High Mobility in Europe

Gil Viry
Vincent Kaufmann

Work and Personal Life

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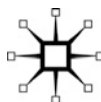
Work and Personal Life

Edited by

Gil Viry
University of Edinburgh, UK

and

Vincent Kaufmann
Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, Switzerland

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Foreword

Migration is only one form of mobility that social scientists document as intensifying in the contemporary period; the focus of *High Mobility in Europe* encompasses another more routine form of mobility – travel to and for work, whether across national boundaries or not – while looking more holistically at the relationship between movement, employment and personal life. Debate continues about the consequences of mobility. For example, Claire Holdsworth[1] notes 'sweeping generalisations about the intensification of mobility at the expense of the family' that provoked her own research (Holdsworth, 2013: 1). The authors of *High Mobility in Europe* demonstrate reasons for avoiding 'sweeping generalisations' along with the enormous importance of mobility for personal and family lives. Their original research shines a timely spotlight on patterns of mobility, weighing assumptions against the evidence. They look within and across nation-state boundaries in Europe to deliver an evidence-based account of who is mobile, and why. Their comparative and collaborative efforts put competing theoretical claims about what mobility means for our future to the test while asking their own brand of distinctive searching questions about the reversibility of mobility practices, spatially, temporally, socially and experientially. This is done without unnecessarily proliferating the growing set of neologisms already coined to capture the mobile characters of contemporary life – flying grannies, LATs (couples living apart together), astronaut parents and transnational families. The European residents who feature most strongly are long-distance commuters whose time away from home is extended by over two hours travelling both to and from work, the overnighters who regularly stay away from home for work reasons, and those in long-distance relationships where, again for work-related reasons, each partner has his or her own residence in geographically separate localities.

The nature of the evidence deployed by the authors – longitudinal surveys and qualitative interviews – offers breadth and depth, change over time and change across life courses. This provides multiple routes to explore *reversibility*, patterns that are subsequently undone. Sample diversity enables analysis by gender and socio-economic circumstances. The fact that mothers bringing up children alone are sometimes long-distance commuters defies common stereotypes and demonstrates how a feeling of entrapment in high mobility is more typical of those with

few resources. It is the more advantaged research participants who have a sense of choosing high mobility as a lifestyle or a life phase. The European countries involved – France, Germany, Spain and Switzerland – do not represent all the regions of Europe. Nevertheless, the detailed and comparative analysis offers food for thought to those of us outside these territories considering our own research evidence. The authors direct our attention to how the sequencing of mobility across the life course reflects differential socialisation that underpins a propensity to mobility, as well as how variations in gender divisions around caring and providing and the impact of recession are affected by different national contexts.

What is distinctively contemporary about mobility and its impact on social worlds and individual lives remains deeply contested. Contemporary patterns of mobility have encouraged some analysts to suggest abandoning the nation-state understanding of society as a conceptual blinker, even though state agencies continue to modify mobility across nation-state borders and to support local people differentially in their means and capacity for movement. The authors of *High Mobility in Europe* bring a new body of evidence to these debates and the data they provide within and across four nation-states demonstrates that freedom of movement within the European Union has not levelled out national differences in patterns of mobility, even between neighbouring countries.

Professor Lynn Jamieson
University of Edinburgh

Note

1. Holdsworth, C. (2013). *Families and Intimate Mobilities*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Acknowledgements

Notes on Contributors

Yann Dubois holds a Master's in Geography from the University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland. His research mainly focuses on spatial mobility and urban issues. He is currently working as a research fellow at the Urban Sociology Laboratory (LaSUR) of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne (EPFL), where he is doing a PhD on Cross-Border Mobility.

Vincent Kaufmann is Associate Professor of Urban Sociology and Mobility, Director of the Urban Sociology Laboratory (LaSUR) of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne (EPFL), and the scientific director of the Mobile Lives Forum. After completing his master's in Sociology from the University of Geneva, he went on to do his PhD on travel mode choices in everyday life at EPFL. He has also completed his postdoctoral studies at Lancaster University (2000) and Ecole Des Ponts et Chaussées (2001). He was invited as professor by Université Laval, Canada, Louvain-la-Neuve University Belgium, Nimegen University, Netherlands and Université de Toulouse Le Mirail, France. He has published widely in the fields of mobility and urban life styles, social and spatial mobility, public policy evaluation of transport and city planning, including *Re-thinking Mobility* in 2002 and *Re-thinking the City* in 2011.

Emmanuel Ravalet is a socio-economist and senior researcher at the Urban Sociology Laboratory (LaSUR) of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne (EPFL). After receiving an engineering degree with a specialisation in transport planning, Emmanuel completed his doctorate in Economics at the University of Lyon, France and a PhD in Urban Studies at the University INRS-UCS, Canada. He has worked for three years as an economist in the French Ministry of Sustainable Development. He is currently investigating segregation, exclusion and spatial mobility. He is particularly interested in social vulnerability as reflected through particular spatial practices, such as immobility, withdrawal into one's own neighbourhood or long-distance commuting.

Stéphanie Vincent-Geslin obtained his PhD in Sociology from the University Paris-Descartes La Sorbonne. After five years as a scientific collaborator at the Urban Sociology Laboratory (LaSUR) of the Swiss

Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne (EPFL), she is working at the Transport Economics Laboratory at Ecole Nationale des Travaux Publics de l'Etat (ENTPE) in Lyon, France. She remains associate researcher at LaSUR. Stéphanie's research deals with spatial mobility practices and urban issues, travel mode change and decision-making processes, job related mobility and youth mobility patterns.

Gil Viry is Chancellor's fellow in Sociology at the University of Edinburgh and an associate researcher at the Centre for Research on Families and Relationships (CRFR). He is co-running the Social Network Analysis in Scotland (SNAS) group. After receiving his master's in Physics and Sociology, Gil completed his PhD in Sociology at the University of Geneva. His research is focused on the relationship between spatial mobility, personal life and the geography of family networks. He mainly uses a life course approach and social network analysis to investigate personal relationships over time and across space. He has been a research fellow at the Centre for Mobility Research (CeMoRe) at Lancaster University, invited scholar at the Federal Institute for Population Research in Wiesbaden (BiB), Germany, research fellow at LaSUR (EPFL) and PAVIE (laboratory of life course research) at the University of Lausanne.

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High Mobility as Social Phenomenon

Vincent Kaufmann and Gil Viry

Challenging preconceptions

Over the past 20 years, several forms of long-distance travel have intensified in Europe and in most industrialised countries (Frändberg and Vilhelmson, 2011; Meissonnier, 2001; Schneider et al., 2002; Hofmeister, 2005). This refers to bi- or multi-location family arrangements (for example, living apart together relationships, commuter marriages, long-distance parenthood), a *pied-à-terre* near the workplace when the principal residence is hundreds of miles away, or leisure activities in multiple places (for example, vacation homes used seasonally). It also refers to daily long-distance or long-duration commuting, when people must travel hundreds of miles each day for their job, or spend a great deal of time commuting between home and work. Likewise, it includes people who often sleep away from home – whether for work-, leisure-, or family-related reasons. None of these forms of travel are completely new. However, while they were marginal practices just a few years ago, together they have become a major social phenomenon. In this book, we focus on *work-related* forms of long-distance travel. We grouped them under the umbrella term: *high mobility*.

These emerging practices are challenging many analytical categories and require epistemological reconsideration. The conceptual and methodological apparatus of urban sociology is primarily concerned, because it is largely based on a territorial conception of social space. This territorial conception posits that human society is organised around groups that can be described and located according to typological logic (Urry, 2000; Kaufmann, 2002). People and territories are grouped based on their similarities, leading to distinct boundaries between categories. While the idea of social class clearly fits into this logic, the same is true

of concepts like neighbourhood social mix, migration, city and agglomeration. All these concepts reflect a categorical approach and draw upon a fixed framework, without which they would be impossible to identify. Yet, this framework is an area-based (that is, delineated) territory, wherein the phenomenon is identified and sometimes compared with other reference frameworks. This can be the neighbourhood, municipality, urban agglomeration, country or metric units such as the square metre, acre or mile.

High mobility practices challenge the conceptual apparatus of urban sociology's framework. For instance, how can neighbourhood diversity be measured if a large share of residents are not locally integrated because they spend half the week in another city or commute 50 miles each day? More generally, these forms of travel reflect the fact that the spatial organisation of societies is changing. The relationship between what is *next to*, what is *connected* and what *moves* is changing, thereby changing the meaning of these notions.

From an epistemological viewpoint, there are various ways of approaching high mobility. Three stances are particularly present in the literature.

The first – and certainly the most widespread – is the post-structuralist school of thought. This considers high mobility as part of a wider epochal turn, making categorisation impossible. Social categories are becoming blurred or even disappearing. Societies construed as states, and spatial divisions such as urban/rural areas, are fading away. In this context, moving, that is uprooting and resettling elsewhere, is becoming impossible in some ways, as there is no longer any clear border to cross. Contemporary mobilities, such as long-distance commuting and dual location households, become a kind of neo-nomadism, in the sense of Deleuze and Guattari (1980). John Urry's work *Sociology beyond societies* (2000) fits clearly into this perspective, as do Manuel Castells' *The rise of the network society* (1996) and Jeremy Rifkin's *The age of access* (2000).

A second perspective – also very common in the literature – is to consider high mobility as a practical consequence of an ideology of speed, to which we are all subject. From this perspective, the social requirement of mobility is becoming increasingly urgent, especially in the labour market. Moving fast, far and frequently has become an imperative for those who claim to be dynamic, motivated and ambitious. Knowing how to identify and play with the rules of this requirement becomes an essential skill for social and professional integration in general, and for a successful career in particular. The rise of long-distance travel reflects the symbiosis between the government's investment in

high-speed transport infrastructure to promote economic development (the latter considered a by-product of travel speed) and how people use it within the context of a strong social pressure to be highly mobile. This second vision is more critical, as in the work of Zygmunt Bauman in *Liquid modernity* (2000), David Harvey when he discusses 'time-space compression' (Harvey, 1990; Harvey, 2001), Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello in *The new spirit of capitalism* (2005 [1999]), and Pierre Lannoy and Thierry Ramadier in *La mobilité généralisée* (2007).

The third main approach is to interpret high mobility as a sign, among others, of the emergence of a society of individuals. This approach is a legacy of methodological individualism. The phenomenon of high mobility is seen as the radicalisation of the founding principles of modernity, and particularly the simultaneous search for self-fulfilment and efficiency. Society as a whole is therefore based on the idea of freeing humans from ascribed roles and pre-existing social structures of class, gender, race, community and so on. Individuals are compelled to make choices rationally and reflexively to shape their own biographies. From this perspective, emerging forms of long-distance travel reflect an aspirational model that results in new (mobile) lifestyles. François Ascher's *Métapolis ou l'avenir des villes* (1995) and Alain Bourdin's *La métropole des individus* (2005a) clearly reflect this third perspective.

These three interpretations oppose one another in their *Weltanshauung* on numerous points. While they can be found throughout the scientific literature, they all present, in our opinion, major limitations.

First, the post-structuralist view confuses the gradual disappearance of some types of territories (that are both distinct and homogeneous in their composition) with the impossibility of categorising spaces and social positions alike. In this vein, John Urry provocatively proposes abandoning the notion of society as an object of sociology and replacing it with that of mobility (Urry, 2000). This means giving precedence to network over territory, which is highly questionable as it is, de facto, a self-fulfilling prophecy. By considering the world through the network lens, we overlook fixity, the institutionalised nature of societies and their stratification (Offner and Pumain, 1996; Montulet, 1998). Empirical evidence clearly shows the interplay between networks and territories. Both social and technical networks shape and are shaped by territories (Amin, 2002; Offner, 2000; Swyngedouw, 2004; Takhteyev et al., 2012; Viry, 2012). Besides the overemphasis on networks (versus territories), the literature often yields to the temptation of binary interpretation by the exclusion of access. Yet, often, the question is not knowing *whether or not* we are linked, but rather *how* we are linked – and to what.

In the second perspective, the totalising ideology of high mobility as the essence of freedom and success is not entirely convincing either. In this ideology, there are good and bad movements, and a more or less precise geography of the origins and destinations associated with this normative judgement. As we argue throughout this book, high mobility is a highly ambivalent phenomenon (Schuler et al., 1997; Schneider et al., 2002), associated with a plurality of personal situations. In some cases, high mobility is caused by disruptive events (for example divorce, unemployment, business relocation) that are not necessarily associated with (economic) success (for example Preston et al., 1993; Vignal, 2005). Moreover, high mobility unfolds in different life domains that may conflict (Huinink and Feldhaus, 2009). For example, high mobility may have a positive effect on career advancement but a negative effect on family development. De facto, it is more accurate to talk about mobility requirements than *a* mobility requirement – requirements that are often contradictory, and that, consequently, do not allow for a unilateral reading of the relationships between mobility phenomena and contemporary societies.

Mobility as a paradoxical ideology is not new. From the 1950s, for instance, in the analysis of intergenerational social mobility, social reproduction was considered an indication of the 'immobilisation of society, and mobility as an indicator of social fluidity' (Cuin, 1983). From the beginning, capitalist societies have valued social mobility because it has helped establish a collective dynamic of social development based on an individual's desire to improve his or her socio-economic conditions. People engage in capitalist production in the hope of improving their living conditions and social status based on merit. This view implies two principles (Montulet and Kaufmann, 2004). The first claims individual freedom in the definition and realisation of status acquisition. The second appeals to the principle of equality among individuals, so that people's backgrounds are no longer an obstacle to their desired social ascension. The paradox is to hold an egalitarian discourse in an inherently unequal competition for social status. The paradox is usually raised by implementing procedures that seek to ensure an initial position of equality among actors. The modern-day valorisation of spatial mobility is based on the same logic. When travel is fast and far, it reflects the idea of freedom. Through spatial mobility, individuals are supposedly free to establish desired contacts without spatial or temporal obstacles. This discourse suggests that the individuals that are most likely to occupy the most enviable positions are also those ready to accept a logic of unfettered flexibility. Thus, the contemporary ideology of mobility

particularly assumes that spatial mobility inevitably favours a fair distribution of individuals within the social hierarchy. It would therefore suffice to promote access to ensure equality in the social game. When addressing mobility issues, it is important not to confuse the ideological dimension of mobility (paradoxically associated with the notion of freedom) with mobility as a concept in social science.

It is also important to note that the notion of mobility as an ideology places a strong emphasis on the labour market. However, spatial mobility includes other areas, such as leisure and family activities. Yet, in these areas, an all-encompassing ideology of mobility as the essence of freedom and success does not completely work. Analysing the links between different forms of mobility reveals a much less mechanical relationship between work and leisure (Schneider et al., 2002; Vignal, 2005). In particular, people who are not very mobile in their jobs – socially and spatially – may compensate for this professional immobility with long-distance travel for private reasons.

Finally, the methodologically individualistic position of viewing the mobility increase as a consequence of the individualisation process fails to recognise the interpersonal and collective dimensions of mobilities (for example Manderscheid, 2014). Social and spatial structures are also at work in mobility behaviours. Mobilities are constrained socially and opportunities for upward social mobility through physical mobility are as much the realisation of desired opportunities as choices by default (Montulet, 1998). First, as we argue throughout this book, much long-distance travel is driven by the need to balance conflicting space and time demands of work and personal life. For example, dual-earner couples can opt for daily long-distance commuting when partners are working in distant locations. In other situations, the 'production of some kinds of mobilities often creates immobilities for others' (Uteng and Cresswell, 2008: 7). For example, frequent absences from home by fathers is often associated with professional immobility of mothers. Moreover, high mobility arrangements depend on the mobility of collective actors like companies, which can likewise be mobile. Second, forms of travel reflect the specific mobility cultures of social groups. Hanja Maksim (2011) thus demonstrated that low-income individuals develop specific spatial mobility habitus to compensate for their economic handicap. These highly mobile people do not correspond to the dominant model of mobile workers, dealing with the requirements of flexibility that characterise contemporary capitalist societies. In other words, the analysis of high mobility cannot be subsumed in an individual approach.

Approaching high mobility: a reversal of perspective

How, then, to approach mobility, and in particular high mobility? In some sense, deconstructing mobility is a simple intellectual exercise. Now, we must take this material and rearrange it to create a relevant, practical framework for analysing high mobility. For this, we propose a reversal of perspective that is summarised in three points.

Considering mobility as a total social phenomenon

The epistemological positions briefly described above show that mobility is at the heart of social dynamics, be it social values, social stratification or social spaces. Echoing what has been termed the 'new mobilities paradigm' and the 'mobility turn' (Canzler et al., 2008; Cresswell, 2006; Sheller and Urry, 2006; Urry, 2007), mobility contributes to the structural and ideological underpinnings of societies. This is realised through the territories mobility produces – in terms of both geographical and social spaces – and the definition of models of social success. Moreover, mobility highlights what is changing via what moves and how.

Mobility reveals society dynamics more generally, to the extent that it can be considered a *total social phenomenon*, in the sense of Marcel Mauss's theory (Bassand and Brulhardt, 1980). In this regard, we agree with Michel Bassand who, 30 years ago, already believed that:

> Social mobility is a total social phenomenon, meaning it is not only movement but always an action at the heart of the social process of functioning and change. (Bassand, 1985: 25)

Considering mobility as a social phenomenon makes it a lens for interpreting an entire society. In this regard, it is a response to John Urry's postulate of the disappearance of societies spurred by the increase of flows and interrelations between and across national spaces. The flow itself then becomes the object of study, and Urry's assumption a hypothesis.

Conceptualising mobility based on an actor's mobility potential

Debates on the social significance of high mobility tend to focus on the implications of time-space compression. The widespread use of long-distance telecommunication and high-speed transport networks (in particular personal cars) has led to an unprecedented time-space compression in the past 50 years.

In this book, we argue that analysing high mobility and its social and spatial implications requires starting with the actors' mobility potential. Mobility potential takes various forms over the life course and through the acquisition of mobility skills.

In its professional and family dimensions, life course largely defines the range of possibilities in terms of mobility. The birth of a child creates the need for more space and can lead to moving house. Dual earner couples must compromise on location and mobility arrangements when partners do not work in the same place. Becoming divorced or unemployed, by definition, results in the disruption of the work–home spatial arrangement. Such examples show that changes in life course are likely to impact actors' mobility potential.

Actors – individuals or groups, such as a business are characterised by a more or less pronounced potential to be (highly) mobile in geographical, economic and social space. With the range of possibilities for moving in space, this potential can take very diverse forms. An actor can show ability to uproot from one place and re-root in another. Another actor can be very good at maintaining long-distance social ties. In other words, mobility potential is localised and depends on the actor's skills, aspirations and constraints. We measure this potential through the notion of motility, which is defined as all of the characteristics that allow an actor to move (Kaufmann et al., 2004). Motility therefore refers to the social conditions of access (to mobility services in a broad sense), the required skills and mobility projects, that is, how the services are actually used to realise these projects. For example, with regard to transportation, motility is how people or groups use the travel options offered by the transport provision in their mobility practices. Motility can remain in a potential state or be activated in the form of movement. Several recent studies have succeeded in measuring motility at the individual level (Kesselring, 2006; Canzler et al., 2008; Kaufmann et al., 2010). These studies are still exploratory, meaning that they have not led to the adoption of an approved standard of measurement. Nevertheless, they have identified several patterns of mobility potential. These patterns are differentiated in both spatial and social terms, but appear to be only moderately related to social class.

Analysing mobility as a social and spatial assemblage

Grasping the total social phenomenon that is mobility based on life course and motility means considering the relationships between the three scales of sociological analysis (individuals, relationships and groups) along with three ways of being in space (being near, moving or

communicating at a distance). To consider these relationships, François Ascher (2000) uses the metaphor of 'hypertext society', where people switch between real and virtual networks and between social universes to stay connected. This is a good starting point, since the territories produced by contemporary mobilities can be divided into different layers, which sometimes overlap or are contiguous: the nearby, the connected and the moving. Territories do not disappear, rather, they change as illustrated by the development of multiple diasporas and other communities.

The three levels of sociological analysis and the three ways of overcoming spatial distance are not new. In fact, they even seem as old as the world itself. However, what *is* changing is related to the hypertext dimension of society. Until recently, the configuration of the personal, interpersonal and collective levels on the one hand, and contiguity, movement and long-distance communication on the other, was, broadly speaking, spatially arranged in a Russian doll configuration. In other words, territories and their boundaries were clear and easily identifiable because they were built via interfitting increments. For example, everyday life unfolded at the micro-local level of the neighbourhood or village.

The main explanation of this interfitting, or nesting, was that travel and long-distance communication were slow until the 1920s (by foot, horse, or trams in cities). Everyday life was necessarily organised around the home. It was impossible to travel far by foot, or to communicate with people far away any faster than the speed of a horse. With the development and availability of high-speed transport and telecommunications, societies – once organised based on proximity according to a nesting logic of Russian dolls – suddenly exploded. Nowadays, we can commute hundreds of miles a day and maintain intimacy with people geographically very far away. In other words, nowadays we are less bound by proximity. The configuration of what is nearby, what moves and what is connected is changing radically (Lévy, 1999; Urry, 2007). There are no longer clear-cut boundaries and clashes of scale have become the norm. The way societies unfold across space is changing. This evolution raises new issues regarding social cohesion, social and spatial embeddedness and a sense of multiple identities.

Defining mobility as a concept

The approach to mobility described above helps us to better grasp the concept of mobility in an open but accurate way. Defining mobility – often a catch-all term – is particularly important given its many meanings.

Geographers use it to evoke the idea of movement through geographical space. They are not talking about the same thing as traffic engineers or sociologists, who use the term in reference to transport flows or social change, respectively. Far from being an asset, this multitude of meanings is an obstacle to knowledge. When we talk about mobility, we do not know precisely what we are talking about. It depends on one's academic discipline.

For our purposes, we consider mobility as a double-sided socio-spatial phenomenon that includes both social change *and* movement in geographical space (Kaufmann, 2008). In this sense, all forms of movement result in social change, since being mobile in space and time, by definition, produces a change, however small. Mobility is defined by planning and then being mobile in geographical space, involving social change. Mobility is organised around three dimensions.

- *The range of possibilities.* Each situation offers its own range of possibilities in terms of mobility, consisting of a variety of contextual criteria. These include: (1) the available transport and communication networks, their development, performances and conditions of access (road, highway and rail networks, airport platforms, and regional telecommunications technology); (2) space and its territorial configurations (for example urban configurations and functional centralities); (3) the labour market (opportunities for training and employment, the unemployment rate); (4) institutions and laws that govern human activities (family policies, property and housing assistance, immigration policy). In short, it encompasses all the social relations and models of success of a given society, and the challenges actors must face in order to succeed.
- *Mobility potential.* Depending on their life courses, family and career path in particular, people have a certain mobility potential characterised by constraints. People and social groups are characterised by their ability to move in geographic, economic and social space, that is, their motility (Schuler et al., 1997; Kaufmann, 2002; Kaufmann et al., 2004). Motility is the way people or groups use the possibilities with regard to movement. It includes intentions and projects.
- *Movement.* This refers to movement in geographical space, or how what is nearby, what is connected and what moves are configured. All forms of movement induce social change. Mobility is defined as simultaneous movement in geographical space and social change.[1] However, this mobility can vary greatly in both intensity and nature.

Together, these three dimensions produce mobility. But it is important not to presume their relationships to one another. A range of possibilities with highly efficient transport networks and widespread access does not automatically lead people to use them. Similarly, highly-developed motility in a population can be used to settle in a territory rather than travel long distances. It can also remain in an inactivated, potential state. Conversely, a highly mobile population does not necessarily have a range of possibilities particularly favourable to movement (for example refugees).

Is high mobility reversible?

We propose using the concept of *reversibility* to describe the nature and intensity of high mobility (Bourdin, 2005b; Kaufmann, 2005). The forms of high mobility explored in this study are characterised by the crossing of long distances, often at high speeds. In theory, they are therefore characterised by reversibility. In the strict sense, the idea of reversibility implies a complete return to the ex-ante (initial) state. However, when applied to mobility, pure reversibility does not exist (Lefebvre, 1992; Sorokin, 1927). Mobility always implies change and movement in geographical space, as opposed to fixity. Here however, reversibility refers to the nature and intensity of the change between the initial and the new state (Pradel, 2013).

Throughout this book we explore the question of reversibility (versus irreversibility) of different forms of high mobility based on two main dimensions:

- *Spatial and temporal reversibility*: using travel time to stay in touch with friends and family; using travel speeds to be physically present with friends and relatives as much as possible.
- *Existential and relational reversibility*: compensating for absences by maintaining distant relationships; limiting the impact of absence and limiting the contact with unfamiliar places and unknown people by developing routines.

We analyse closely people's mobility potential and its activation in the form of travel to assess the nature and scope of the reversibility of high mobility. High mobility practices are also examined through the sequence of mobility experiences over time and the life course. Finally, we investigate the *potential receptiveness* to mobility projects in different territories. Potential receptiveness refers to the range of possibilities offered by a territory in terms of mobility projects. Regarding high mobility,

this receptiveness has largely to do with the availability and reliability of high-speed transport infrastructures (road, rail and air). In an environment providing such infrastructures, high mobility practices can potentially take place in order to reduce the friction of distance. This creates new spatial and temporal arrangements that were once unimaginable and unrealisable prior to the era of high-speed travel.

Empirical evidence shows that high mobility is often a way of adjusting lifestyle choices and the constraints of the labour market. It is important to note that high mobility can be caused as much by the former as by the latter, even if the forms of long-distance travel examined in the present study are work-related. For example, some households choose to live in the south of France, while some household members continue to work in Paris. Residing close to a high-speed train station places them only two hours from the capital. Hence, the distinction between personal and professional motives is often blurred.

Analysing high mobility over time enables us to examine the role of past experiences in current practices. We also explore changes and continuity in high mobility practices in relation to career and personal life. In particular, we address the following research questions:

- Is high mobility practised at specific life stages (transition into adulthood, early career) or is high mobility a long-term practice? What social factors drive people to continue or stop being highly mobile? What are the underlying mechanisms leading to these changes? Are Europeans increasingly highly mobile?
- Is motility built gradually, in relation to its activation, that is, via high mobility experiences? Or is motility developed in a specific family and professional context? How do highly mobile people use travel time and develop place attachment?
- What impact do high mobility practices, and changes in these practices, have on career success, personal life and family development? Does high mobility delay or hinder starting a family? Is high mobility positively associated with career success, or does it insure against downward social mobility?

Throughout this book, we show that high mobility practices should be understood in the broader social context in which mobile people are embedded (job situation, households, transport infrastructures, attachment to places). Prospectively speaking, gaining a better understanding of high mobility will help us anticipate the deep social changes related to these social and spatial practices.

The layout of the book

The book is divided into ten chapters.

Following this introduction, the second chapter focuses on the method. It presents and discusses the methodological choices and the data of the study *Job Mobilities and Family Lives in Europe* in France, Germany, Spain and Switzerland. In particular, it describes the panel design, the qualitative sample and the use of mixed methods.

Using the quantitative part of the study, the third chapter presents findings on the scope of high mobility. It shows who was highly mobile, who became or stopped being highly mobile over their careers and how highly mobile people perceived their mobility. Using retrospective data, the authors compare high mobility histories of three birth cohorts to address the question of whether Europeans are increasingly more mobile. This general overview is discussed in the light of existing literature in the area.

The fourth chapter focuses on the socialisation to high mobility. Based on life story interviews and a typology of highly mobile individuals, it shows that, for some people, high mobility is part of mobile life trajectories starting from childhood, while for others it occurs unexpectedly at certain life stages. The authors show what high mobility skills are necessary before or during mobility experiences. They also examine the effects of this socialisation on current high mobility practices.

In the fifth chapter, mixed methods are used to study typical patterns of high mobility history and their links to career achievement. The chapter investigates in which conditions high mobility is practised as a life stage or, conversely, as a long-term practice. The socio-economic determinants of high mobility histories are analysed to conclude whether having repeated experiences of high mobility is a way of achieving a successful career.

The sixth chapter analyses how motility shapes high mobility practices and the nature of their reversibility. Based on theoretical work and an empirical typology, the authors discuss the importance of the various dimensions of motility and the associated mobility behaviours. The second part of the chapter focuses on the motility of highly mobile individuals. In particular, it examines the nature and scope of this population's motility and to what extent it impacts how people experience their mobile lives.

In the seventh chapter, the authors address the issue of vulnerable populations facing high mobility and disentangle the effects of individual constraints from those of the macro-economic context. They

analyse the impact of territories (degree of urbanisation, unemployment rate) on high mobility practices and motility and discuss the case of Spain, which was particularly affected by the 2008 economic recession.

How changes in family life and high mobility intersect is the topic of Chapter 8. Using quantitative and qualitative methods, this chapter examines the possible impact of high mobility on childbirth and union dissolution. In the other direction of causality, it considers the influence of such household changes on high mobility practices and the *willingness* to be highly mobile. Finally, it investigates if there are gender and country-specific differences. Results are discussed in the light of the gendered nature of mobility arrangements between partners and family policies in Europe.

The ninth chapter explores travel time use and place attachment among highly mobile people. In particular, the authors study the social implications of spatial reversibility enabled by high-speed transport and telecommunications. Using the photographs collected during photo-elicitation interviews, the chapter develops a typology of how people relate to mobility spaces, especially temporary spaces and transit areas.

The concluding chapter summarises the major contributions of the study. It outlines a comprehensive vision of the high mobility phenomenon. In particular, we come back to what high mobility reveals about the nature of socio-spatial dynamics in contemporary societies. The book closes with a prospective research agenda.

Note

1. In our understanding of mobility, all movement in space is, by definition, associated with a social change, however small. The mere fact that crossing space implies the passing of time is in itself a social change. We therefore depart from McKenzie's position (1927), which evokes the existence of movement without mobility, on the grounds that this movement means nothing in terms of experience, and that the people doing it immediately forget it (things like taking out the rubbish, or buying a newspaper or pack of cigarettes).

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2
Methodological Choices and Research Design

Emmanuel Ravalet, Stéphanie Vincent-Geslin and Gil Viry

Introduction

Conducting empirical research on an emerging phenomenon that cannot be analysed with existing conceptual tools is a challenge. In the previous chapter, we saw that high-speed travel and communication technologies reshaped our relationship to time and space. These considerations have led to the idea that high mobility practices can be interpreted heuristically, using the concept of reversibility. The questions then become: (1) to what degree are these practices reversible from spatial, temporal, relational and experiential viewpoints; (2) how can we develop an empirical research design to analyse high mobility through the lens of reversibility?

One possibility would be to categorise high mobility based on how people describe themselves. Do they consider themselves highly mobile? If so, why? Deconstructing the category of highly mobile individuals is likely to reveal a wide variety of mobility practices that are difficult to group and measure. This could be all the more difficult considering that high mobility is a multi-faceted phenomenon that is not stabilised, terminologically speaking, and does not exist as a recognised, shared social phenomenon.

A second possibility would be quantifying the phenomenon based on pre-existing categories, without considering how highly mobile individuals experience them on a daily basis. From this perspective, we would be left with a primarily descriptive analysis that would not allow us to grasp fully the individual and social mechanisms that underlie high mobility.

We chose a third possibility, a longitudinal, cross-country analysis combining quantitative and qualitative methods. This mixed

methodology allowed us: (1) to quantify the phenomenon of high mobility in several national contexts; (2) study individual practices of high mobility and their changes over the life course; (3) explore more deeply how these practices are related to the social context in which people are embedded, such as family, work, place attachment; (4) examine how people experience past and present forms of high mobility.

The quantitative part of the study continues and extends the investigations begun within the *Job Mobilities and Family Lives in Europe* research programme (see below). The 2007 survey was designed from the outset as a possible panel. Participants in the 2007 survey living in France, Germany, Spain and Switzerland were re-interviewed in 2011 to explore new aspects related to high mobility behaviours and to examine continuity and changes in these behaviours.

This chapter presents the methodology, its benefits and limitations. We begin by clarifying the definition of high mobility, then we present the quantitative and qualitative instruments before discussing the advantages of a mixed research methodology.

High mobility: definition and positioning

Due to the diversity of its forms, defining high mobility is no easy matter. In the 2007 *Job Mobilities and Family Lives in Europe* project (Schneider and Meil, 2008; Schneider and Collet, 2010), the approach was quantitative, based on a sample of 7,220 people in six European countries (Belgium, France, Switzerland, Germany, Spain and Poland). High mobility was conceptualised as a *strategy* or *resource,* a way of organising one's personal, social and professional life in a context of increased demand for mobility among both men and women. The survey focused on any form of spatial mobility with a potential significant impact on personal or family life. A strong emphasis was placed on travel time (rather than distance travelled or the origin/destination of trips). The rationale was that long travel time to work or for work is likely to reduce (quality) time in other life domains (leisure, family, community). Based on different dimensions that could potentially characterise the practice of high mobility (permanence, frequency, regularity and predictability), three main forms of high mobility were defined:

- daily long-distance commuters, home to work trips of more than one hour, at least three times a week;
- overnighters, that is, people who spend at least 60 nights a year away from the (main) home for work-related reasons;

- people in long-distance relationships, both partners have their own residence for work-related reasons, with at least 50 km between the two homes.

The category of daily long-distance commuters should be more exactly called *daily long-duration commuters*. However, for the sake of consistency with the literature, we will use the first term. The vast majority of these commuters use motorised transport modes. For this reason, they are also *de facto* long-distance commuters. The category of overnighters covers a variety of high mobility practices. They can be weekly or monthly long-distance commuters with a primary and secondary residence, people who travel frequently for work to various destinations/worksites and at irregular intervals or seasonal workers absent for longer periods of time. These forms of work-related high mobility were also used in the 2011 survey for comparability purposes.

In 2007, migrants, that is, people who had moved to another region (at least 50 km away) or country for work-related reasons within the previous three years were also classified as highly mobile. We were not able to interview recent migrants in the 2011 survey, as their contact information had been lost between the two surveys (due to their move). We therefore did not include migrants as a form of high mobility in our longitudinal analyses and focused our study on reversible forms of high mobility.[1]

Rather than categorising the three forms of high mobility as discrete events, our assumption in this book is that mobility research can be enhanced by examining them as part of a larger pattern of mobility behaviour, with various feedback loops. For example, knowledge gained through the experience of long-distance relationship can later be used for overnighting, and the experience of travelling can widen horizons and facilitate other forms of high mobility. Despite the differences between long-distance commuters, overnighters and people in long-distance relationships, several points in common can be highlighted. First, all are inherently work-related and thus fall into one of the categories defined by Bericat (1994), namely: 'mobility to work', 'at work' or 'because of work'. They are also forms of mobility that can be described as spatially reversible, as they involve going to and returning from a distant location in a more or less rapid timeframe (Vincent-Geslin and Kaufmann, 2012). The frequency of the return trip depends on the form of mobility. But all three forms are the result of space and time trade-offs between personal and professional lives. In this book, we aim to examine these trade-offs and their social and spatial consequences.

A quantitative, European, longitudinal approach

Job Mobilities and Family Lives in Europe – Modern mobile living and its relation to quality of life research project, launched in 2006, brought together six countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Spain, Switzerland and Poland) to explore the links between work-related spatial mobility and family life.[2] The three main objectives were: (1) to assess the scope of different forms of work-related mobility; (2) to better understand the circumstances under which people decide to be mobile or not; (3) to analyse the consequences of mobility on well-being and personal life.

Using a panel design, the survey data collected in 2007 were supplemented with a second survey in 2011 in four countries: France, Germany, Spain and Switzerland.[3] The same computer assisted telephone interview method (CATI) was used and most of the questions from the first wave were asked again (for more information about the questionnaire, see Appendix 1).

Establishing a base panel

The target population of the 2011 survey was defined as all participants from the 2007 survey living in France, Germany, Spain and Switzerland. In this first survey, all participants aged 25–54 were selected randomly (based on national telephone directories or random digit dialling technique) and interviewed by phone using a standardised questionnaire. An oversample of the highly mobile population was also collected by random selection and screening interviews to ensure a sufficient number of highly mobile people. In each country, two samples were then collected: (1) a representative sample of the resident population (aged 25–54) in the country; (2) a representative sample of the highly mobile population (aged 25–54) in the country. The latter was underweighted according to the distribution of the highly mobile population, as identified in the first sample. Finally, the two samples were combined to form a single representative sample (see also Appendix 3). For the 2011 survey, the challenge was limiting attrition (loss of respondents between the two waves) and biases within a mobile population, which is, by definition, difficult to capture. Respondents from the first wave were lost at various stages of the data collection. The two main sources of attrition were refusals to participate in second interviews (either immediately after the first interview or some years later) and an inability to recontact respondents (Skora et al., 2013). Table 2.1 shows the attrition rates for all countries. Dropouts were higher in France and Germany than in Spain and Switzerland. In France, many

Table 2.1   Attrition between the 2007 and 2011 surveys

	Germany	France	Spain	Switzerland	Total
Number of respondents in the 2007 survey	1,663	1,223	1,133	1,007	5,026
Number of respondents in the base panel (2007 and 2011 surveys)	504	254	537	440	1,735
Overall response rate between the two waves	30.3%	20.8%	47.4%	43.7%	34.5%

Source: Skora et al. (2013).

respondents either refused to participate in a second interview or could not be reached when the French survey institute contacted them six months after the first survey. Moreover, in France and Germany, many contact attempts were unsuccessful at the time of the second wave. A comparatively high share of residential mobility and phone number changes may explain this result. A description of the panel sample can be found in Appendix 2.

We ran a series of logistic regressions separately for the four countries, using the 2007 data, to identify under- or over-represented social groups in the second survey (analysis not shown). People with low education and income levels, those living with partners and children, non-married people, those who had migrated between 2004 and 2007, and individuals who practised several forms of high mobility in 2007 (multi-mobiles) were under-represented in the second survey. There were also national differences. For example, in France and Spain, young people were more rarely re-interviewed than older participants. In Switzerland, people living alone, self-employed people and unemployed people in 2007 were under-represented. Based on these results, weights were calculated to correct for attrition bias. We specify the weight calculation method in Appendix 3.

Mobile oversampling in France and Germany

We conducted a complementary survey exclusively on highly mobile people in Germany and France.[4] The goal was to supplement the numbers of highly mobile individuals in the second survey. In both countries 250 additional, non-panel, highly mobile individuals aged 25–54 were interviewed, using an almost identical questionnaire to that

used for the panel survey. Like the 2007 oversampling of mobile individuals, the sample was collected by random selection and short screening interviews.

The oversample was combined with the panel data. However, contrary to the mobile oversample in the first survey wave, it is not an oversampling per se, as the 2011 mobile sample is younger (aged 25–54) than the panel sample (aged 29–58). We therefore did not compile the 2011 panel data with the 2011 mobile sample in France and Germany. However, as selection was random, we can consider that the material collected aptly describes the situation of highly mobile individuals in both countries. Retrospective analyses are also possible through the use of sequence analysis to capture high mobility histories (see Chapters 3 and 5).

Panel analysis and cross-national comparisons

The two-wave panel data offers a diachronic analysis of high mobility behaviours. After the first survey it appeared crucial to examine the circumstances under which people started or stopped being highly mobile, and the volatility or permanence of high mobility practices. In addition, examining the changes in the social conditions and narratives associated with these practices offer insights into high mobility as a dynamic process.

Although we collected data at two time points, the 2011 cross-sectional data is incomplete. The 2007 sample was representative of the population aged 25–54 in the four countries. But this was not the case for the 2011 sample, which includes individuals who are four years older. When we analyse changes in practices and discourses, we are considering the changes in people who are representative of the 2007 population. But we do not show how society evolved between 2007 and 2011.

Regarding the analysis, we used methods specifically designed for panel data, such as change score analysis (Johnson, 2005), conditional logistic regression models (Allison, 2009; Kleinbaum and Klein, 2010), multi-date typologies (Piron et al., 2004) and cross-lagged path analysis (Finkel, 1995). Sequence analysis was also used with retrospective data. We describe these methods in the chapters that follow.

Another essential feature of the database is its international scope. The panel base is composed of people living in France, Germany, Spain and Switzerland. The data were collected via telephone interviews by national survey institutes in 2007. The same institutes conducted the 2011 survey, except in France, where the Swiss institute took over. Besides these differences, the data collection was conducted collectively

in all four countries, so that research objectives, questionnaire construction, data cleansing and the implementation of common indicators were consistent. Comparability depends on the subject in question and the objectives of the comparison (Hassenteufel, 2005). Functionally speaking, while a table and wardrobe seemingly have little in common, the quality and type of the wood they are made of, their price or their utility can nonetheless be compared. In this sense, it is difficult to determine the comparability of two terms without mentioning the approach used to address them, or the comparison basis itself. 'Comparability is rarely a given; rather, it must be created' (Hassenteufel, 2005: 118).

So, what can be said of the comparability of high mobility behaviours in the four countries? Methodologically speaking, the same questions, variables and thresholds were used. Moreover, the research questions regarding work-related high mobility were identical and relevant in the four countries. Transport infrastructure, such as highways, high-speed trains or low-cost air travel, has developed strongly over the past few decades, making long-distance commutes possible. Likewise, high-speed travel and communication technologies development has been accompanied by a trend toward the functional specialisation of spaces and sectorial specialisation of jobs. Structural changes, such as increasing dual-earner couples, work flexibility and mass unemployment raise the question of the role of work-related high mobility in European lifestyles today, and how this role is changing. The interpretation of cross-national differences is more difficult here, as we do not have all the information necessary to distinguish between cultural, structural and geographical factors, all of which influence high mobility behaviours. We therefore adopt a cautious stance, particularly in Chapter 7, which explores inter-territorial differences.

From a qualitative approach to mixed methods

A qualitative study was conducted in France in 2012–2013 to complement the survey and provide a deeper understanding of high mobility situations. This had three main objectives:

(1) To give flesh to the survey data through personal experiences of high mobility.
(2) To deeper understand the mechanisms at work in high mobility practices by closely analysing social determinants, decision-making processes and the underlying family and professional arrangements.
(3) To better understand the imaginaries of and feelings about high mobility practices.

Table 2.2 The interviewees (qualitative sample)

Name	Age	Occupation	Form of high mobility	Household structure	Residential context	Photo elicitation
Bob	57	Site manager	Daily long-distance commuter	Married, six children	Periurban	No
Jacqueline	60	Manager in the National Health Service	Daily long-distance commuter	Married, one child	Inner suburb	No
Gaby	50	Nursing auxiliary	Daily long-distance commuter	Married, five children	Inner suburb	No
Caroline	42	Proofreader at a publishing house	Daily long-distance commuter	Non co-resident partner	Urban centre	No
Emilie	35	Secondary school teacher	Daily long-distance commuter	Married, two children	Rural	No
Patrick	56	Journalist	Daily long-distance commuter	Married, four children	Periurban	No
Matthias	56	Legal officer	Daily long-distance commuter	Married, three children	Periurban	Yes
Claude	51	Delivery driver	Daily long-distance commuter	Lives with partner, no child	Small urban centre	Yes
Michelle	53	Civil servant, secretary at a university	Daily long-distance commuter	Non co-resident partner, two children	Large suburb	No
Thierry	49	Music teacher	Daily long-distance commuter	Married, non co-resident spouse	Inner suburb	Yes
Jean	50	Train driver	Overnighter	Married, three children	Large suburb	Yes
Michel	57	Armed forces member	Overnighter	Married, two children	Rural	No
Laurence	37	Resident doctor	Overnighter	Married, no child	Periurban	Yes
Bruno	40	Firefighter	Overnighter	Married, two children	Large suburb	No
Martin	50	IT administrator	Overnighter	Married, one child	Periurban	No

Table 2.2 Continued

Name	Age	Occupation	Form of high mobility	Household structure	Residential context	Photo elicitation
Aurélie	24	IT trainer	Overnighter	Lives with partner, no child	Large suburb	Yes
Lionel	35	Prevention and security officer at the civil aviation national school	Overnighter	Single	Large suburb	No
Philippe	51	Sales engineer	Overnighter	Married, two children	Large suburb	Yes
Pierre	50	Sales engineer	Overnighter	Married, four children	Urban centre	No
Sébastien	33	Business manager	Overnighter	Married, two children	Inner suburb	No
Césaire	42	Firefighter	Stopped high mobility	Married, two children	Periurban	No
Christelle	34	Sales representative	Stopped high mobility	Lives with partner, one child	Periurban	No
Lucie	39	Training manager in the third sector	Stopped high mobility	Lives with partner, two children	Large suburb	No
Léonard	34	Civil servant, representative of the Prefect	Stopped high mobility	Lives with partner, one child	Large suburb	Yes
Henry	58	Maintenance worker at an hospital	Stopped high mobility	Married, one child	Rural	No
Hervé	50	Project manager in the banking sector	Stopped high mobility	Married, four children	Periurban	No
Mélanie	37	Librarian	Stopped high mobility	Married, two children	Urban centre	No
Sylvie	60	Teacher in the medico-social sector	Stopped high mobility	Lives with partner, one child	Large suburb	No
Nadège	45	Nursing auxiliary	Stopped high mobility	Lives with partner, three children	Rural	No
Eric	50	Mobile police constable	Stopped high mobility	Married, two children	Rural	No

The first part of the qualitative data collection included in-depth interviews with 20 highly mobile individuals living in France. These ten daily long-distance commuters and ten overnighters had been identified as highly mobile during the 2011 survey. The latter were all travelling frequently for work to various destinations. In particular, dual residents with weekly long-distance commutes were not included in the qualitative sample. Of the 20 highly mobile people, about half were interviewed using photo elicitation, to explore more specifically travel time use and place attachment among highly mobile individuals.

The second part of the qualitative data collection included ten in-depth interviews with respondents who lived in France and practised high mobility at the time of the 2007 interview, but were no longer highly mobile in 2011. The aim was to understand the decision-making process and mechanisms that explain why people stop being highly mobile. Table 2.2 presents the socio-demographic profiles of people interviewed in the qualitative phase. The forms of high mobility indicated in the table reflect mobility practices at the time of the 2011 survey. When we interviewed the participants several months later for the qualitative interview, some had changed their mobility practices. For example, Sebastien was no longer an overnighter and had stopped being highly mobile. Léonard had resumed being a daily long-distance commuter.

Qualitative methods: life story interviews and photo elicitation

The qualitative interviews were conducted by one of the authors (Vincent-Geslin) using the life story method. This involved travelling through time with the respondents, starting from early childhood, and retracing their memories through work- and leisure-related travel experiences (for example migration and vacations), and the feelings they evoked. This collection method captures periods of stability and instability over the course of people's lives. As Bertaux (2005: 8) points out, 'life stories...study action over the long term'. It provides insight into the learning process of high mobility. On average, interviews lasted about ninety minutes.

We also used photo elicitation interviews as an interactive qualitative method (Rose, 2003; Harper, 2002). Ten highly mobile people were asked to take photographs during their travel that captured places, objects or people meaningful to them. Participants then described the photographs and explained their meaning during a second interview. Photographs enable researchers to enter a participant's mobile life

through the participant's eyes. But photographs are not only illustrative. They are used in the data production process, in parallel with interview data. Firstly, participants express ideas and feelings visually through the photographs. Secondly, photographs are jointly interpreted through a conversation between the researcher and the participant. Photographs are used to facilitate the discussion. They also enable participants to discuss topics that they would not have discussed without photographs (Rose, 2003). The conversation ensures that the researcher collects the meanings of the photographs given by participants, rather than through a personal interpretation.

Mixed methods, data collection and analytical strategies

A research design including quantitative and qualitative methods is not a sufficient condition to consider a method as 'mixed' (Barbour, 1999). The challenge is combining quantitative and qualitative data according to the methodological design and later in the analytical phase.

Triangulation refers to combining qualitative and quantitative methods, and must be organised both at the level of data collection and analysis. Triangulation is based on both a sequential and embedded (or nested) mixed method design (Cresswell et al., 2011). A sequential design refers to the idea that one database is built on the results of the other. In this case, we decided to collect qualitative data following the results obtained during the first survey. The data limitation of the European survey required the extension of the methodological arsenal. It appeared necessary to gain qualitative insight into the decision-making process associated with high mobility situations, and how highly mobile individuals use travel time and space. We also had an embedded mixed method design. All participants of the qualitative study were initially interviewed via the survey questionnaire. Their responses were used to select the qualitative sample.

Regarding mixed data analysis, we can discuss how methods are related to each other by describing the 'thread' (O'Cathain et al., 2010) for all the issues we addressed. Throughout the book, the reader will discover that our approach varied depending on the research questions to be addressed. Without getting into the specific details of the threads we followed, we can nonetheless give the example of an embedded analysis of typology development (Caracelli and Greene, 1993). In Chapter 6, we built a typology based on quantitative data, to group people according to their mobility potential (or motility). The variables used to build this typology were inspired by the qualitative interviews regarding the skills necessary for high mobility (described in Chapters 4 and 9). Based on

this empirical typology, an analysis based on qualitative data helped highlight the links between motility and mobility across the different groups we identified.

The thread went from qualitative data to quantitative data, and vice versa. For example, some findings identified in the qualitative analysis regarding the socialisation to high mobility (Chapter 4) justified conducting quantitative analysis that statistically confirmed these findings. Conversely, Chapter 5 on high mobility histories and Chapter 8, on the links between high mobility and family development, began with a quantitative analysis that was illustrated and clarified using findings from the life-story interviews.

The methodological framework we developed includes a wide range of empirical sources. It combines quantitative panel data from four countries, complementary samples of highly mobile people, life-story interviews and photographic material supplied by the highly mobile respondents themselves. This results in varied, complex analytical possibilities that we do not exhaust in this book. Due to the variety of data and methods, we will specify the data, sample and analytical thread used for each analysis presented in the chapters that follow.

Notes

1. Except in high mobility biographies based on retrospective data. See Chapters 3 and 5.
2. This project was funded by the European Commission (sixth framework programme) and was led by the German team, under the direction of Professor Norbert Schneider of the University of Mainz in Germany. This large-scale project gave rise to a series of publications, including two books (Schneider and Meil, 2008; Schneider and Collet, 2010).
3. In Germany, the second survey (wave 2) was conducted in 2010. For brevity's sake, we will refer to the wave 2 survey in the four countries as 'the 2011 survey' in this book.
4. The mobile oversample was collected in mid-2010 in Germany and early 2012 in France. For brevity's sake, we will refer to this oversampling as 'the 2011 mobile sample' in this book.

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3
High Mobility in Europe: An Overview

Gil Viry, Emmanuel Ravalet and Vincent Kaufmann

Introduction

Using the quantitative part of the *Job Mobility and Family Lives in Europe* study (JobMob), the present chapter describes (1) the scope of high mobility in Europe, (2) to what extent Europeans are increasingly highly mobile, (3) who the highly mobile people are and (4) how they perceive their mobility. This general overview is discussed in the light of existing literature in the area. Such an overview has already been carried out, based on the 2007 survey conducted in the six countries of Germany, Spain, France, Switzerland, Belgium and Poland (Lück and Ruppenthal, 2010). This chapter pursues this work with a longitudinal approach. A few results from 2007 are presented again for comparison. Here we only consider the first four countries and reversible high mobility practices, namely, daily long-distance commuting, overnighting (long-distance weekly commuting and regular business travel) and long-distance relationships. People who have recently migrated are not considered highly mobile in the present book. Whenever possible, we highlight situations that are specific to each country and the form of high mobility considered.

Some general results presented in this overview are discussed throughout the book in relation to the context in which high mobility occurs (family life, territories and place attachment, economic crisis and life course). Our two-wave panel data allowed us to explore (1) the mobility situation of people aged 25–54 in 2007; (2) stability and change in the four years that followed (2011); (3) changes in private/professional contexts that promote or inhibit mobility change.

High mobility: scope, forms and evolution

In this section we consider the scope and evolution of high mobility in Europe. One major aim of the 2007 JobMob survey was to quantify high mobility in the countries studied. Table 3.1 shows the proportion of highly mobile people among the whole population aged 25–54 and among the working population for the same age group. The high mobility rate of the working population ranged from 11 per cent in France and Switzerland to 15 per cent in Germany. This amounts to one working person in eight (see also Schneider and Meil, 2008). The differences across countries were relatively weak given the considerable national differences in economics, culture, geography and transport infrastructure.

Table 3.2 shows the situation four years later based on the same respondents. On average, the Germans and Swiss were somewhat more mobile than four years earlier, while the French and Spanish were less so. The 2008 economic crisis, which hit the second two countries harder than the first two, could partly explain these changes (see Chapter 7). Germany still has the highest mobility rate among the countries studied. This could be due to the fact that 'the labour market is tight and the pressure for employees to be flexible is especially high' (Lück and Ruppenthal, 2010: 39). This can also be attributed to the density of population and a high-speed transport network (particularly in Western Germany) favouring long-distance intercity commuting. The longitudinal analysis based on our panel sample offers another possible explanation. High mobility practices in Germany last longer than in the other countries, as shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.1   Proportion of highly mobile people by country in 2007 (%)

	Germany	France	Spain	Switzerland
All people aged 25–54	12	10	10	9
Working people aged 25–54	15	11	12	11

Source: Crossed table, total population aged 25–54 in 2007, JobMob I, weighted.

Table 3.2   Proportion of highly mobile people by country in 2011 (%)

	Germany	France	Spain	Switzerland
All people aged 25–54 in 2007	14	9	7	11
Working people aged 25–54 in 2007	16	9	10	13

Source: Crossed table, panel data, total population aged 25–54 in 2007, JobMob II, 'panel nation analysis' weighting.

Table 3.3 Proportion of highly mobile people in 2011, among people who were highly mobile in 2007, by country (%)

	Germany	France	Spain	Switzerland
People who were still highly mobile in 2011	64	27	32	39

Source: Crossed table, panel data, total population aged 25–54 in 2007, JobMob II, 'panel nation analysis' weighting.

High mobility proves to be a short-lived episode for a majority of highly mobile people, except in Germany. In France and Spain, approximately 30 per cent of the people who were highly mobile in 2007 were still so in 2011. This was 39 per cent in Switzerland and 64 per cent in Germany. The relative stability in the total mobility rate hides a strong turnover of the mobile population. People frequently start and stop being highly mobile over time. We show in Chapter 5 that highly educated people are more likely to make such changes than less educated ones. The relative instability of high mobility situations was already glimpsed during the first survey. While high mobility concerned 9–12 per cent of the population aged 25–54 in 2007, 44 per cent of the sample said they had already practised high mobility during their careers (Schneider and Meil, 2008). Interestingly, there is a strong unpredictability in mobility changes. Among highly mobile individuals in 2007, those who perceived their high mobility as a permanent way of life were not more likely to stay mobile four years later than those who perceived it as a temporary solution. The economic climate and the personal context (family, professional and residential) appear decisive and are considered more specifically in the chapters that follow. This instability of mobility situations makes a strong case for analysing people's high mobility behaviours over their life courses. This approach is at the heart of this book.

It is difficult to compare the figures presented above with those found in the literature since high mobility practices, such as long-distance commuting, regular business travel and long-distance relationships, are typically investigated separately. We turn then to specific types of high mobility in the next section.

High mobility and its different forms

Table 3.4 shows the proportion of long-distance commuters, overnighters (regular business travellers and long-distance weekly commuters), people in long-distance relationships and multi-mobiles among the

Table 3.4   Proportion of highly mobile people by type and by country among employed people, in 2007 and 2011 (%)

2007	Daily long-distance commuters	Overnighters	In a long-distance relationship	Multi-mobiles	Total
Germany	7	5	1	2	15
France	5	4	1	2	12
Spain	8	2	0	2	12
Switzerland	7	2	0	2	11

Source: Crossed table, total population aged 25–54 in 2007, JobMob I (% rounded).

2011	Daily long-distance commuters	Overnighters	In a long-distance relationship	Multi-mobiles	Total
Germany	8	5	2	1	16
France	4	3	2	0	9
Spain	3	5	2	0	10
Switzerland	9	3	1	0	13

Source: Crossed table, panel data, total population aged 25–54 in 2007, JobMob II, panel nation analysis (% rounded).

working population in 2007 and 2011 respectively. The last category groups together people combining two forms of high mobility. The two samples are comprised of the same respondents, who aged four years between 2007 and 2011. The first notable change is the increase in the number of daily long-distance commuters in Switzerland. This change was also measured in Swiss micro census data (OFS, 2014) for a slightly different period (2005–2010). Of the various possible explanations of this increase, two major ones can be mentioned here

1) The Swiss urban system is comprised of many medium-sized cities located relatively close to one another. Transport infrastructure, especially the intercity highway and rail networks, are efficient and tend to improve over time. The annual pass allows regular commuters to use most trains, coaches and urban public transport across the whole country.
2) The overheating of the housing rental market in certain large Swiss cities makes it difficult for new entrants to find accommodation in some city centres. Moreover, the Swiss federal system obliges people who change their canton (county) of residence to change educational and fiscal systems as well.

Hence, the ease of daily travel and difficulty in moving may encourage an increasing number of workers to opt for long-distance commuting rather than relocation.

The second important result is that the number of daily long-distance commuters fell in Spain, while the number of overnighters for the same period doubled. We discuss in Chapter 7 to what extent these changes can be attributed to the 2008 economic crisis, which affected this country more than the other three. It should, however, be noted that the drop in daily long-distance commuting in Spain occurred among employed people. It is therefore not directly attributable to the increase in unemployment.

Several studies have highlighted the fact that high mobility is not a marginal phenomenon in industrialised countries, be it work-related mobility (Meissonnier, 2001; Pooley et al., 2005; Schneider et al., 2002), leisure mobility (Pierre, 2006; Vincent-Geslin and Kaufmann, 2012) or family-related mobility, such as long-distance relationships (Duncan and Phillips, 2010; Levin, 2004; Holmes, 2014) and post-divorce family arrangements (Castren, 2008; Mulder and Wagner, 2012).

The results we have just presented for work-related high mobility show that approximately one employed person in eight was involved in 2007, depending on the country. This proportion remained globally stable when the individuals were four years older, despite national differences. This relative stability hides very high turnover among highly mobile people, except in Germany. People start and stop high mobility regularly during their careers. Nearly half of employed people had had a period of high mobility during their careers. Are these figures consistent with those in the literature and in other national contexts? Studies regarding these mobility behaviours are lacking, as traditional databases either describe them poorly or not at all. This is noted by several authors, including Green et al. (1999) relative to weekly long-distance commuting in the United States. Using data from the 1995 census, these authors estimated that 1 per cent of the working population in the United States practised these behaviours. In our study, these people fall into the overnighter category, although this category also includes frequent business travellers, rather than dual location households in stricto sensu.

Daily long-distance commuting has been better researched. However, many studies have used distance thresholds rather than time thresholds. In both cases, the general trend over the past decades in several European countries is toward an increase in the number of long-distance (or long-duration) daily commuters (DESTATIS, 2013; OFS, 2014; Place, 2013). The Office for National Statistics in Switzerland evaluated the proportion of employed people who spend at least one hour travelling

to work at 10 per cent in 2012 (OFS, 2014). This is consistent with the value of 9 per cent observed in the 2011 survey (Table 3.4). In Britain, 11 per cent of workers spent at least one hour travelling to work (Lyons and Chatterjee, 2008). However, this average rate obscures important variations across spatial contexts. In particular, this rate climbed to 31 per cent for people working in London. Consistent with our findings that high mobility practices fluctuate over individual careers, a British Household Panel Survey analysis found that more than half of people with long commutes (over one hour) decreased their commute time by at least five minutes the following year (Dargay and Hanly, 2003). Because long-distance commuting is demanding in terms of time, money and physical/mental energy, many workers wish they could reduce their long commutes by changing jobs or moving house. However, as is discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, reducing high mobility is not always possible, even when desired. It strongly depends on people's resources, place attachment and labour market opportunities. Based on Swedish longitudinal register data, Sandow and Westin (2010) showed, for example, that many long-distance commuters (over 30 km) have been commuting for more than ten years. For these authors, this suggests a long-term household mobility strategy.

The literature is scarce on leisure mobility. Several studies have nevertheless shown that households move voluntarily further away from the workplace(s) to purchase a property, even if it requires long-distance commuting. In France and Spain, dual location households were particularly observed between Paris and Lyon in France and between Madrid and coastal regions in Spain when high-speed train lines were built (Viard, 2011; Vincent-Geslin and Kaufmann, 2012). Moreover, a significant proportion of the Western European population has access to a holiday home where they spend part of the week or year. In Switzerland, for example, 11 per cent of households have a second home (Stock, 2006). Finally, the migration of young retirees to warmer climates often has the characteristics of high mobility (Stimson and Minnery, 1998; Pierre, 2006).

Living apart together couples (LATs) is the category typically used for long-distance relationships. They comprise approximately 10 per cent of the adult population according to studies in Great Britain and Scandinavia (Duncan and Phillips, 2010; Levin, 2004). This is far higher than the value of 1–2 per cent observed in this study. However, the literature shows that the majority of LATs live separately for reasons independent of labour or housing market constraints. Parental cohabitation among young couples, the desire to be independent from one's

partner or a situation prior to cohabitation were often cited as reasons for wanting to live separately (see, for example, Duncan and Phillips, 2010, 2011). In the United States, a frequently cited statistic estimates that the number of married individuals living apart for reasons other than marital discord (known as commuter marriages) are about 3 per cent of the adult population (McBride and Bergen, 2014). This figure has roughly doubled in the past 20 years and the number is thought to have grown during the 2008 economic crisis. But this category has the disadvantage of only including married couples. Moreover, it may include mobility situations that we classify in the overnighter category in our survey. This is the case when spouses do not have the same legal address and at least one spouse travels regularly (on a weekly or fortnightly basis, for example) between the two residences.

Regarding our research topic, these last results reveal two important points. First, work-related high mobility – as defined in this study – is only part of the phenomenon. In other words, the investigations presented in this book do not consider the phenomenon in its entirety. The boundary between, so-called, work-related mobilities and mobilities for private/family reasons is blurred. For example, a long commute may be the result of the acquisition of a suburban family home, couple cohabitation or travel time increase due to dropping off or collecting children at school. Secondly, a significant proportion of the European population develop an attachment to multiple places, or in Stock's words (2006, 2007) a 'poly-topical mode of dwelling'. One sign of this multiple rootedness is high mobility. However, it is neither the only sign nor even necessarily the main one. Yet, examining work-related high mobility contributes to a better understanding of the changing nature of the relationship between people and space in contemporary societies (Duchêne-Lacroix, 2014).

Are Europeans becoming more mobile?

National registry studies from several European countries indicate that Europeans are travelling more with each passing decade, including for work (DESTATIS, 2013; DfT, 2005; OFS, 2014; Place, 2013). This trend has nevertheless slowed – and sometimes stopped – in recent years. Travel increase is mainly observed in the *distance travelled*, driven by higher travel speeds and the widespread use of personal cars. In particular, gains in travel speeds fostered urban sprawl and long-distance commuting to large city centres. However, travel time and number of commute trips have remained globally stable (or even decreased in the case of the latter) (Crozet and Joly, 2004; Lyons and Chatterjee, 2008).

Some authors argue that the increase in work-related travel is directly related to economic globalisation, neoliberal policies and changing modes of production and regulation (Harvey, 1989; Callaghan, 1997; Hardill and Green, 2003; Ludwig-Mayerhofer and Behrend, 2014). Processes such as outsourcing, computer-based production, flexible specialisation on dispersed sites, as well as deregulation of the labour market, job insecurity and growing demands for employee flexibility have combined to create an 'imperative' of high mobility in certain business sectors (see Chapter 7). The two extremes of professional hierarchy – those in precarious positions and executives – are most affected by this demand. The former become mobile in order to find or keep a job. The latter become mobile in order to climb or remain at the top of the professional ladder. The increasing participation of women in the labour market, in particular in management positions, may also contribute to the growth of high mobility behaviours. Dual-career couples are likely to make complex residential choices when their workplaces are geographically distant, which may lead to long-distance commuting or overnighting (Green, 1997).

However, research has yet to show a clear link between the growing mobility obligation in contemporary capitalist societies and a general rise in *mobility practices*. Large studies in the area are rare and often focus on specific populations particularly affected by high mobility, such as unqualified migrants, global elites or professionals. Using the JobMob data, the present section aims to provide some answers to the question of whether high mobility has been increasing in Europe in recent decades.

Comparing the high mobility rate across cohorts is not a straightforward task, as high mobility behaviours fluctuate greatly over an individual's career (see above). Moreover, the timing of high mobility experiences may have changed across cohorts. For example, high mobility may occur later in the careers of the younger generation due to the expansion of higher education. We decided to examine individual high mobility histories from retrospective data to measure high mobility rates at different life stages. Sequence analysis was used to account simultaneously for five dimensions of high mobility: the duration, timing, frequency, sequencing and type of mobility episodes. Two questions were addressed. First, does high mobility rate vary over the life course? In particular, is high mobility more likely to happen in later career stages, when people with children and family homes are more firmly settled in a geographical area? Or, conversely, is high mobility more likely to happen in the earlier career stages in a pre-child

situation? Secondly, does (early career) high mobility rate differ between age cohorts?

Using sequence analysis, we constructed individual high mobility histories from retrospective data on all jobs held by respondents that lasted at least one year from the age of 15. For each job listed, respondents were asked whether they had practised one or more forms of high mobility (daily long-distance commuting or overnighting[1]) and whether they had moved at least 50 km or abroad (migration). If the mobility period differed from the employment period, respondents could specify the start and end years of the mobility episode. In case of migration, the mobility episode was assigned to the first year of the employment period. The histories were composed of seven possible states: (1) non-employed (including unemployment and in education), (2) employed, without high mobility, (3) daily long-distance commuter, (4) overnighter, (5) migrant, (6) daily long-distance commuter and overnighter, (7) migrant and daily long-distance commuter/overnighter. The TraMineR package for the statistical environment R was used to visualise and analyse the sequences (Gabadinho et al., 2009; Studer, 2013).

Figure 3.1 displays the distribution of states by year of age for ages 15–50 using the panel sample of the four countries. Because of too few cases, years corresponding to ages 51–58 were excluded from the figure. While migration is unlikely to occur beyond the age of 35, the rate of daily long-distance commuting and overnighting remains stable throughout the career. In particular, this rate does not decrease in the prime fertility period of ages 25–35.

Histories were grouped by age cohorts for measuring intergenerational changes. We focused on the early career to compare complete histories of the same length, truncating the sequences of older respondents. Figure 3.2 shows the distribution of states by year of age (15–39) for two age groups – people born between 1952 and 1961 and people born between 1962 and 1971.

Contrary to the hypothesis that high mobility has increased over generations, we observed stability and even a slight decline in long-distance commuting and overnighting between the cohort born in the 1950s and the one born in the 1960s. Within the two cohorts, the rate of high mobility was approximately 15 per cent, and was globally stable between ages 23 and 40. The later entry into the labour market for the younger age group is clearly visible. We performed the same sequence analysis separately by country and by sex. No notable increase in mobility within these sub-populations was observed (graphs not shown here). One exception, however, was Germany, where the mobility rate

Figure 3.1   State distribution graph – panel sample (ages 15–50)

Note: State distribution graph (frequency) by year of age (15–50), panel sample, population aged 29–58 in 2011, JobMob II, 'countries equally weighted', *n* = 1687.

Reading: At 30, around 17 per cent of the panel sample were non-employed, 67 per cent employed, without high mobility, 7 per cent long-distance commuters, 5 per cent over-nighters, 1 per cent migrants, 3 per cent combining different forms of high mobility.

rose from approximately 15 per cent to 20 per cent over both cohorts, particularly under the influence of overnight business travel.

We performed the same sequence analysis by including people born between 1972 and 1981. Sequences of older age groups were truncated at age 29 so that sequences had the same length. Figure 3.3 represents the distribution of states by year of age and by age groups. Again, we observed overall stability in the rate of high mobility across generations. The later entry into the workforce of the youngest age group alone does not explain the absence of increased mobility. The room for increase seems limited given the low rate of non-employment at age 29 within the younger cohort (even though the proportion of people studying at age 30 is likely to be higher in this group). We can, nevertheless, observe a longer period of migration within the younger cohorts. This can be explained by younger generations' later transition into adulthood. In

Age group – 1952–1961

Age group – 1962–1971

Freq. (weighted n=472.26)

Freq. (weighted n=613.73)

☐ Non-employed   ⊠ Overnighting   ▥ Daily commuting + Overnighting
▨ Employed without high mobility   ■ Migration   ■ Migration + Commuting/Overnighting
⊡ Daily long–distance commuting

Figure 3.2   State distribution graph – panel sample (ages 15–39) by age group

Note: State distribution graph (frequency) by year of age (15–39), panel sample, population born between 1952 and 1961 (left) and between 1962 and 1971 (right), JobMob II, 'countries equally weighted', *n* = 1282.
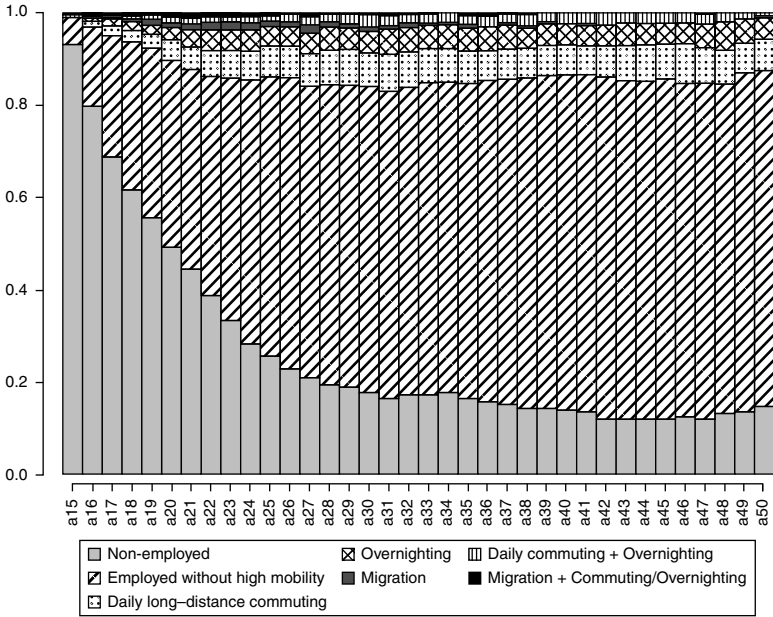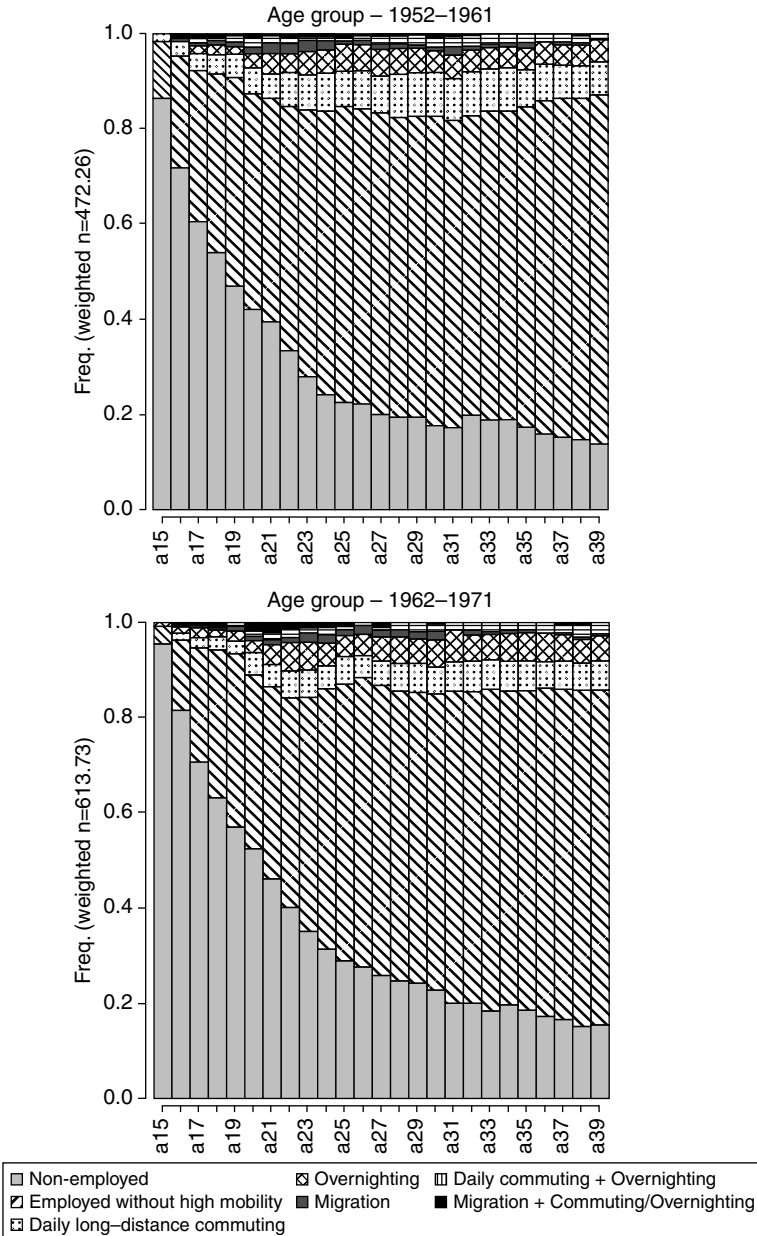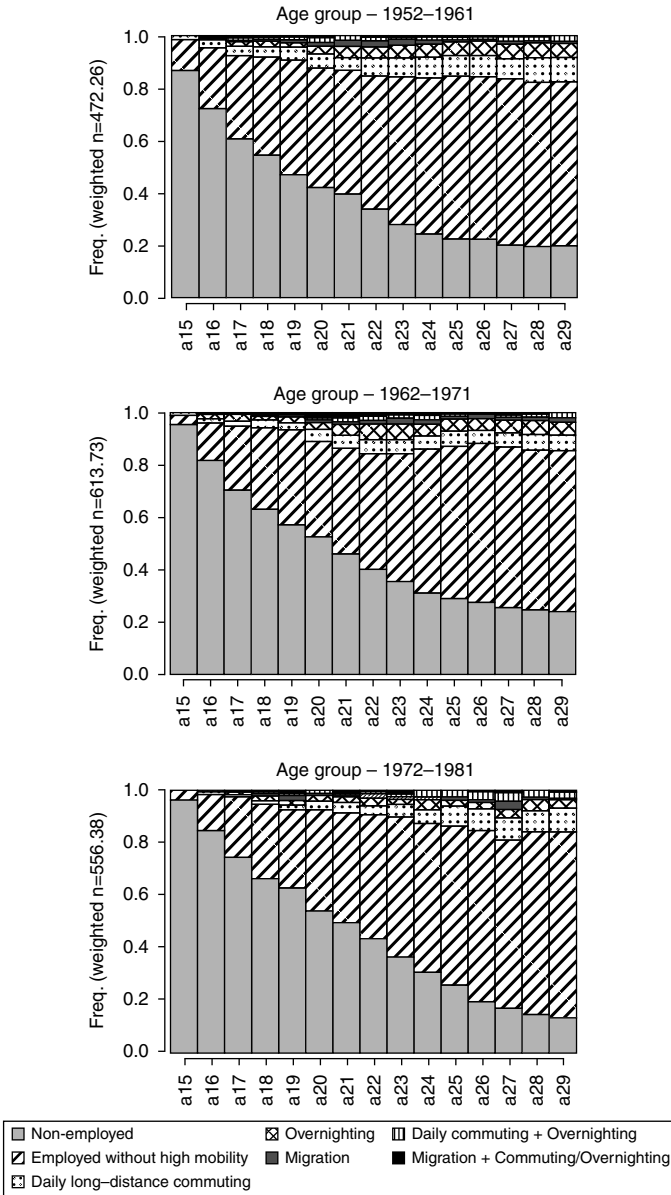
Figure 3.3   State distribution graph – panel sample (ages 15–29) by age group

Note: State distribution graph (frequency) by year of age (15–29), panel sample, population born between 1952 and 1961 (upper left), between 1962 and 1971 (upper right) and between 1972 and 1981 (lower left), JobMob II, 'countries equally weighted', *n* = 1665.

particular, many studies have shown that the birth of a child significantly reduces a couple's likelihood and willingness to move far away for a job (see, for example, Kulu, 2008). As with the two-cohort study, we controlled for the effects of sex and country in further analyses. These did not significantly differ from analysis for the entire population, including Germany.

The JobMob data showed that early career high mobility did not increase significantly over generations. However, it remains to be seen whether high mobility histories fluctuate more among younger generations in a context of work flexibilisation and job insecurity. We expect that high mobility is increasing in the form of short, repeated episodes among younger generations, rather than on an ongoing basis. To test this, we used *turbulence* as a measure of sequence heterogeneity.

Recently developed by Elzinga and Liefbroer (2007), sequence turbulence measures the diversity of successive states comprising a given individual sequence. A person who remains in the same state his/her entire career would have a turbulence of 0. This is the case for respondents who had never worked or those who had been long-distance commuters from age 15 to the time of the interview. Conversely, turbulence is high when there is strong variability between consecutive states and the time spent in each distinct state. The sequencing of states, that is, the order in which the states are experienced, is thus taken into account. For example, people who make daily long-distance commutes for six years and are not highly mobile for the next six (C-C-C-C-C-C-N-N-N-N-N-N) have lower turbulence than people who commute over long distances for the same number of years but with varying episode length (C-N-C-C-N-N-C-C-C-N-N-N).

Turbulence was calculated on the basis of complete sequences of ages 15–39 for respondents born between 1952 and 1971 (two age groups) and complete sequences of ages 15–29 for respondents born between 1952 and 1981 (three age groups). The boxplots displayed in Figures 3.4 and 3.5 show the mean and dispersion of turbulence scores by age groups. On average, people born in the 1960s had higher sequence turbulence than people born in the 1950s (mean: 5.60 vs. 5.22, $p < .01$). Similarly, people born in the 1970s had significantly higher sequence turbulence (mean: 4.86) than people born in the 1950s (mean: 4.62, $p < .05$) and 1960s (mean: 4.48, $p < .001$). Additional analysis on the distribution of states has shown that this increased volatility is mainly explained by more fluctuating early career high mobility histories.

Following Schneider et al. (2014), we calculated the cumulative percentage of respondents born between 1952 and 1981 who had been
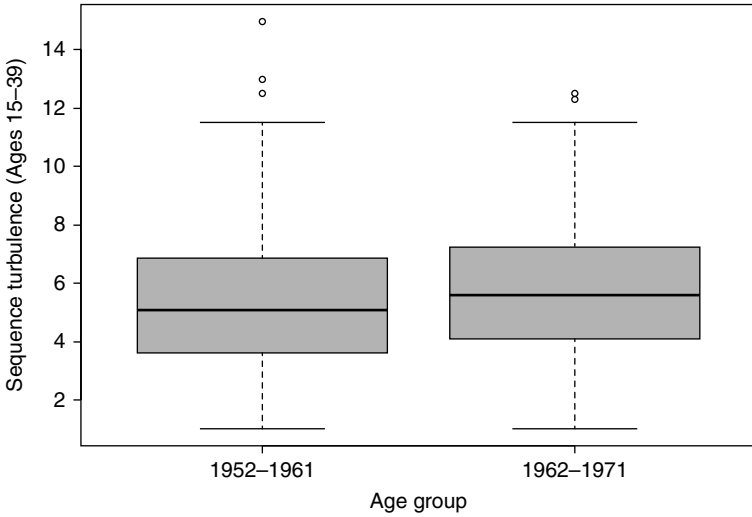
Figure 3.4   Sequence turbulence by two age groups (sequence of ages 15–39)

Note: Boxplot of turbulence scores by age groups, panel sample, population born between 1952 and 1971, JobMob II, 'countries equally weighted', *n* = 1282.
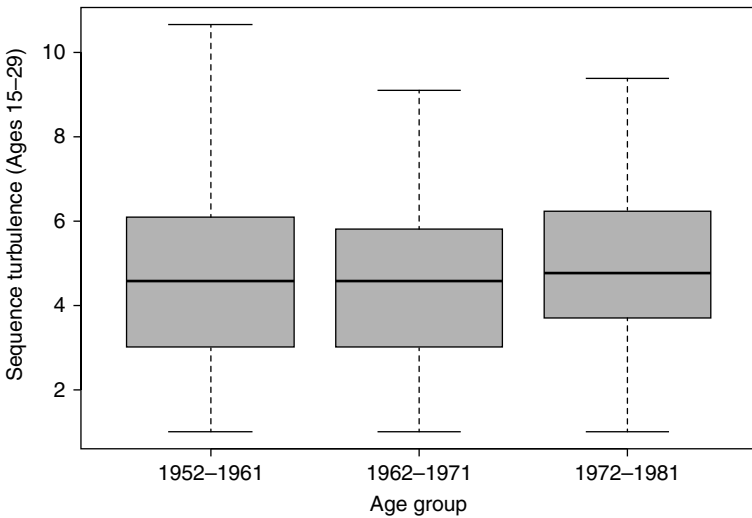
Figure 3.5   Sequence turbulence by three age groups (sequence of ages 15–29)

Note: Boxplot of turbulence scores by age groups, panel sample, population born between 1952 and 1981, JobMob II, 'countries equally weighted', *n* = 1665.

highly mobile between the ages of 15–29. Figure 3.6 illustrates this cumulative percentage in each age group. We additionally calculated the cumulative number of years of high mobility in each age group (Figure 3.7). Migration was excluded from the analysis to test the increase in long-distance commuting and overnighting over generations. We performed the same analysis separately by country and by sex (not presented here). Significant differences are highlighted in the text.

Figure 3.6 shows that people born in the 1970s are proportionally more exposed to high mobility from age 26. About 36 per cent of this cohort have experienced at least one high mobility episode by age 29, against 32 per cent and 30 per cent for people born in the 1960s and 1950s, respectively. The result is robust, as it was observed for both men and women and for the four countries. The trend was less marked in Switzerland, with a high cumulative percentage among people born in the 1960s. Further analysis shows, however, that the higher exposure to high mobility among the youngest generation is, on average, of shorter duration. Figure 3.7 clearly demonstrates that the youngest generation has experienced high mobility for a shorter period of time, on average. By age 29, people born in the 1970s have been highly mobile for 1.26 years on average, against 1.44 and 1.72 for people born in the
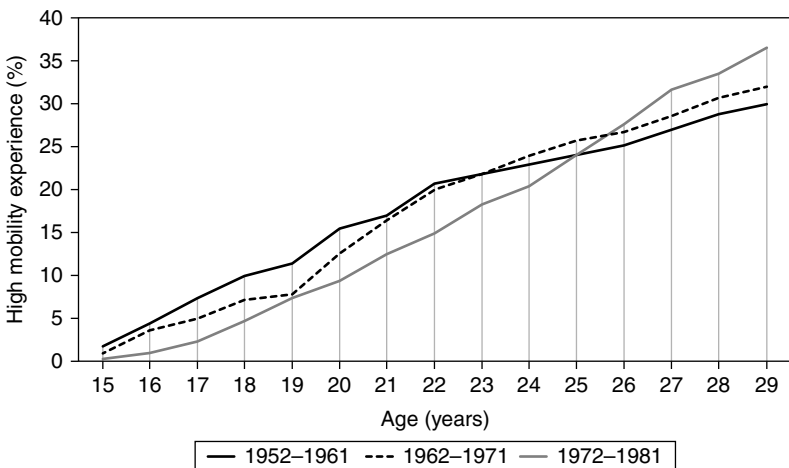
Figure 3.6   People who have experienced high mobility (cumulative percentage) by year of age and by age groups

Note: Cumulative percentage graph by age groups, panel sample, population born between 1952 and 1981, JobMob II, 'countries equally weighted', *n* = 1642.
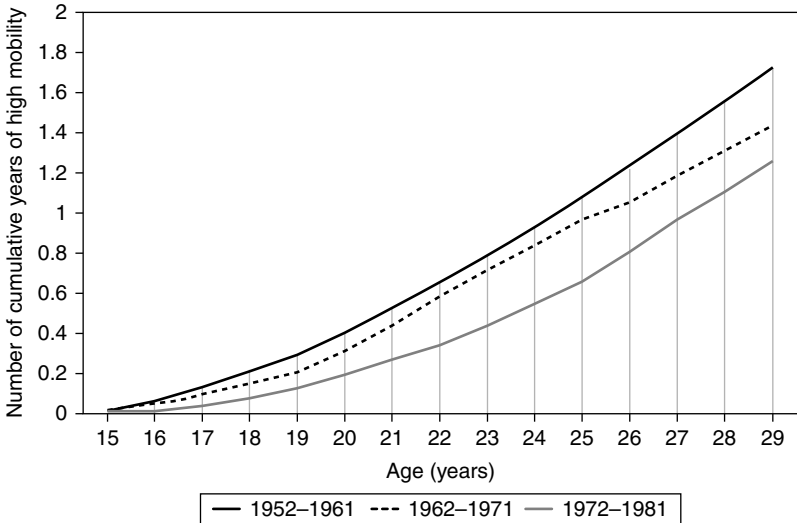
Figure 3.7 Number of cumulative years of high mobility by year of age and by age groups

Note: Cumulative percentage graph by age groups, panel sample, population born between 1952 and 1981, JobMob II, 'countries equally weighted', *n* = 1642.

1960s and 1950s, respectively. This result was observed for both men and women and for all countries but Spain, where the duration of high mobility experiences has substantially increased over generations. The general trend in the three other countries is consistent with the above results of sequence analysis, showing a stable proportion of the population practising high mobility across age groups and more fluctuating high mobility histories among the youngest generation.

Overall, the findings presented in this section show that the proportion of the population practising high mobility (when measured by travel time) has been stable over the past decades rather than increased. People born in the 1960s or 1970s were not more highly mobile in their early career than people born in the 1950s, although they were more likely to have experienced high mobility for at least one year. These findings are robust to controls for sex and country, with a few exceptions in some countries. A significant generational change concerned the migration period, which was longer among the younger generations. While people born in the 1950s generally migrated between ages 18 and 25, those born in the 1960s and 1970s migrated between ages 20 and 30.

The migration rate was relatively stable during these periods and was similar between the cohorts. A second important change was that the youngest generation had more fluctuating early career mobility histories with shorter mobility episodes than their elders did at the same stage in their career.

In this study, high mobility was measured by travel time rather than travel distance. The stability of daily long-distance commuting and overnighting masks increased travel speeds and greater spatial range. Undoubtedly, Europeans travel greater distances today than in previous generations. However, the proportion of young workers who commute more than two hours a day or are absent from home more than 60 nights a year has not increased from earlier generations. Our findings support Zahavi's theory that higher travel speeds have increased travel distance and urban sprawl within a fixed travel time budget (see, for example, Crozet and Joly, 2004). Deregulation of the labour market and individualisation of careers associated with neoliberalism may explain the greater variability of high mobility states and time spent in successive states among the youngest age group.

Overall, our results show that narratives about hypermobility and hyperflexibility promoted by the business world and (to some extent) governments are more of an ideology than a reality. These narratives imperfectly reflect workers' travel behaviours in the four countries studied. A limited and stable proportion of people travels long hours for work. High mobility is probably perceived as unenviable or unnecessary by a large percentage of European workers who see it as diminishing their quality of life. In the context of the 2008 economic crisis, it remains to be seen whether high mobility increases for the youngest cohort as they reach mid-career. The difficulty of finding a (qualified) job close to home may lead young people from some European countries to migrate or commute further (see Chapter 7). Both migration and high mobility rates could therefore significantly increase for people born in the 1980s and 1990s.

Highly mobile people: who are they and how do they perceive their mobility?

Who are highly mobile people?

High mobility is far from being limited to workers with high incomes and high levels of education in professional and managerial jobs. While, generally speaking, middle-class people are more likely to become

highly mobile than working-class people, they are not more likely to practise high mobility in the long run (see Chapter 5). There is, however, a strong and persistent link to gender; high mobility is primarily prac-tised by men and women without children. High mobility behaviours are closely associated with life course, but in different ways for men and women (see Chapter 8).

Table 3.5 shows the results of a logistic regression model to identify socio-demographic predictors of high mobility practices in 2007. We found that men had more than two times higher odds of travelling inten-sively for work than women. Similarly, high incomes and high levels of education were associated with a 50 per cent increase in the odds of practising high mobility. Conversely, high mobility was 25 per cent less likely among people aged 45–54 than among the youngest age cohort (25–34). When age is included in the model, household structure is not a good predictor of high mobility. These associations are found in litera-ture on travel times and distances in various national contexts (Crane, 2007; Groot et al., 2012; Lee and McDonald, 2003; Lyons and Chatterjee, 2008; Ohman et al., 2003; Sandow, 2011), on frequent business travel

Table 3.5   Predictors of high mobility in 2007 (odds ratio)

Sex: women (ref.)	
Men	2.25**
Age: 25–34 (ref.)	
35–44	.83
45–54	.75*
Education level: low (ref.)	
Medium	1.12
High	1.50**
Income level: low (ref.)	
Medium	1.14
High	1.54**
Household: lives with partner and child (ref.)	
Lives alone	1.11
Lives with a partner	1.14
Lives without partner, with child	1.19
Constant	.06**
Significance of the model	.000
N	4905

Notes: *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$.
Source: Logistic regression, whole population aged 25–54 in 2007, JobMob I, 'countries equally weighted'.

in France (Grimal, 2010) and on long-distance job changes in the Netherlands (Van Ham et al., 2001; Van Ham, 2003).

Making use of the panel structure of the data, we can extend the previous analysis by exploring the determinants of *changes* in high mobility practices over time. Table 3.6 shows the results of conditional logistic (or fixed effects logistic) regression models (Allison, 2009; Kleinbaum and Klein, 2010). This type of models uses only within-individual differences. One main advantage is that the effects of stable characteristics over time, such as sex or citizenship, are controlled for. The downside is that these effects are not estimated.[2]

Model A includes changes in household structure, education and income levels between 2007 and 2011 as predictors of changes in high mobility practices. Results show that, overall, people have lower odds of being highly mobile over time, although the effect is not significant. This is in line with the results presented above, which highlight instead the fluctuation of high mobility histories and the overall stability of the mobility rate over a career. Compared with people who started living with partner and children, people who became lone parents had about nine times higher odds of becoming highly mobile. The long commutes of single mothers (in particular among low-income and ethnic minority groups) have been highlighted elsewhere (Crane, 2007; Maksim, 2010; Preston et al., 1993). Single mothers must often juggle multiple roles

Table 3.6 Predictors of changes in high mobility between 2007 and 2011 (odds ratio)

	A	B
Time	.86	.77
Education	1.19	1.16
Income	.97	.85
Household: lives with partner and child (ref.)		
Lives alone	2.28	
Lives with partner	1.83	
Lives without partner, with child	8.55**	
Had a first child between 2007 and 2011		.38
Change in partner status between 2007 and 2011		1.97*
Increase in the employment rate between 2007 and 2011		2.08**
Significance of the model	.006	.002
N	317	298

Notes: *p < .05; **p < .01.
Source: Conditional logistic regression, panel data, whole population aged 25–54 in 2007, JobMob II, 'countries equally weighted', N = number of observations with changes in high mobility between 2007 and 2011.

including full-time employment and daily trips to accompany their children, increasing their travel time budgets (see Chapter 8). Changes in education and income levels had little impact on changes in high mobility practices over time. Throughout this book, we will see that increasing high mobility practices among the less educated and lower income workers are not rare. The 2008 economic crisis may have contributed to this result (see Chapter 7).

Model B includes the effects of having a first child, a change in partner status (separation and/or a new partner) and an increase in the employment rate between the two survey years. Results show that a change in partner status doubles the odds of becoming highly mobile. People who had a first child between the two survey waves tended to reduce high mobility practices, but the effect is not significant (see Chapter 8 for a detailed analysis and discussion of this result). An increase in the employment rate is associated with higher odds of practising high mobility.

As we stress throughout this book, this individual-based approach is nonetheless lacking, as work-related travel is best understood in the larger social context (cultural, spatial, relational, familial, political and economic) (see, for example, Mandersheid, 2014; Sheller and Urry, 2006). In particular, individual mobility behaviours are shaped by residential and professional arrangements at the household level, which in turn depend on the needs of partners and children (see Chapter 8). The socio-demographic profiles of the highly mobile people identified here must partly be understood in light of the trade-offs between private and professional spheres. The tension that may exist between the two and the associated gender and class inequalities (Pailhé and Solaz, 2009) are discussed in the following chapters. In particular, the link between family life and high mobility is the focus of Chapter 8.

What are the opinions of highly mobile people regarding their situation?

In general, highly mobile people consider their mobility as a way of balancing the competing demands of employment and private life. Daily long-distance commuting, long-distance relationships and overnighting enable people to combine a stable place of residence with work in one or more distant locations (see, for example, Vincent-Geslin and Kaufmann, 2012). The speed potential of contemporary mobility systems, such as highways, low-cost air travel, mobile phone networks, allow for social and spatial combinations that were unimaginable and unrealisable before the era of high-speed travel (Urry, 2007).

In the JobMob survey, highly mobile respondents were asked to rate their overall perception of their mobility experience and what advantages/disadvantages this experience had for them. Regarding the former, in 2007, about half saw their mobility as a *necessity*, about a third saw it as an *opportunity* and about 15 per cent saw it as a *constraint* (with a significant over-representation of people living in Spain in this last category). Four years later, about two-thirds of highly mobile people saw their high mobility as a necessity, while 29 per cent saw it as an opportunity and only 8 per cent saw it as a constraint. Analysis shows that this was mainly due to a change in perception over the life course. The vast majority of those who saw their high mobility as a constraint in 2007 – and about half of those who saw it as an opportunity – saw it as a necessity four years later. This indicates a process of normalisation over highly mobile careers, as opposed to a process of selection. Highly mobile people who had perceived their mobility negatively four years earlier were not more likely to stop being highly mobile than those who had a positive perception of it. Overall, past perception of mobility did not influence the likelihood of remaining highly mobile (see Chapter 5).

Benefiting from high mobility and seeing it as an opportunity is unequally distributed in the mobile population. Table 3.7 shows the results of logistic regressions predicting the odds of seeing high mobility as an opportunity in 2007 and 2011. Respondents seeing their high mobility as a necessity or constraint were set as the reference group. Here, the analysis population is not identical in both survey years, as the mobile population changed between the two waves (see above). In 2007, overnighters and people in long-distance relationships had two and a half to three times higher odds of seeing their high mobility as an opportunity compared to long-distance commuters. As discussed elsewhere (Viry and Vincent-Geslin, 2015), people regularly absent from home were more likely to have a job requiring frequent travel, in which case mobility was likely to be seen as a personal choice. Instead, long-distance commuters often consider that their mobility results more from contextual factors than from their own choice. In particular, long-distance commuting is seen as a means of coping with job shortages in the residential area, and/or unaffordable housing costs in more central areas. Within the JobMob sample, people in long-distance relationships were often young and without children. They tended to have recently started practising this form of high mobility and perceived it as temporary, compared to the perceptions of long-distance commuters. This could explain why they perceived their mobility more as a job opportunity

Table 3.7   High mobility seen as an opportunity in 2007 and 2011 (odds ratio)

	2007	2011
High mobility type: daily long-distance commuters (ref.)		
Overnighters	2.46**	2.40*
In a long-distance relationship	3.03**	1.78
Multi-mobile	1.14	.49
Women (ref.)		
Men	1.23	.39*
Age: 25–34 (ref.)		
35–44	.82	.39*
45–54	.54**	.26**
Education level: low (ref.)		
Medium	1.23	1.32
High	1.02	1.64
Income level: low (ref.)		
Medium	1.86**	.73
High	1.96**	.57
Household: lives with partner and child (ref.)		
Lives alone	2.24**	.77
Lives with a partner	1.19	1.63
Lives without a partner, with child	1.20	.25*
Constant	.17**	1.26
Significance of the model	.000	.036
N	1170	226

Note: *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$.
Source: Logistic regressions, mobile population aged 25–54 in 2007, JobMob I (2007) and JobMob II (2011), 'countries equally weighted'. Reference category: high mobility seen as a necessity or constraint.

than did long-distance commuters. This positive perception may well fade over the duration of the mobility experience, as is suggested by the lower (and not significant) effect in 2011.

Regression results for both waves show that young people were more likely to perceive their high mobility as an opportunity than older people did. Moreover, in 2007, high-income people had two times higher odds of seeing their high mobility as an opportunity. Interestingly, this link disappeared and even reversed slightly in 2011. In a difficult economic climate with increasing job insecurity, high mobility is seen positively by vulnerable and low-income mobile people because it helped them get or keep a job (see Chapter 7). Changes also occurred in the relationship between household structure and perception of mobility. In 2007, people living alone had more than two times higher odds of seeing their high mobility as an opportunity, compared to people living with partner

and children. There was no such effect four years later. Instead, a positive perception of mobility was 75 per cent less likely among single parents, compared to parents living with a partner. Single parents are often under time pressure because they must alone assume most of the responsibility for rearing children while working full-time. This results in a negative perception of long commutes. In 2007, perception of mobility did not differ between highly mobile men and women. Interestingly, four years later, highly mobile women were significantly more likely to see their high mobility as an opportunity than highly mobile men. This was true for both mothers and non-mothers. In a labour market where women remain disadvantaged, having a mobile job, and in some cases pursuing a professional career, can be a source of security and pride and give women a sense of being valued. However, perception of mobility varies strongly among highly mobile mothers, who were more likely than men and women without children to perceive their mobility as a constraint. Finally, the expectation that better-educated people would perceive their mobility practices more positively than less-educated ones was not verified in this study.

Tables 3.8 and 3.9 show the breakdown of the mobile population by country of residence and various indicators of the perception of their high mobility – including advantages and disadvantages of mobility – for 2007 and 2011. Here again, the analysis sample is not identical in both survey years due to changes in the mobile population over time. Prior to the 2008 economic crisis, we show that the economic context was already relatively tense in Spain, as mobile respondents were more likely to express concern about their professional future. Mobile people in Spain also tended to consider high mobility as negative and coercive in 2007. Three years after the start of the crisis, mobile people living in Spain and France were significantly more concerned about losing their jobs than mobile people in Germany and Switzerland. Mobile people in Spain were less likely to perceive their mobility as a way of maintaining their home or staying close to friends and relatives, compared to mobile people from other national contexts. This can be attributed to the aforementioned increase in overnighting in this country. Among the mobile population in Spain, 39 per cent did not feel at home anywhere in 2011, versus less than 20 per cent in other countries. However, despite the strong constraint that seems to be associated with high mobility in Spain, high mobility narratives did not degrade, and even improved over time. Being highly mobile in Spain in 2011 – which implied having a job – was probably seen as quite a positive situation in a context of mass unemployment. In 2011, high mobility was reported as a way

Table 3.8   Mobility perception and narratives of highly mobile people by country in 2007 (%)

		Germany	France	Spain	Switzerland
	Worried about losing job	27	48	27	13
Overall perception of high mobility	Negative perception of mobility	14	33	14	13
	Mobility perceived as a constraint	13	24	14	7
Benefits of high mobility	Mobility allowed me to get out of a period of unemployment[a]				
	Mobility is the only chance for me to work	67	49	46	49
	Mobility allows me to stay close to friends and relatives	70	58	55	58
	Mobility allowed to keep my home	69	54	71	69
	Mobility makes me more independent	79	58	81	75
Disadvantages of high mobility	Never feel at home	22	31	20	18
	Is often tired	58	53	48	38

Note: [a] This question was not asked in the 2007 survey.
Source: Crossed table, total mobile population aged 25–54 in 2007, JobMob I, 'panel nation analysis weighted', *N* between 1231 and 1255 cases.

of getting out of a period of unemployment for more than half of the highly mobile population in Spain, compared to 28 per cent in France, 22 per cent in Germany and 13 per cent in Switzerland.

High mobility is perceived in contrasting ways in the narratives of highly mobile people across Europe. For some workers, mobility is an economic necessity. For others, it is a choice in which people find pleasure and professional opportunities. And for many, it is a way of combining a distant job with local attachment to a place, home or community. High mobility is more likely to be seen as an economic constraint by those who have been commuting extensively for many years because of multiple low-paid, often insecure, job activities distant in time and space (see Chapter 4). This is also the case among those forced by economic duress to accept a job involving frequent absences from home. But high mobility is also a pleasure for those who have chosen mobile jobs and who enjoy travelling as an integral part of

Table 3.9 Mobility perception and narrative of highly mobile people by country in 2011 (%)

		Germany	France	Spain	Switzerland
	Worried about losing job	18	47	46	20
Overall perception of high mobility	Negative perception of mobility	16	15	14	11
	Mobility perceived as a constraint	2	7	23	4
Benefits of high mobility	Mobility allowed me to get out of a period of unemployment	22	54	28	13
	Mobility is the only chance for me to work	53	70	39	69
	Mobility allows me to stay close to friends and relatives	78	50	67	64
	Mobility allowed to keep my home	74	44	86	69
	Mobility makes me more independent	81	68	75	89
Disadvantages of high mobility	Never feel at home	19	39	11	4
	Is often tired	65	36	67	27

Source: Crossed table, longitudinal data, total population aged 25–54 in 2007, JobMob II, 'panel nation analysis weighted', *N* between 162 and 168 cases.

their profession (for example, armed forces occupations, train and lorry drivers, sales representatives). However, as highlighted throughout this book, the perception of high mobility and a willingness to be highly mobile do not only depend on the job and economic context, but also on the broader social context in which mobile people are embedded (households, networks of friends and relatives, transport infrastructures, attachment and identification to places). This is what we turn to in the next chapters.

Conclusion

This overview has shown that work-related high mobility is not an anecdotal phenomenon in advanced contemporary societies. It affects a significant proportion of employed persons over their careers, as well as many households. Predicting the development of this phenomenon

appears difficult, however, with regard to our analyses. The younger generations we studied were not significantly more highly mobile (when measured by travel time) than the older ones. High mobility, rather, appears to be increasingly practised for short periods of time, resulting in more fluctuating mobility histories than in past decades. People frequently start and stop being highly mobile and these changes depend on the economic climate, professional projects and personal context. The recourse to high mobility and the causes and consequences of high mobility nonetheless vary considerably depending on an individual's position in the social structure and the life course. High mobility thus reveals a much more complex reality than the dominant neoliberal discourse of the 'successful and unencumbered mobile worker' who is totally committed to work and free from family obligations (Acker, 2006). Certainly, mobility arrangements within households are likely to support, and sometimes even reinforce, a traditional division of labour between partners when young children are present (see Chapter 8). But high mobility may be better conceptualised as a way of balancing work demands and personal life obligations in time and space. Moreover, there is no clear evidence that highly mobile careers are more likely to be successful (see Chapter 5). As shown in this chapter, high mobility can also be a way to avoid unemployment in difficult economic circumstances (see Chapters 4 and 6). These various elements are analysed and discussed in greater detail in the following chapters. To better understand high mobility situations in their complexity, we use a threefold approach in the rest of this book. We examine individual mobility practices in relation to (1) people's mobility potential (or motility), (2) the larger social context in which these practices take place (family, economic, territory, place attachment) and, finally, (3) people's life courses, including early and later socialisation to high mobility.

Notes

1. Information about past experiences of long-distance relationships were not collected and therefore not included in the sequence analysis.
2. Conditional logistic regression models were preferred to lagged dependent variable regression models. One main reason is that the latter do not allow for measurement errors in high mobility in 2007. The correlation between high mobility in 2007 and other predictors of high mobility in 2011 can lead to spurious significant effects (see Johnson, 2005).

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4
Socialisation to High Mobility?
Stéphanie Vincent-Geslin and Emmanuel Ravalet

Introduction

Is high mobility a disposition we are born with or do we become highly mobile? How does it develop? Longitudinal data was fundamental for analysing the entry process into high mobility and the permanence of these practices over time. A long-term perspective is necessary for understanding continuity and changes in people's mobility situations. The role of socialisation to high mobility is central to these questions. The qualitative data based on life story interviews – along with questions about how people experience their high mobility in the quantitative questionnaire – showed that for some highly mobile people, mobility is a long-standing practice. In this chapter, we explore the various processes of socialisation to high mobility.

This chapters examines the ways highly mobile people are *formed* by high mobility, that is acquire the skills, practices and values of high mobility, and *transformed* through the experience of high mobility, that is change their skills, practices and values previously acquired. We draw here on the notion of socialisation defined as formation and transformation (Darmon, 2006) to investigate this process. We first define the concept of socialisation and situate it in the sociological tradition. We then explore the role of primary (childhood) and secondary (adulthood) socialisation to high mobility. We finally discuss the ways these two types of socialisation influence how highly mobile people experience, feel and plan for the future their mobility.

We show two different attitudes towards mobility experiences during childhood and within the family (primary socialisation). For some, high mobility appears to be a continuation of childhood mobility experiences. Others, however, reject the mobility practices to which they

were exposed early in life. Concerning secondary socialisation, we show that, for some people, certain mobility experiences, such as travel or job training, serve more or less as direct preparation for high mobility. For others, preparation for high mobility occurs through practice, with greater or lesser degrees of success.

Formation and transformation of highly mobile people: socialisation process

As a sociological concept, socialisation is defined as the process by which individuals internalise ways of thinking and doing that are specific to their primary group. The 'habitus' created through this process is defined as both a structured structure and a structuring structure (Bourdieu, 1979), whereby individuals internalise social and cultural dispositions that guide their choices, practices, values and aspirations. In a Bourdieusian perspective, the habitus is the very basis of social reproduction, as it passes down cultural capital specific to an individual's social position to the next generation. This perspective, which is often described as highly deterministic, considers socialisation to be the process by which society produces the individual. However, socialisation is not unilateral. It is not only the process by which social structures shape individual perceptions and behaviours, but also that by which individuals create social structures. Our understanding of socialisation in this chapter is closer to the approach of Jean Piaget (1975), who emphasises the interpretation of norms in education rather than their internalisation. Our understanding of socialisation combines what Foucault refers to as subjectivation, that is, the transformation of individuals by institutions, and aesthetisation, or the 'transformation of the self by the self' (Foucault, 1994). Socialisation, as discussed in this chapter, is therefore understood as both formation and transformation (Darmon, 2006), a learning process and its interpretation, creation of potential and practices.

Applying the concept of socialisation to mobility is an original approach not yet reflected by an established body of research. It aims to analyse how people are formed by and transformed through high mobility experiences during childhood (primary socialisation) and adulthood (secondary socialisation). In other words, it addresses the question of how people acquire and internalise skills, norms, values and even construct identities relative to high mobility. These socialisation practices, especially in adulthood, involve processes similar to those identified in studies on professional socialisation. Hughes (1955) described professional socialisation as a 'making', an initiation and a

conversion. Initiation is understood here in an anthropological sense, as becoming part of a specific group or community through sharing common knowledge. Initiation therefore means the formative dimension of transitioning from the collective to the individual. In turn, conversion refers to the transformation of individual practices, identities and self-image that results from this initiation. The making of a highly mobile person, like the 'making of a physician', requires several steps. These steps include gradual identification with the role, duality between ideals and actual practices (resulting in a greater or lesser acceptance of the role) and identification with the members of a reference group. In line with the research on occupational socialisation, our study examines the different processes of socialisation to work-related high mobility.

Through the internalisation of skills and practices, socialisation to high mobility also draws on the literature on mobility capital, motility (Kaufmann, 2002) and mobility potential (Kellerman, 2012). In the past 20 years, some mobility studies have looked specifically at potentials rather than mere practices, to better understand inequalities in this area. Inequalities are not only linked to vertical stratification, such as gender or social class, they are also linked to the (unequal) distribution of personal skills, that is, the ability for people to use the resources available for their plans and projects (Ohnmacht et al., 2009). The concept of motility includes access, skills and individual mobility plans (see Chapter 6). While access depends largely on residential setting and transport offering, skills and plans are personal dimensions which are developed over the course of an individual's life and experiences, that are not determined exclusively by pre-existing social structures, such as class, gender or race (Kaufmann, 2002). Hence, 'the relationship between potential and practiced mobilities is a two-way road, with potential mobilities paving the road for practiced ones, and vice versa: practiced mobilities shaping future potential ones. Thus, experience gained in practiced mobility may influence potential mobility' (Kellerman, 2012: 179). Applying patterns of socialisation to the development of high mobility practices offers an important contribution to this literature because it allows for greater clarification of the nature of those skills and their different expressions. It shows how potential, skills and plans are built through experience and how they are used in practice.

In order to do this, we must investigate the elements that shape individuals and prepare them for high mobility. Do particular patterns of socialisation to high mobility exist? If so, how do they operate? Through what mechanisms are people socialised to high mobility? What are the effects of this socialisation on high mobility practices?

To answer these questions, we use data primarily from the life story interviews to illustrate how high mobility experiences are part of highly mobile people's primary and/or secondary socialisation and to consider their effects. These data were collected in France, and enable us to examine the socialising mechanisms of high mobility in this national context. Though we can hypothesise that some of these mechanisms exist in the other European countries surveyed, for methodological precaution the conclusions of this chapter will not be generalised for the whole of Europe. However, some insights from the quantitative data will be used to support or qualify the arguments made in the qualitative analysis.

Primary socialisation to high mobility and its effects

The life story interviews show that among highly mobile adults, some had had high mobility experiences with their family during childhood. Others had childhoods marked by residential immobility. These were people who stayed in their town, city or county throughout their childhood and schooling, and, in some cases, still lived there when we met them. One major difference emerged between daily long-distance commuters and overnighters. The former seem to have moved less during childhood and showed strong local embeddedness. Some, such as Bob and Emilie, were very attached to the place where they grew up and aspired to sedentariness. Meanwhile, those frequently absent from home (overnighters) and who had had a sedentary childhood, approached work-related mobility neutrally and did not have any particular emotional association with it due to a lack of prior experience.

Yet, the biographical method used in the interviews highlighted early exposure to high mobility among a number of highly mobile participants. This exposure primarily took the form of migrating, nationally or internationally, or of a parent's frequent absence from home. This section has three objectives. The first is to describe early high mobility experiences. The second is to analyse how individuals interpret them. The third is to show the potential produced (skills, values and norms) and its possible impact on actual high mobility practices.

Continuity with mobility experiences during childhood

For some highly mobile people, high mobility is a continuation of childhood experiences. In these cases, mobility is a family legacy, stemming either from a tradition of mobile occupations across generations or multiple work-related moves during childhood. Several of the

highly mobile people we interviewed belonged to professionally mobile families (for example, military or seafaring). Michel, a member of the armed forces, came from a family of sailors. He described himself as a 'big traveller', and has carried on – and identified with – this tradition of mobility. Others, like Bruno, a professional fireman, stressed his multiple moves during childhood:

> My parents' geographic mobility, because of a military career. Being far away from the family birthplace and home. The tip of Brittany. I regularly lived there, since that's where we would get together for fun – vacations – and family events, etc. The rest of the time it was in the four corners of France, the north of France, Anger, Paris, Kehl, on the German border, Metz, Anger and Paris, the Paris region again. (Bruno, 40 years old, firefighter, overnighter, living in a large suburb)

This was also the case for Martin, who spent his childhood as an expatriate because of his father's job and wanted to lead a similar lifestyle after receiving his diploma. He lived abroad for several years and finally returned to France due to the scarcity of expatriate contracts in his profession. He was nonetheless considered highly mobile in our survey because he coupled long-distance commuting with frequent absences from home.

From the first minutes of the interview, these highly mobile people described themselves as perpetuating family and childhood mobility experiences. These experiences formed a 'personal culture' of mobility, to use their words. Culture here can be defined as a set of norms, values and skills relative to mobility.

Firstly, when experienced during childhood or within the family structure, work-related mobility becomes a reference point from which individuals evolve. As a result, highly mobile people perceive their mobility as something innocuous and normal that is integrated during primary socialisation:

> I come from a military family. This is something that was integrated, but I didn't experience it for long because my parents left the army when I was six. So I only moved twice, when I was three or four. But for me, and I am a product of it, I mean all my uncles and aunt are in that milieu…It's something that's part of my personal culture. (Christelle, 34 years old, sales representative, stopped high mobility, living in a periurban area)

This environment sets a norm as regards work-related mobility, most often in the form of moves and, more rarely, in the form of absence from home. This norm is also reinforced by the fact that early exposure to high mobility seems to be associated with positive values regarding mobility. These positive values are built around enchanted imaginaries of mobility relative to change, discovery and travel – elements that are greatly valued by highly mobile people. These people seem to develop a strong attraction to change.

> I was super happy!…I mean, that's change. Let's go, we're moving. Okay, I'm going to start my business…(Laurence, 37 years old, resident doctor, overnighter, living in a periurban area)

Secondly, early high mobility experiences create a particular skill set, that is, adaptation, relational, social and spatial skills. Concerning adaptation skills, highly mobile individuals must develop strong coping skills and a level of comfort that facilitates their mobility. The ability to adapt is also obvious in the linguistic skills acquired during experiences living abroad.

> Well, I speak four languages fluently. I'm of Spanish origin. So I know Spanish. In South Africa, Afrikaans is Dutch, so I speak Dutch not too bad. English. And I can get along in Italian and German. Because it's pretty similar…(Martin, 50 years old, IT administrator, overnighter and daily long-distance commuter, living in a periurban area)

Participants who frequently relocated gradually developed social and relational skills, which were particularly useful for highly mobile lifestyle. They learnt to manage social relationships at a distance, how to leave loved ones behind (for example to manage the sadness of leaving), and how to build social ties quickly in a new place of residence:

> Yes, every time [I would have liked to have stayed longer because of friends], but in the same way as we would have liked to have stayed on holiday at the end of summer where our cousins lived…to have gone to school with them, and not gone home. It's the exact same heartbreak. The same sadness of leaving, yes, and at the same time, the same joy of coming home each time we came back or each time we discovered a new [city]. (Bruno, 40 years old, firefighter, overnighter, living in a large suburb)

> Sometimes it is a little harder to fit in, so you have to make an effort. If you end up in a place where the people aren't very cheerful, you smile for two, and voila! (Michel, 57 years old, armed forces member, overnighter, living in a rural area)

These individuals have also sharply honed spatial skills, such as being able to find their way around a new place, quickly finding their bearings and quickly using the area surrounding their home.

> I experienced it as a discovery, marking out our route with my parents, finding places, seeing obligatory points of passage, safety rules for crossing the street. I don't recall any particular difficulties for that. (Bruno, 40 years old, firefighter, overnighter, living in a large suburb)

Our interviews showed that high mobility experiences in early childhood occur both through the perpetuation of family traditions in mobile occupations and through high mobility experiences within the family. In both cases, they provide the basis for a personal culture of high mobility. The highly mobile lifestyle often appears to be a modus operandi within families. Moreover, highly mobile individuals associate mobility with positive values related to discovery and change. Finally, it is built on coping, relational and spatial skills developed during early childhood. While early mobility experiences most often take the form of moves, the skills and knowledge acquired prove to be easily transferable to other high mobility forms, such as overnighting. This personal culture does not determine work-related high mobility practised during adulthood, but serves as a resource, as latent potential and a family legacy with which highly mobile people identify.

Breaking with childhood mobility experiences

While some interviewees who had experienced high mobility in childhood went on to become highly mobile as adults, not all did. Some interpret – to use Piaget's words – their early experiences and position themselves in opposition to them as adults. In our qualitative sample, these individuals were often long-distance commuters with strong aspirations to residential immobility, in contrast to their childhood experiences. We also suppose that some non-mobile people had been socialised to high mobility during childhood but had not activated their acquired potential in adulthood.

Jacqueline, a long-distance commuter, lives in the Paris suburbs. During the interview, she told us about the complex residential history of her father, who was determined to succeed professionally. Depending on the job, the family sometimes followed, and sometimes did not. Jacqueline perceives her father's mobility, motivated by professional ambition, in negative terms because it put the family life and family well-being second. Rather than being associated with discovery and valued, high mobility in this case is associated with instability.

> He was a civil servant, but he moved a lot, he was a bit unstable. Okay, he wanted a successful career, and he succeeded, but for me, I'd say, it's not an example for me because family life didn't count. (Jacqueline, 60 years old, manager in the National Health Service, daily long-distance commuter, living in an inner suburb)

Jacqueline has neither internalised high mobility as a norm, nor is it her personal culture. Moreover, she also associates it with negative values. However, she did acquire certain skills through childhood moves, especially in terms of managing social relationships. However, the negative association she has made between mobility, instability and the desire for social and professional success has led her to reject work-related high mobility. For this reason, she declined certain professional and training opportunities that would have required her to move house or to be absent from home at different periods during her career. She perceives her long-distance commuting neutrally, not as high mobility – like that of her father. For her, long-distance commuting has more to do with a metropolitan way of life that is largely structured by her ownership of a house in the Paris suburbs.

Léonard, a long-distance commuter who lives in the Paris region, would like to reduce his travel time in the near future. Despite having been socialised to high mobility during childhood through moves, he likewise has a reactionary attitude to high mobility. His parents were forced to move for professional reasons during his childhood. For Léonard, these experiences seem to have been 'heart-wrenching', uprooting him from his friends and relatives. As a student he moved several times and, later, spent a year away from his partner. All of these experiences, again, are perceived as negative but necessary transitions.

Unlike Jacqueline, Léonard spoke little about the skills he might have acquired through these experiences. Instead, he described the logistical difficulty of high mobility situations, the hardship or impossibility of settling in places during short stays and the resulting feeling of unease

and of never being at home anywhere. He also talks about the difficulty he has orientating himself in places, navigating public transport networks and reading maps. As a result, he rejected high mobility in adulthood, because he values stability and co-presence with his son and wife.

> The place where I spent the most time is Rennes – three years. So those years, as we had some stability, we succeeded…My wife was with me…in reorganising our lives a bit. We were still far from our families. The other school years were more complicated because we knew we would only be there for a year, and so we lived in a kind of precariousness…The mail that arrived at a stable place in our families, a minimum of furniture to move. So a somewhat nomadic life.…During those years, since we knew we wouldn't be staying, we invested little time and energy in these places. I didn't stay in touch with anyone in Strasbourg. I was in touch with classmates in Paris for a few months, a year or two, and then we grew apart. She's kept in touch with people in Rennes, but the same, they grew apart after a few years because we didn't have the chance to go back for several years. We went there on vacation, but very briefly. (Léonard, 34 years old, civil servant, representative of the Prefect, stopped high mobility, living in a large suburb)

For both Jacqueline and Léonard, their negative perception of mobility led them to reject high mobility in their own adult lives rather than continuing the family tradition. Interestingly, they do not consider their long-distance commuting practices – which are considered a high mobility practice for the purposes of this study – as such because they allow for the residential and family stability to which they aspire. They therefore distinguish between moving and overnighting on the one hand, and daily long-distance commuting on the other, which ensures residential stability and a daily co-presence with family and friends.

Although both Léonard and Jacqueline seem to have acquired certain knowledge and skills through their childhood mobility experiences, those skills were seen as less important and less valued during the interview due to their negative view. Their socialisation shows little identification with the role of highly mobile worker, which, according to Hughes (1955), is a phase in the professional socialisation process. The lack of identification with these experiences means that their mobility potential is less likely to be used during adulthood.

The analysis of life stories shows that the relationship between high mobility experiences during childhood and such practices during adulthood is not deterministic. Rather, the interpretation of these experiences plays a significant role in the socialising experience. People were more likely to reject high mobility practices when they developed negative perceptions and imaginaries of mobility during childhood.

Internalisation and transfer of skills, norms and values

Mobility experiences during childhood seem to contribute to the development of two main skill sets. The first set involves spatial skills, such as reading maps, spatial orientation, being comfortable in unfamiliar places and knowing how to use different modes of transport. The second is social management skills, such as quickly making connections, leaving them behind easily, maintaining relationships at a distance. The qualitative analysis indicates that primary socialisation to high mobility helps people develop such skills. This hypothesis is supported for spatial skills in the quantitative survey, but could not be verified for the social skills due to data limitation.

The skills developed through moves can later be used for high mobility practices. The qualitative analysis suggests that the skills acquired through successive moves during childhood are transferable across different types of high mobility practices in adulthood, for example in facilitating absences from home. This link was also confirmed quantitatively. The proportion of people who moved several times during childhood is two times higher among those absent from home than the rest of the sample (Table 4.1)

One reason for this is that people who regularly migrated during childhood are less rooted to one particular place. It can also be linked to the set of skills acquired during childhood, particularly in terms of managing social ties at a distance and easily creating new ones. Highly

Table 4.1   Number of moves during childhood (%)

	0	1	2 or more	Total
Daily long-distance commuters	70	14	16	100
Overnighters	59	17	24	100
Rest of the population	71	16	13	100
Total	71	16	13	100

Source: Cross table, chi2 = 6.96, $p < 0.05$, total population. 30–59 in 2011, JobMob II, 'countries equally weighted'.

mobile people who migrated during childhood integrated mobility practices by internalising norms, ways of doing and thinking, skills and knowledge, which predisposed them to implementing high mobility practices during adulthood.

However, early mobility experiences do not necessarily result in the internalisation of the norms, skills and values that are associated with it. In other words, the intergenerational transmission of a high-mobility habitus does not necessarily occur. People who continue these high-mobility practices in adulthood identify with their role as highly mobile to varying degrees, depending on how they perceived this mobility and the imaginaries they associated with it. Those that do not identify with high mobility may reject it because of their childhood experiences, despite skills and knowledge that could facilitate a highly mobile lifestyle. This may seem paradoxical, as our qualitative sample was exclusively comprised of people who currently were or had been highly mobile for professional reasons. But daily long-distance commuting and absence from home were not perceived the same way by highly mobile people. Commuting was less associated with high mobility than was absence from home and, conversely, was used as a way to safeguard residential and relational attachments (Kaufmann, 2008; Vincent-Geslin, 2012). Primary socialisation to high mobility thus shows the importance of identifying with the role of highly mobile person. It also shows that the identification with high mobility affects how the potential acquired during childhood experiences is used (or not used) during adulthood. This step in the socialisation process is similar to the dimension of plans in motility, defined as the willingness to be highly mobile to achieve particular objectives. This dimension strongly influences high mobility practices in adulthood, even if mobility plans change significantly over time depending on economic constraints (see especially Chapters 6 and 7).

Secondary socialisation to high mobility

Socialisation to high mobility does not necessarily need to take place during childhood, it can also occur during adulthood. Before entering the labour market, highly mobile individuals can become socialised to high mobility practices in a variety of ways, including travel, serving in the armed forces or during training and education. Once again, the potential acquired through these experiences is often transferable and

can be utilised for work-related high mobility. Others only experience high mobility directly through work during adulthood and become socialised to it with greater or lesser success. This on-the-job socialisation process helps us to better understand the strategies for learning high mobility as it is happening – strategies that are often difficult to express verbally for those who were socialised earlier in life.

Socialisation prior to entering the labour market

Some of the highly mobile people we interviewed were socialised during their youth, before entering the job market. In such cases, the two main influences identified were school and peers. This type of socialisation tends to occur within the context of high mobility experiences that are fully desired by those individuals and tend to be linked to a desire for travel, discovery and change – classical imaginaries of mobility (Barrère and Martuccelli, 2005).

This form of socialisation can take place during youth travel. Trips made during youth participate in the construction of a young adult's identity (Cicchelli et al., 2004; Galland and Cavalli, 1993). As in Jean's case, this took the form of long-distance travel with the army.

> I did my three days to join the army…I had no links, except my parents. I had no links in France. I didn't have a girlfriend, all that. I'm from the Ardennes region, so I watched all the people from the village go do their military service in Germany. And that didn't appeal to me. I didn't want to end up in the cold in Germany. I wanted to go overseas…So I signed up for 18 months…and I went to Senegal for 13 months. So, I got on a plane in July of '81 and came back in August of '82. I was in Dakar. It was also an important trip for me because it was the first time I took a plane. (Jean, 50 years old, train driver, overnighter, living in a large suburb)

Or holidays hitchhiking with a rucksack:

> While I was still unattached, I took the opportunity to travel…I did quite a lot of things. Well, I had already started when I was a student. A rucksack and hitchhiking. First big trip was when I hitchhiked around Brittany with a friend during holidays. After I hitchhiked to the border of Eastern Germany with a friend…With my rucksack I did quite a few things. I was in Senegal, I hitchhiked all around the Casamance region. I did Mauritania. I did Gambia. For over a month. (Philippe, 51 years old, sales engineer, overnighter, living in a large suburb)

These trips were described as the first high mobility experiences for these interviewees. Such formative experiences tend to directly influence (mobile) career choices, notably by developing certain potentials: independence, autonomy, orientation skills in new and faraway places and an attraction to novelty and the unknown. However, individuals had trouble describing the skills they acquired during these trips, most likely because they had happened in the distant past and were not work related.

Other highly mobile people were socialised to high mobility during career training, which then resulted in a choice of mobile jobs. Our study included people whose jobs were inherently mobile, such as delivery people, train drivers, armed services personnel and sales representatives. These individuals thus chose to embrace careers that involved travel. This choice was relative to the job as an employment opportunity, and was also explained by a particular interest in travelling. Eric talked about his choice to become a mobile police constable during his professional training:

> At that moment, I knew I wanted to be a mobile constable … Why? Because I wanted to travel, to see other things … I had people who supervised us, officers, who clearly explained their job and what they did, and it appealed to me much more than [being a] county constable who does paperwork. What interested me was travelling, discovering, earning a bit more money than the others … (Eric, 50 years old, mobile police constable, stopped high mobility, living in a rural area)

Eric's choice to become a mobile police constable is interesting because it combines several elements, including the rejection of the other possible activities of constable, a desire for travel and autonomy, and economic interests. The choice was made during his studies and vocational training. As with most professions, training played the role of socialisation for Eric. During his studies he internalised the knowledge and ways of doing and thinking of a police constable, including a certain attitude towards high mobility.

For others, like Christelle, the choice of a mobile job was made during her studies. Aspiring to become a sales representative and convinced that her career would involve travel, Christelle 'tested' – in her own words – her ability to be mobile by choosing to do her studies far from her hometown.

So [I wanted to test] two things. To see if I could stand leaving my environment, my parents, my friends. Would I be able to cut the cord. And also to show on my CV that I was capable of leaving. Because my goal was to get into the labour market, to be operational straight away…If I hadn't been able to bear it, I would have come back to my parents. I had already planned the worst. And otherwise, it would be a way of proving I was mobile from the beginning of my career. (Christelle, 34 years old, sales representative, stopped high mobility, living in a periurban area)

Through this experience, Christelle acquired skills, particularly as regards managing social and friendship bonds:

I think that when you live 200 or 500 miles from home, even 1,000 miles from home, what is different is that you have to start from scratch, that is to say in terms of relations…people don't necessarily function the same way…you have to find networks to make friends. Because …. [during] my two years as a student, I didn't understand that it was up to me to adapt, that I wasn't with the people I grew up with…[During] my two years as a student I hardly made any friends. (Christelle)

One of the outcomes of Christelle's test was gaining a new perspective on her friendships, and developing strategies for creating new ones. In other words, she developed the same skills for moving and/or being away from home that those raised in mobile family traditions typically acquire during primary socialisation.

Finally, a third type of secondary socialisation to high mobility takes place early in the career. In this case, it is no longer youth travel or training school that plays a socialising role, but professionally mobile peers, colleagues and friends. During adolescence and youth, peers have a strong socialising influence (Bush, 1985; Cicchelli et al., 2004). Through contact with them, certain mobile people we interviewed – dissatisfied with their careers – gradually developed an attraction for high mobility in the form of frequent business trips and envisaged being mobile for their job.

I remember that, at the time, I had a very good friend. We saw each other often…He was a sales representative for hair products. Each time, when we got together at weekends, he sometimes had his company car. He talked about his experiences, his travels. He was rarely there

during the week because he had half of France. I learnt a bit about being a sales rep, being on the road, whereas maybe ten years earlier, less even, I was very focused on technology…Then, well, I thought that maybe it would offer other openings of the mind and variety in my job. I inquired and responded to job offers for sales reps. (Pierre, 50 years old, sales engineer, overnighter, living in an urban centre)

It is not only the financial benefits associated with mobile careers that are appealing, but also – and above all – the imaginaries of discovery, change and variety of experiences. These imaginaries resurfaced in several interviews, in contrast to the negative image of repetitive, boring office work. Pierre's and Philippe's highly mobile friends, for example, became references for them, allowing them to gradually identify with the role of overnighter. They then sought to put it into practice in their own careers. This was much easier for Philippe, as it combined with the potential he acquired through skills learnt during his travels.

High mobility without pre-existing potential

Some individuals become highly mobile as adults, without any prior experience. They had no intention of becoming highly mobile, but did so under economic constraints (see also Chapter 7). Unlike professional socialisation to high mobility, their role in this case develops through the experience itself:

Like I told you, it was somewhat vital to find a source of income, so I took the first thing I was offered. (Aurélie, 24 years old, IT trainer, overnighter, living in a large suburb)

Besides the need to find a job, high mobility is also a palliative against job insecurity for those who, like Thierry, must couple several distinct and geographically distant occupations to make a living:

I have several jobs. I have one that is my passion, let's say. I'm a music teacher primarily. It's still my first career…I had to take another job, so I do delivery for a logistics company. I recently took on a third job. I'm going to do relationship marketing from home. (Thierry, 49 years old, music teacher, daily long-distance commuter, living in an inner suburb)

High mobility is new for these individuals, who consequently have few skills or personal values directly related to high mobility, or mobility

plans. They did not anticipate being in these situations, and therefore must settle into their new role with varying degrees of success and satisfaction.

Learning through experience

While all socialisation to high mobility stems from practical experience, we found that the earlier in life the experience took place, the more difficult it was for the respondent to verbalise and identify with it, since the effects had been fully internalised. Ongoing experience, however, provided more information on how people become highly mobile.

In general, highly-mobile adults who have not been socialised to high mobility in any of the aforementioned ways experience more stress. Coping with the stress of high mobility can be done in two ways. The first is by implementing strategies aimed at facilitating the cognitive effort of travel. The second is through practice and the development of routines. Socialisation to high mobility practices occurs in different ways depending on whether it involves absence from home or daily/weekly long-distance commuting, which is more repetitive.

For long-distance commuters, repeat journeys gradually create routines and reduce the mental stress associated with commuting. Through repetition, spatial skills and landmarks, such as public transport maps and line routes, are created and internalised. Léonard explains the gradual development of his expertise in the use of public transport in the Paris region and his knowledge of places:

> Before, I used to look for street names. Now, I really follow the [public transport] map that I have in front of me. So, there's a kind of habit, an expertise perhaps. Maybe that word's a bit strong, but we become an old hand at public transport. I see the difference compared to my small-town family, and even my partner, who uses public transport less frequently and doesn't have the same reflexes when it comes to identifying the lines, the stations…(Léonard, 34 years old, civil servant, representative of the Prefect, stopped high mobility, living in a large suburb)

Learning takes place through repetition – and through trial and error – which allows individuals to become gradually familiar with a route and find the shortest, least congested one:

> You follow the signs…after, by dint of making trips, you find the shortest. Anyway, practice makes perfect. On the outskirts…I don't

have a GPS but I get by. The first time it definitely isn't easy because you get a bit lost … But well, it's by getting lost that you learn. (Thierry, 49 years old, music teacher, daily long-distance commuter, living in an inner suburb)

For overnighters, repeating the same journeys and returning to the same places reduce stress, but the trips remain less routine than for daily long-distance commuters. Overnighters without early socialisation to high mobility develop strategies to limit the mental stress of facing the unknown. They decide what route they will take ahead of time, print out maps and get advice regarding the best itinerary. To mitigate any difficulties navigating or recognising a place, they use GPS and localisation tools on their smartphones:

I have my iPhone, which is extremely useful … for GPS, etc. … So, anyway, when I'm abroad, it's more complicated because I didn't have Internet in Belgium. So, well, I had to have a map and to use it. I wasn't used to reading maps, but I had to get used to it. (Aurélie, 24 years old, IT trainer, overnighter, living in a large suburb)

The use of such technological devices facilitates travel and can compensate for a lack of navigation skills. These tools also require particular skills, albeit different from those needed for travelling in the physical space. Our respondents were more likely to have these technological skills. Regarding accommodation, strategies were also developed for creating spatial references, travel routines and stress reduction (see also Chapter 9). These highly mobile individuals gradually became socialised by creating landmarks and routines while doing their job. In practice, they internalised potential in the form of practical and social skills that were useful for high mobility, made routine commutes, created landmarks and routines for overnighting, and used technology to reduce travel-related stress. Those not already socialised to high mobility thus acquired skills in a variety of ways, through direct high mobility experiences. This type of socialisation, though effective and achievable, nonetheless appears to be more difficult and is sometimes negatively experienced by those who did not intend to become highly mobile.

Impossible socialisation

Socialisation to high mobility through experience proves impossible in some cases. Emilie, a secondary school teacher, was born in a rural part

of France. She has strong roots, and refused to leave her hometown even for her studies. Emilie described how she has always known she does not want to move away from the region where her family, friends and, now, her husband live. However, after having passed the national exam to be a secondary school teacher in France, she accepted a job more than 250 miles away. Not really having a choice, Emilie accepted the position and became a weekly long-distance commuter, sleeping at the school three nights a week and returning home at weekends. After a year and a half, tired from her commutes and the change in social and spatial landmarks, Emilie fell into a depression that prevented her from working for nearly two years:

> In Amiens I couldn't bear it. That was the worst part. I left for the week and slept at the school. Boarding at the school, even with other colleagues, it wasn't possible, it meant we were working non-stop…I took it very badly, I became depressed…after a year and a half, I broke down, I couldn't take it anymore. (Emilie, 35 years old, secondary school teacher, daily long-distance commuter, living in a rural area)

Emilie's depression following this dual location household arrangement was also linked to her lack of both primary and secondary socialisation to mobility. For Emilie, socialisation to high mobility – at least this form of it – was impossible, as adapting and conforming to high mobility practices and changing her behaviours and feelings was unbearable. After several months of sick leave followed by parental leave, she was finally able to get a job closer to her home and family, nonetheless, she is still obliged to commute long distances.

High mobility experiences form and transform people, even as adults. Some participants showed forms of voluntary and successful secondary socialisation to high mobility, in particular through vocational training or travel. Some others proved to be completely unprepared for it. Among the latter group, some failed to develop the necessary skills in a positive way that would allow them to cope. It is therefore through the practice and experience of high mobility that people develop the necessary skills, gradually creating landmarks and routines through trial and error. Many also use mobile technology to compensate for their shortcomings. Mobility as a practice not only shapes highly mobile individuals, it also transforms them in their relationship to the world, to others and even to their own bodies, requiring individuals to adapt in terms of equipment and mobility plans.

The effects of socialisation: potential and actual practices

In this section, we analyse how the different forms of socialisation to high mobility influence high mobility practices. Do those who are well socialised to high mobility have a different approach to it than those who are not? Beyond having certain skills and knowledge, what role does socialisation play in the actual development of high mobility practices or the activating of latent skills? The qualitative analysis suggests that primary socialisation and – to a lesser extent – secondary socialisation to high mobility result in more positive feelings about high mobility. Moreover, primary and secondary socialisation do not necessarily lead to the implementation of high mobility practices, which are largely driven by professional constraints and family life.

Socialisation influences the mobility experience

Analysing the emotional aspects of mobility has highlighted the role of primary and secondary socialisation. Life story interviews showed a link between early socialisation to high mobility and a positive experience of this mobility, that is, finding pleasure and personal satisfaction in it. However, while the statistical analysis showed a link between childhood moves and frequent overnight business trips in adulthood, it did not show that overnighters who had moved during childhood perceived their mobility more positively than those who had never moved. This effect of early socialisation, however, was observed among long-distance commuters. Those who had lived abroad experienced their commuting practices more positively than those who had never moved. The duration of high mobility had no direct impact on the perception of mobility across all the forms outlined in the study. People who had been mobile for a long time were more likely to perceive this form of mobility as a way of life, but did not necessarily experience it more positively. This may be interpreted as the forging of high mobility routines among veteran practitioners. As such, this group was likely to perceive mobility in a neutral way. People who had been highly mobile for a long time developed routines, behaviours, ways of thinking, social and spatial skills, that facilitated their high mobility practices. Those people often imagined themselves highly mobile in the future. Two opposite examples aptly illustrate this: the case of Martin, the son of an expatriate, socialised to high mobility during childhood; and the case of Aurélie, who neither chose nor was prepared to be absent from home for work. The two experienced high mobility in opposite ways. Aurélie feels anxiety every time she has to travel or go to an unknown

place. She does not have good mobility skills, such as reading maps or working in noisy places, compared to Martin, who moves easily from one space to another and quickly feels comfortable in trains and hotels. Unlike Aurélie, Martin wants to live the highly mobile life he experienced during childhood. Thus, Martin feels that his mobility is something normal – neutral – an inherent part of his working life:

> It's part of life … No, it doesn't bother me. (Martin, 50 years old, IT administrator, overnighter and daily long-distance commuter, living in a periurban area)

For Aurélie, conversely, each trip generates stress:

> I'm a stressed person in general. So, no matter what happens, I'm going to be stressed. (Aurélie, 24 years old, IT trainer, overnighter, living in a large suburb)

The internalisation of norms, skills, knowledge, attitudes and values associated with high mobility fosters a more positive perception of high mobility, which also includes various ways of using travel time and travel spaces (see also Chapter 9).

   People with the most positive experiences of high mobility were also those who anticipated how travelling for work-related reasons would be and imagined themselves as highly mobile in the future. They viewed high mobility as a way of life. Conversely, overnighters who had not imagined beforehand being regularly absent from home and the effects of their absence were more likely to have a negative view of their mobility:

> I hadn't really anticipated [it], and that was the problem. What I liked was being on the road. And also changing jobs. Changing occupations, career path, seeing people. (Bob, 57 years old, site manager, daily long-distance commuter, living in a periurban area)

> It happened gradually. I didn't even think about it, and afterwards, at some point, I thought: God, you're never home! Do something! (Sébastien, 33 years old, business manager, stopped high mobility, living in an inner suburb)

Those not well-socialised to high mobility but who were under heavy economic pressure continued their plans to be highly mobile in the

future. However, they did so with a sense of resignation, since being highly mobile was the only way they could keep working.

Finally, lack of skills and foresight can even lead to outright rejection of a particular form of high mobility, as in the case of Emilie (presented above).

The presence or absence of socialisation to high mobility – especially during childhood and young adulthood – result in different attitudes regarding high mobility practices in adulthood. Overall, primary and secondary socialisation generate more positive feelings about being highly mobile and result in a greater likelihood of continuing these practices. On the other hand, lack of socialisation appears to be associated with either the desire to put an end to high mobility situations or becoming resigned to high mobility practices due to economic constraints.

Socialisation does not determine high mobility practices

While being socialised to high mobility creates the potential for and disposition to high mobility, it does not necessarily lead to the actual practices of high mobility. Thus, certain people who are well-socialised to high mobility, with positive feelings about it and plans to continue being highly mobile, can end it at specific stages of their life course. This was the case for Mélanie, a librarian in Grenoble and a former long-distance commuter. A Grenoble native, Mélanie went to university in Dijon, then moved to London as part of an internship, followed by a proper job contract at an embassy. In this way, Mélanie became part of the international network of embassies and aspired to a career in that field:

> Working at the French Institute, you're part of the foreign affairs ministry network…it's something that really interested me, seeing as I did a literature and language baccalaureate. There were jobs available in embassies all over the world. So that made me dream. (Mélanie, 37 years old, librarian, stopped high mobility, living in an urban centre)

Mélanie was offered a job in Barcelona, but ultimately turned it down because it conflicted with the sedentary preferences of her partner, 'someone who does not want to travel'.

> Yes, yes, we talked [about the possibility of moving abroad], but it wasn't something that was possible for him. For example Barcelona, I

don't speak any Spanish. For me, learning a language didn't seem like a boundary. (Mélanie, 37 years old, librarian, stopped high mobility, living in an urban centre)

Her professional mobility plans clashed with the sedentary preferences of her partner, who did not want to leave Grenoble. After passing the civil servant exam and four years of work in the Paris region, she got a job closer to Grenoble and, after several years put an end to their long-distance relationship. During the interview, Mélanie mentioned major mobility plans and demonstrated a set of skills necessary for high mobility, such as learning foreign languages, creating social links and adapting to different social and spatial contexts. In spite of this, she has chosen not to activate these plans and skills in the form of concrete mobility practices for family reasons. Relationship and family plans have therefore led Mélanie to gradually abandon her high mobility practices. Similarly, Christelle, who was socialised to high mobility both during childhood and her studies, chose a sedentary job to start a family. Hence, dispositions created through socialisation to high mobility are not necessarily activated in the form of concrete practices, particularly for family-related reasons (see also Chapter 8).

High mobility: life stage or lifestyle?

This chapter identifies that long-term high mobility may be experienced either as a phase or a way of life. When we interviewed them, Aurélie, Léonard and Emilie all considered overnight absences from home or long-distance commuting as a step in their careers pending a more sedentary position or a job closer to home. High mobility was not really part of their long-term plans, either because they had had negative experiences with mobility during childhood or because they did not aspire to or had not experienced mobility previously. Those who saw high mobility as a phase also seemed to have difficulty adjusting to high mobility practices, as Emilie's depression following her experience as an overnighter illustrates. However, seeing high mobility as a transition does not preclude abandoning it in the short term. Statistical analysis based on panel data shows that mobile people who saw high mobility as a transition in 2007 were not more likely to have stopped their mobility in 2011 than those who saw it as a way of life (see also next chapter). The continuation of high mobility is certainly linked to the constraints of the labour market and/or family decisions. People are also likely to change their perception of mobility over time, which can become a more long-term project.

Other highly mobile people in our qualitative sample tended to see high mobility as a way of life, although they differed in the way they perceived this way of life. Some experienced their mobility neutrally or positively, as a chosen way of life and an integral part of professional and family life. Those who had made a career of being mobile – like Jean, Claude and Eric – belonged to this category (mobile by job). This was also the case for travellers who had inherited mobility through socialisation during childhood and had carried on high mobility practices as a part of their habitus. These individuals had internalised the norms and values relative to high mobility, had strong social and spatial skills, and planned to pursue a mobile career. For others, however, high mobility was more a result of resignation than a true aspiration. This was the case for workers in precarious positions, such as Thierry, for whom high mobility was a means of economic survival. Also in this category were those who accepted high mobility in the form of long-distance commuting as a tedious but necessary part of living in or around Paris, which afforded them career opportunities without the hassle of relocating. Nevertheless, for highly mobile people in metropolitan areas, where long-distance commuting is the norm, there is a tenuous line between neutral and resigned acceptance. The distinction depends both on the person's degree of economic constraint and on their skills and knowledge of daily commuting.

Conclusion

Exposure to high mobility experiences results in the internalisation of norms, knowledge, skills and values, which can facilitate proficiency and comfort in high mobility practices in adult working life. However, this socialisation is neither automatic nor deterministic, like a habitus. Rather, people interpret the experiences they have through primary and secondary socialisation to position themselves with respect to those experiences. For some people, high mobility was a family habitus. Having moved often as children, they tended towards jobs that often took them away from home, and where they could utilise the social and spatial skills learnt during childhood. Others, however, reject high mobility, associating it with emotional and material instability. For others still, we observed secondary socialisation to high mobility – either during studies or youth travel – that allowed them to internalise certain dispositions and skills that were favourable to high mobility. However, we also encountered highly mobile individuals who become so without intending to. These individuals did not anticipate the implications of

high mobility and were often unfamiliar with it. Their narratives are particularly useful in describing the acquisition of mobility skills through practice, the strategies used and the resulting effects.

Being socialised to high mobility facilitates the practice, enhances the experience itself – especially among daily long-distance commuters – and makes it easier to project it in the future. However, high mobility practices are not an inevitable result of the internalisation of dispositions favourable to high mobility. These dispositions result from everyday mobility practices, interactions with family members and the constraints of the labour market. High mobility experiences leave room for the subjective dimension and the feelings of mobile people regarding their own practices. Using the quantitative sample, the next chapter returns to the issue of high mobility over the life course based on high mobility histories.

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5
High Mobility Over the Life Course

Gil Viry and Stéphanie Vincent-Geslin

Introduction

We begin this chapter with a brief portrayal of three different mobility histories, those of Jean, Christelle and Thierry who participated in our study. Jean's career has been marked by high mobility and regular absences from home. Having completed military service at age 20, Jean rose through the ranks of the French national railway company SNCF from ticket inspector, to train driver in the Paris metropolitan area, to finally becoming a high-speed train driver. Christelle has a diploma in sales and marketing. For several years, her job in sales involved 5-day periods away from home. At 31, she found a more sedentary job with a view to starting a family. Thierry teaches music at several music schools and municipal associations. Working in several locations means that he must commute over long distances in order to make a living wage.

The mobility histories for Jean, Christelle and Thierry underline the importance of studying high mobility practices over an individual's life course. This raises the question of whether high mobility is a long-term practice or a life stage. In the latter case, does high mobility occur earlier in a career, or later when people are more tied to their place of residence by family responsibilities, home ownership and job stability? Workers who are highly mobile in the early career stage, before having children, may well differ from those who practise high mobility throughout their careers. The duration and timing of high mobility practices are also essential for understanding the consequences of high mobility on family, health and career success (see Huinink and Feldhaus, 2009; Viry et al., 2014). In particular, individual high mobility histories must be understood relative to other life trajectories, such as the career and family development. For example, high mobility during the first half of the career can have a

positive effect on career advancement but a negative effect on intimate relationships and family trajectories (Mulder and Hooimeijer, 1999).

In this chapter, we use quantitative and qualitative retrospective data to construct individual high mobility histories. We address four specific questions: (1) What are the main patterns of high mobility history in Europe and their socio-demographic determinants? (2) To what extent and for what people is high mobility a life stage? (3) To what extent is high mobility perceived as a long-term practice? (4) What are the effects of high mobility histories on the work situation, in particular, are highly mobile people more successful in their career?

A plurality of high mobility histories

The first part of this chapter uses sequence analysis to identify typical patterns of high mobility history and their socio-demographic determinants in France, Germany, Spain and Switzerland. All respondents aged 35 and over were included in the analysis (n = 1851). The younger respondents were excluded, as their high mobility histories were too short to be characterised accurately. Roughly a third of the analytic sample were highly mobile people oversampled during the first survey wave (n = 262, from the four countries) and the second survey wave (n = 365, from France and Germany). Data were unweighted. The objective of the analysis was to identify contrasting patterns of high mobility history and their relationship to socio-economic variables. It did not aim to describe the distribution of patterns within the population since the sample was not representative of the resident populations of the four countries. The patterns identified were certainly influenced by the over-representation of mobile people in 2007 and in 2011. However, these mobility behaviours occurred at different career stages and a significant portion of the sample was not mobile in 2011 (n = 1280). It is therefore reasonable to assume that the patterns identified represent common mobility histories within the resident populations of the four countries.

Respondents were asked retrospectively about current and past jobs held for at least one year since the age of 15. For each job reported, they were asked to indicate if they were highly mobile in one or more forms. Based on this information, complete individual sequences of high mobility histories were built. We ran an optimal matching (or optimal alignment) procedure, followed by a cluster analysis to group people with similar sequences.[1] Sequences that did not include any mobility episode were excluded from this classification procedure. A four-pattern solution was chosen. Figure 5.1 shows the distribution of states for each year of age grouped according to the four patterns identified. The years

corresponding to ages 53–58 were excluded from the graphs, because the number of cases was insufficient.

Type 1 individuals – early and sometimes late career mobility (*n* = 325) – were mobile in their 20s and sometimes in their early 30s, often in the form of episodes of migration. For most, this was followed by a period of non-mobility. A minority stopped working in their 30s, probably due to childbirth. The older members of this category were likely to become highly mobile in the form of daily long-distance commuting and overnighting at around age 45. A minority showed long-duration high mobility, especially in the form of overnighting.

Type 2 individuals – early and short mobility (*n* = 290) – had more homogeneous histories than the previous group. They entered the labour market early. They were highly mobile in their 20s, often in the form of migration or short periods of daily long-distance commuting/ overnighting. Most continued their careers without any additional episodes of mobility.

Type 3 individuals – long-term mobility (*n* = 426) – had the most heterogeneous histories, characterised by high mobility, often in the form of daily long-distance commuting. These individuals experienced either repeated mobility episodes punctuated by periods of non-mobility or a long mobility episode. High mobility sometimes occurred after a period of unmobile job activity.

Finally, Type 4 individuals – ongoing daily long-distance commuting (*n* = 131) – were characterised by a short period of employment without mobility followed by a long period of daily long-distance commuting that was ongoing at the time of the survey.

The high mobility behaviours for the four patterns varied significantly in duration, form, timing and frequency. The four patterns are unevenly distributed across countries due to the sampling method. The over-sampling of mobile people in Germany and France during the second survey wave logically led to an over-representation of residents of these two countries among Types 3 and 4. The statistical analyses presented below were systematically reproduced separately for the four national samples. This ensured that the effects associated with these histories did not confound country effects. The major differences observed between countries are explicitly described in the text.

Multinomial logistic regressions were run to identify the socio-demographic profiles of the four patterns of high mobility history (Table 5.1). People aged 35 and over who had never been mobile were set as the reference group (*n* = 679). The regression model was first tested on the whole sample, and then on women and men separately. People of the four patterns of high mobility histories had about two times higher
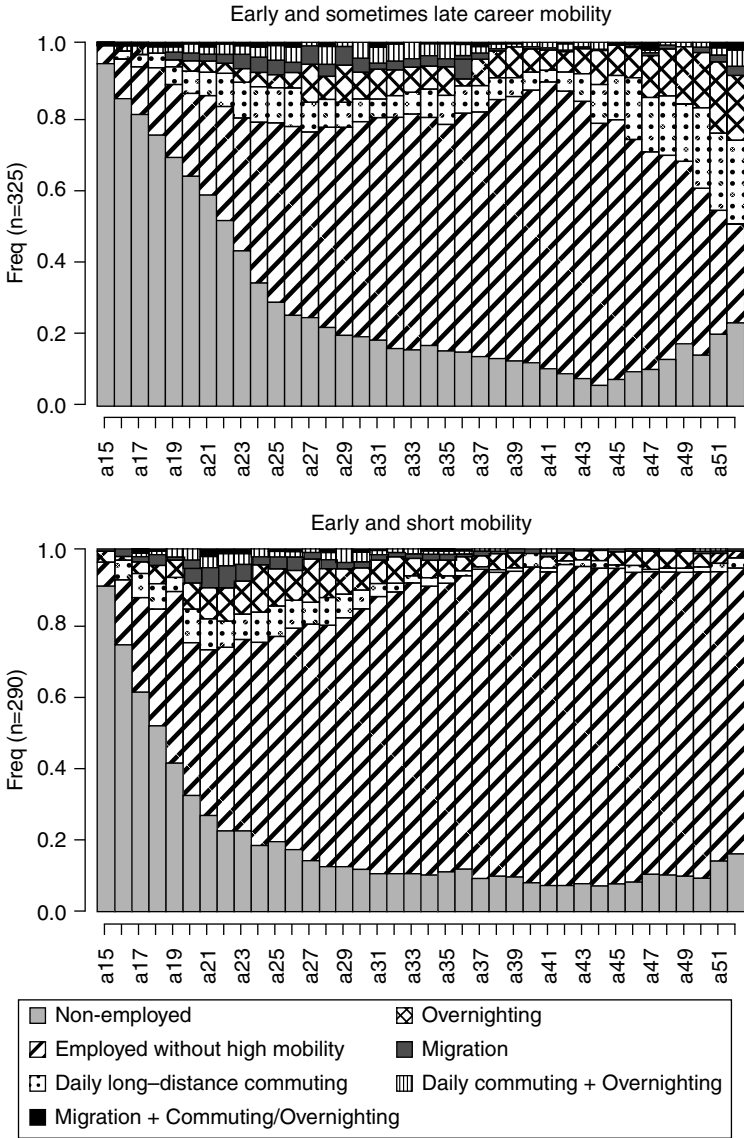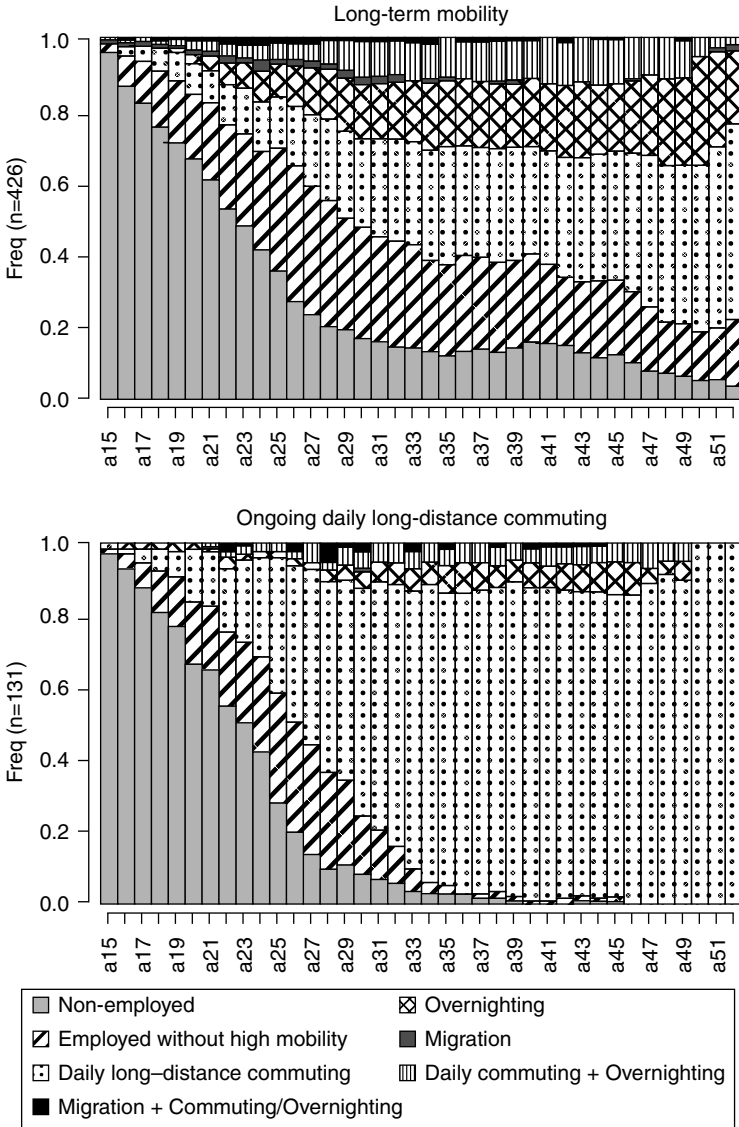
Figure 5.1   Continued

Figure 5.1 Typology of mobility histories

Source: Distribution graphs of mobility states (frequency) by age (15–51) and by patterns, population aged 35 and over in 2011, *n* = 1172, JobMob II, unweighted; Reading: at age 35, approximately 12% of Type 3 (long mobility) individuals were unemployed, 24% had a job without high mobility, 33% were long-distance commuters, 19% were overnighters, 0% had migrated and 12% practised several forms of high mobility.

Table 5.1 Socio-demographic profiles of the four patterns of high mobility histories

	Early and sometimes late career mobility			Early and short mobility		
	All	Women	Men	All	Women	Men
Women (ref.)						
Men	1.52**			1.55**		
Age: 35–42 (ref.)						
43–51	.78	.64*	1.07	.60**	.47**	.84
52–59	.35**	.22**	.53*	2.30**	2.03**	2.71**
Education level: average (ref.)						
Low	1.11	1.01	1.36	.79	.77	.83
High	2.26**	2.18**	2.31**	1.15	1.71	1.01
Household: lives with partner and children (ref.)						
Lives without partner, without children	1.63**	2.72**	.96	1.32	1.45	.97
Lives with partner, without children	1.31	1.77*	.95	1.43	1.45	1.38
Lives without partner, with children	1.49	1.70*	.86	1.24	1.44	.36
Employment status: employee (ref.)						
Self-employed	.91	1.34	.65	.69	.71	.64
Non-employed	.74	.57*	1.48	.47**	.55*	.35*

	Long-term mobility			Ongoing daily long-distance commuting		
	All	Women	Men	All	Women	Men
Gender: Women (ref.)						
Men	2.24**			2.12**		
Age: 35–42 (ref.)						
43–51	1.02	.96	1.19	5.59**	3.99**	8.29**
52–59	.42**	.42**	.44**	.74	.45	1.03
Education level: average (ref.)						
Low	.62**	.61	.65	.40**	.47	.33*
High	1.83**	2.00**	1.69**	1.62*	1.17	2.10*
Household: lives with partner and children (ref.)						
Lives without partner, without children	1.41	1.78*	1.11	1.90*	3.75**	1.16
Lives with partner, without children	1.42*	1.41	1.37	1.58	2.79**	.88
Lives without partner, with children	1.02	1.16	.44	1.37	1.45	1.83
Employment status: employee (ref.)						
Self-employed	.81	1.07	.66	.32**	.18	.39
Non-employed	.57**	.69	.46	.05**	.06**	.03**

Notes: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.

Source: Logistic regression, odds ratio, population aged 35 and over in 2011, $n = 1172$, JobMob II, unweighted Reference category: never mobile. All: -2 log-likelihood = 1378.73; $\chi^2 = 447.75$; $Df = 40$; Sign. = .000; Pseudo R^2 (Nagelkerke) = .23; $n = 1822$; Women: -2 log-likelihood = 730.26; $\chi^2 = 239.42$; $Df = 36$; Sign. = .000; Pseudo R^2 (Nagelkerke) = .22; $n = 1008$; Men: -2 log-likelihood = 604.42; $\chi^2 = 193.36$; $Df = 36$; Sign. = .000; Pseudo R^2 (Nagelkerke) = .22; $n = 814$.

odds of being men, compared with those who had not experienced high mobility during their career. Those who had been mobile early in their careers (Type 1) were more often young, with higher education levels and had entered the labour market later than people who had never experienced high mobility. The women in this group had a higher probability of being employed, living alone (without a partner or child), with a partner without children or as single parents, compared with women who had never been mobile, who more often lived with a partner and children.

People with shorter mobility episodes around age 20 (Type 2) were more often born in the 1950s and were more often employed than people who had never been highly mobile. People who had practised long-term mobility with frequent episodes (Type 3) were less likely to be from the older group. They had higher education levels than those who had never been mobile. They were more often employed and tended to live with a partner but without children. Women in this group were more likely to live alone than women without mobility experience. Finally, respondents who had been long-distance commuters their entire careers (Type 4) tended to come from the cohort born in the 1960s. They were less often self-employed than those who had never been mobile. Men from this group tended to have high education levels, while women tended to live alone or with a partner without children. Women with Types 1, 3 and 4 high mobility histories lived with a partner and children less often than those without mobility experience, while high mobility histories had no effect on household structures for men (see Chapter 8).

In the next two sections we use life story interviews to enrich the understanding of the patterns of high mobility history presented above. We discuss the variety of high mobility situations, from temporary (at least as perceived by mobile people) to long-term situations.

High mobility as a life stage

Type 2 – early and short mobility – and Type 1 – early and sometimes late career mobility – individuals are similar in profile to mobiles in transition, as discussed in the previous chapter. These people experienced high mobility early in their careers, but did not plan to continue in the long term. They often waited for employment opportunities closer to their place of residence, to which they are attached. This was the case for Emilie, a secondary school teacher who was strongly attached to the Tours region (France), where she was born and grew up. Emilie's first job was in Amiens, approximately a four hour drive from her home. This marked the beginning of her high mobility experience in the form of weekly commuting as an overnighter. After a nervous breakdown due of her inability to adjust to the situation, she obtained a placement closer

to home, which still requires daily long-distance commuting. At the time of the interview, Emilie did not see herself in this situation in the long term. She still hopes to get a teaching position in the city nearest her home within the next five years.

Like other people we interviewed, Emilie viewed this period of mobility as a transitional stage. However, such high mobility experiences may not be simple transitions. Being able to stop high mobility depends on job opportunities closer to home. The panel data show that people who considered their high mobility as transitional in 2007 were not more likely to have stopped their mobility in 2011 than those who saw it as a way of life.

Interestingly, those who did stop their high mobility were more likely to be highly educated. Among those who were daily long-distance commuters and overnighters in 2007, 56 per cent of people without a post-compulsory education were still mobile in 2011, against 38 per cent of people with a secondary education and 32 per cent of those with a university or professional degree ($n = 378$, $p < .05$). This effect was particularly strong within the younger cohorts. Young people with high education levels were over-represented within the Type 1- early career mobility. The effect of education was confirmed by multivariate regressions (Table 5.2). Stopping or starting a high mobility practice (daily long-distance commuting or overnighting) between the two survey waves was analysed according to the respondent's socio-economic situation in 2011. People who were unemployed in 2007 or in 2011 were excluded from the analyses. Results show that people with high education levels had between two and five times higher odds of stopping, *as well as starting*, long-distance commuting or overnighting practices than people without a post-compulsory education. Income level did not have a significant effect on the odds of stopping one's mobility. However, people with low incomes had more than two times higher odds of starting a high mobility practice. This was also the case for men, single people and single parents, compared to women and people living with a partner and child(ren) respectively.

Stopping high mobility was not always possible. Yet it remains true that some people – especially in the early career stages – saw their mobility as a transition rather than a long-term practice. They hoped to seize a job opportunity in the near future, enabling them to end their high mobility either by reducing the distance between home and workplace or by moving toward occupations that do not require high mobility practices.

High mobility as a long-term practice

For others, high mobility was more of a long-term career practice. Sequence analysis supported the profiles identified in the previous

Table 5.2 Factors influencing changes in mobility between the two survey waves

	Mobility ended[A]	Mobility started[B]
Gender: Women (ref.)		
Men	.95	2.35**
Age: 28–37 (ref.)		
38–47	.76	2.00*
48–57	.92	1.24
Level of education: low (ref.)		
Medium	2.37*	2.59**
High	4.65**	2.56*
Household: lives with partner and children (ref.)		
Lives without partner, without children	1.55	2.69**
Lives with partner, without children	1.33	1.53
Lives without partner, with children	1.08	8.87**
Income level[C]: medium (ref.)		
Low	2.24	2.14*
High	.63	.92
Employment status: employed (ref.)		
Self-employed	1.66	.33
Constant	.32	.02**
Pseudo R^2 (Nagelkerke)	.13	.13
χ^2	15.12	57.92
D*f*	11	11
Significance of the model	.177	.000

Notes: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.
Source: Logistic regressions, odd ratio, panel population, JobMob II, unweighted. [A] Analytic sample: highly mobile people in 2007 (daily long-distance commuting or overnighting) professionally active in 2011, *n* = 339; [B] Analytic sample: professionally active non-mobile people (daily long-distance commuting or overnighting) in 2007, *n* = 973; [C] Household income level relative to purchasing power parity (PPP) and per unit of consumption within the household.

chapter based on life story interviews. However, high mobility as a long-term practice includes a variety of situations.

Type 3 long-term mobility histories comprised three distinct profiles, as presented in the previous chapter. First, there are those who chose mobile jobs, like Jean the train driver or Eric the mobile constable. In these cases, high mobility, which is inherently linked to the occupation, is considered in the long-term perspective of a career trajectory.

Another profile is that of travellers. Often socialised to high mobility at an early age travellers tend to practise high mobility in the form of over-nighting and experience it very positively. Their high mobility practices give them a sense of both professional and personal fulfilment, which is also associated with their strong motility, as discussed in Chapter 6. Such was the case for Philippe and Martin in the qualitative sample.

Type 3 long-term mobility histories also appear to be associated with frequent and relatively short episodes of high mobility. This echoes the profile of 'precarious' individuals, whose career trajectories reveal a high degree of job insecurity and a succession of short-term jobs. In such cases, individuals resign themselves to high mobility as an economic necessity.

The precarious group also sheds light on Type 4 individuals, ongoing daily long-distance commuting. For instance, for economic reasons Thierry was forced to combine several jobs in order to survive. Although these jobs were in some cases long-term jobs, their geographic dispersion required intensive daily commuting. This situation becomes ongoing due to economic necessity. However, Type 4, above all, includes daily long-distance commuters living in metropolitan areas, for example outlying cities in Germany and Switzerland, or the Paris region in France. People accepted their situation of daily long-distance commuting due to the specific nature of their residential location. High mobility was therefore seen as necessary, something that goes along with metropolitan living. It was also acceptable because of the career opportunities it offered.

Finally, the life story interviews also revealed a certain instability in high mobility situations. Several respondents who reported having stopped their high mobility between the 2007 and 2011 waves had returned to high mobility when we interviewed them several months later for the life story interview. This observation also echoes Type 3 histories, especially when they resulted from repeated mobility episodes. Certain social categories (high education levels, low salaries, young people) appear to be more affected by instability in high mobility situations than others. For those with low incomes, this pattern may well be due to job insecurity and repeated short-term contracts.

The effects of high mobility histories on careers

Traditionally, it has been assumed that moving and travelling long distances for work was positively associated with career success (see for example Cooke, 2003; So et al., 2001; van Ham, 2001, 2003). One reason is that mobile workers have broader job search areas. They can seize job opportunities outside their immediate surroundings and compete for

more jobs. Secondly, career gains are likely to be greater when people move or commute to specific destinations with particularly active labour markets, typically large city centres and economically dynamic regions (Bassand et al., 1985; Fielding, 1992). Furthermore, there are reasons to suspect that jobs requiring frequent business trips are, on average, better paid than other jobs because they are demanding in terms of time and effort (Aguilera, 2008; Bonnet and Orain, 2010).

However, there are two major limitations to existing research in this area. Firstly, evidence of the positive impact of past mobility experiences on career achievement comes mainly from migration studies. Little is known about the effect of past experiences of long-distance commuting and frequent overnight business trips. In a retrospective national study in the Netherlands, van Ham (2001) found that people who accepted a job 45 km or more away progressed further in their careers than those who were less mobile. In a subsequent study, van Ham (2003) showed that the positive link between spatial mobility and career advancement found previously for job-to-job mobility is also true for a longer period of time. He concluded that long-distance mobility serves as an instrument to accumulate human capital more rapidly and is beneficial for the career in the long term. However, the data did not distinguish between migration and long-distance commuting.

A second limitation to the research is the difficulty of disentangling direct effects of spatial mobility on career achievement from indirect ones. In particular, highly mobile people, especially overnighters, are more often men, highly-qualified people and full-time workers in the service sector and creative industries, conditions that often imply better job positions, higher wages and socio-economic status. When all these factors are controlled, the positive link between long-distance travel and career success is far from clear (Lück and Ruppenthal, 2010; Viry et al., 2014).

The last part of this chapter examines whether the patterns of high mobility histories previously identified (and thereby the duration and timing of mobility experiences) impact an individual's career success. New regression models were performed with the patterns of high mobility history as predictors of a respondent's professional situation. People who had never been highly mobile were set as the reference group. Because some people travel intensively *owing to* their hierarchical position, these regression models cannot be regarded as strictly causal, but rather as a way of testing the strength of the relationship between high mobility histories and career achievement. Career achievement was measured using five indicators: (1) having a senior position (managerial/supervisory responsibilities); (2) having an open-ended contract; (3) being unemployed and searching for a job; (4) household income level relative to purchasing power parity

(PPP) and per unit of consumption within the household; (5) job status measured by ISEI (International Socio-Economic Index of Occupational Status), capturing the cultural and economic resources associated with a given occupation (Ganzeboom et al., 1992). The ISEI score is strongly correlated with occupational prestige as measured by opinion polls.

We tested logistic regression models for the first three economic indicators (binary variables) and linear (OLS) regression models for the last two (continuous variables). Socio-demographic variables were used as control variables. The results for the entire analytic sample are presented in Table 5.3.[2] We also tested the regression models separately for men and women, and for the four countries studied (not shown here). Important gender or national disparities are discussed in the text.

Overall, a clear link between high mobility histories and career achievement across the four countries was not confirmed by the analysis. People with early and short mobility histories (Type 2) or long mobility histories (Types 3 and 4) tended to have higher professional statuses than people who had never been mobile. This effect was particularly strong for women in France and Germany. We also observed this effect for people with early career mobility (Type 1) if we included people who were unemployed during the second survey wave (ISEI index for the last occupation). However, higher status did not translate into higher wages or increasing odds of supervisory responsibilities. High mobility histories had no effect on household income level. Only those with early career mobility (Type 1) had significantly higher odds of having a managerial position than people who had never been mobile. This effect was particularly strong for women in France. Long mobility histories (Types 3 and 4) therefore did not increase the likelihood of having a high income or managerial responsibilities. People with long-term mobility histories (Type 3) in Switzerland were an exception. These people had higher incomes and a greater chance of having a managerial position than Swiss with no mobility experience. The effect of high mobility histories on the odds of having a permanent contract was mixed. Ongoing daily long-distance commuters (Type 4) tended to have such contracts. Those with early career mobility (Type 1) more often had fixed-term contracts. This effect was particularly strong in Spain, where Type 3 histories were also associated with fixed-term contracts. However, it was also observed in Germany and France. Finally, we observed that a high education level reduced the risk of unemployment more than high mobility experiences. As identified in Chapter 7, high mobility may, however, be a way of avoiding unemployment in periods of economic crisis.

Two general observations can be made from these results. First, there is no clear link between high mobility histories and high hierarchical

Table 5.3   Effect of patterns of high mobility history on economic indicators

	Manager	Open-ended contract	Unemployed	Income	ISEI
Patterns of high mobility history: never mobile (ref.)					
1. Early and sometimes late career mobility	1.60**	.49**	.92	.02	.04
2. Early and short mobility	1.35	.98	.51	-.01	.06*
3. Long-term mobility	1.25	.81	.79	.04	.09**
4. Ongoing daily long-distance commuting	.92	3.14*	.14*	-.02	.05*
Gender: Women (ref.)					
Men	2.03**	2.16**	.76	.06**	.03
Age: 35–42 (ref.)					
43–51	1.28*	1.40	.93	.05	-.02
52–59	1.13	1.30	1.08	.05	-.02
Education level: medium (ref.)					
Low	1.13	.78	1.86*	-.04	-.11**
High	1.27*	.71	.42**	.13**	.42**
Household: lives with partner and children (ref.)					
Lives without partner, without children	.96	.94	1.40	.12**	.02
Lives with partner, without children	1.04	1.15	.77	.13**	.05*
Lives without partner, with children	.96	1.72	.69	-.02	-.01
Employment: employee (ref.)					
Self-employed	.98			.04	.03
Constant	.30**	7.75**	.08**	1039.58**	45.27**
Pseudo R2 (Nagelkerke)/R2	.06	.07	.08	.06	.26
χ2/F	68.70	42.75	43.17	8.08	37.75
Df	13	12	12	13	13
Significance of the model	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
N	1574	1400	1658	1575	1392

Notes: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.
Source: Logistic regressions (manager, open-ended contract, unemployed) and OLS regressions (income, ISEI), odds ratio or standardised coefficient, population aged 35+ in 2011, JobMob II, unweighted. Category of reference: never mobile.

positions (managers, high wages) when controlling for socio-demographics. Secondly, long-term high mobility appears to have a different effect on careers depending on the specific population studied. While long-term high mobility generally had a positive effect on careers in Switzerland and women's careers in France, it tended to be associated with job insecurity in Spain.

These findings support the normalisation/inflation model in which today's work-related high mobility has become something that is expected of workers and taken for granted by employers. From this perspective, spatial mobility is not so much a factor in upward social mobility as a way of maintaining one's status or avoiding downward social mobility (Limmer and Schneider, 2008). The absence of a clear relationship between long-term high mobility experiences and career success may be because domestic and private motivations underlie long-distance travel, such as daily or weekly commuting. A strong sense of attachment to one particular place or community may, for instance, lead some people to commute intensively. Thus, high mobility may more often be a way of combining a distant workplace with a residence in a particular location than of merely maximising professional opportunities. Long-distance commuting for precarious profiles (see the previous section) may even reflect economic hardship. Employees with fixed-term contracts may be deterred from moving closer to their work places (Vincent-Geslin, 2012). Moreover, some low-wage employees have no choice but to live outside a city due to high real estate prices (Green et al., 1999; Orfeuil, 2004).

Conclusion

This chapter examined individual high mobility histories based on quantitative and qualitative data. It identified (1) main patterns of high mobility history across the four European countries; (2) the socio-demographic profiles of the actors involved; (3) the impact of high mobility histories on work situations.

We showed that long-distance commuting and frequent overnight business trips occur at various times during a career versus migration, which often occurs in the early career stages and before childbirth. This underlines the importance of studying high mobility over the course of people's lives. Some people decide to spend more time commuting or travelling for work-related reasons at specific stages in their careers, such as after a promotion or when re-entering the labour market. In other cases, high mobility is experienced in the long term, especially when associated with a mobile occupation or a residential arrangement. Finally, some people start and stop being mobile depending

on the opportunities and constraints of the labour market. Highly-educated people, those with low incomes and young people have more fluctuating mobility histories, combining periods of high mobility and non-mobility.

High mobility as a life phase or lifestyle is linked to notions of power and motility – an individual's potential to be mobile (see next chapter). Our study shows that those wanting to end high mobility practices were not more likely to do so than those who did not want to. People with high education levels start and stop high mobility practices the most often. Finding an (equivalent) job close to home or finding housing close to the workplace depend on particular conditions of possibility. These possibilities are not evenly distributed among the population. Nor is the ability to travel (in good conditions), the interest in doing so or the ability to benefit from this mobility. People endowed with strong cultural and economic capital, and high motility, are likely to have more possibilities when it comes to arranging their family, residential and professional lives. This point will be discussed further in the next chapter, which examines the links between motility, high mobility practices and self-perception of these practices by actors.

Finally, we showed that high mobility histories are only weakly associated with career achievement when controlling for socio-demographics. Media representations of CEOs, top managers and show business celebrities are certainly a reality, but do not reflect the diversity of situations. As illustrated in this and the previous chapters, high mobility covers a large variety of economic situations and family/residential arrangements. High mobility has varied effects on careers depending on the specific population studied. For example, in Switzerland and among women in France, long-term high mobility histories have positive effects on individual careers. However, in Spain they are associated with job insecurity. In some situations, high mobility can be directly or indirectly associated with career opportunities, such as a managerial position involving frequent business trips abroad. But it can also be associated with economic insecurity, when workers have to combine several jobs in order to get by. Likewise, high mobility can be mainly driven by family and/or personal reasons. The link between high mobility and job insecurity, and the issue of unemployment in particular, will be discussed further in Chapter 7.

Notes

1. Optimal matching algorithms determine the dissimilarity (or distance) between two sequences by minimising the 'cost' of transforming one sequence into

another by inserting, deleting or substituting states (Abbott and Forrest, 1986; Abbott and Tsay, 2000; Stovel and Bolan, 2004). The cost of substituting state *i* with state *j* (a different work/mobility status) was set at 1 when the two states corresponded to different forms of mobility. It was set at 2 when one of the states was 'unemployed', and at 3 when the substitution was between a state of mobility and an 'employed, not mobile' state. The latter cost was higher in order to better distinguish between periods of mobility and non-mobility. The cost of inserting or deleting one state was 4. For example, consider two people of the same age who entered the labour market the same year and had no interruption in their careers. If the first person was a long-distance commuter for 7 years and practised no other form of mobility, and the second had never been mobile, then the inter-sequence distance would be 7. An ascendant hierarchical cluster analysis using the Ward minimum variance method (Everitt, 1993) was run on the inter-sequence distances (the dissimilarity matrix) in order to group similar patterns of sequences (Gabadinho et al., 2009; Studer, 2013). A four-fold typology was constructed. Other cost schemes and groupings were tested and eventually rejected because they did not lead to a more clearly interpretable grouping. Unlike the sequence analysis in Chapter 3, we chose not to truncate the sequences in order to include maximum data information. The sequences were therefore incomplete and of variable length. The longest trajectories were from ages 15 to 59, and the shortest from 15 to 35. The optimal matching algorithm tends to group sequences of similar length. However, the high variability of sequence lengths within each type suggests that respondents were grouped based more on their mobility profile than their age.
2. We excluded from the analyses respondents unemployed during the second survey wave (n = 248), apart from job seekers (n = 83) in the model for unemployment. Self-employed people (n = 171) were excluded from the model for the type of employment contract.

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6
Motility and High Mobility

Yann Dubois, Emmanuel Ravalet, Stéphanie Vincent-Geslin and Vincent Kaufmann

Introduction

Does being highly mobile require a specific set of skills, accesses and aspirations? This chapter is about motility, or people's mobility potential. Research shows that motility takes many forms and is not necessarily associated with social class (Kaufmann et al., 2010; Maksim, 2011; Witter, 2012). This raises the question of whether motility is a resource in its own right, vis-à-vis an individual's position in the social hierarchy and life course.

In this chapter we focus specifically on the role of motility as high mobility potential, regardless of whether or not it is transformed into movement and high mobility practices. Two main considerations guide our analysis. The first is to understand how motility is distributed among the population and how it evolves over time. To do this, we distinguish between different types of motility. The second issue relates more specifically to the relationship between motility and mobility. We address the role of motility in people's relationship with high mobility, such as practising, being reluctant to or not being exposed to high mobility. In relation to this issue, we also explore the link between modal practices and motility. We address these issues with quantitative and qualitative data using both cross-sectional and longitudinal perspectives.

Motility: what potential?

Individuals are characterised by a more or less pronounced propensity to be mobile in geographical, economic and social spaces. This propensity is referred to as motility, in reference to the biological definition of this term. Motility is defined as the set of personal characteristics that allows

people to be mobile. It includes physical ability, aspirations to be mobile or sedentary, access to transport and telecommunication systems, learnt skills (for example, driving license or international English for travel) (Kaufmann, 2002). Motility therefore refers to: (1) social conditions of access, that is, the conditions that make it possible to use transport supply in a broad sense; (2) the skills required to use it; (3) mobility plans, that is, actual use of available transport to materialise these plans.

The concept of motility helps to identify the relationship between the possibilities of mobility in a particular area, the way people seize these opportunities according to their own capacities and the actual mobility practices. Without necessarily naming this concept, the scientific literature addresses the three dimensions that comprise motility: access, skills and plans.

Access

A large body of literature claims that access is a key feature of contemporary society (Castells, 1996; Bauman, 2000; Urry, 2007a). Some, like Rifkin (2000), go so far as to make it the organising paradigm of the capitalism of the future. The virtualisation of property and money, elimination of stocks, decline of fixed capital and privatisation of public spaces, such as shopping centres, is paving the way toward a new era in which networks replace markets and access replaces property (Rifkin, 2000: 10). Socio-economics and geography have long focused on the issue of access, in both its monetary and temporal aspects. In economic terms, access functions on a price basis, and thus relates to income. Price influences both the possibility of being mobile and the mode of transport used (Kenyon et al., 2002; Lucas, 2012). A good example is the access to home ownership, which is regulated by price. In order to own property, households with modest incomes are sometimes forced to move away from urban centres to low-density areas that are less well-served by public transport. This subsequently leads to increasing car dependency and daily travel costs (Motte-Baumvol et al., 2012). Commuters who work downtown and use public transport because they cannot afford a parking space is another example of the effects of economic constraints associated with access. These findings echo phenomena known as ghettoisation and spatial mismatch, which are widely addressed in works on deprived areas (Fieldhouse, 1999; Gobillon et al., 2007; see also next Chapter). They show that people from low-income households usually wish they lived in another environment (Kaufmann et al., 2001). Lack of access to a personal car among poor households strongly limits daily activity schedules and access to jobs, and therefore both

spatial and social mobility (Dupuy and Bost, 2001; Kenyon et al., 2002; Froud et al., 2005). In the United Kingdom, for example, young people with a driving license are twice as likely to find a job as those without. Similarly, twice as many people without cars as with cars said they had trouble maintaining friendship ties (Urry, 2007b). As a result of these combined factors, many lower income households find it necessary to own a car, even if it means spending much of their income on it (Froud et al., 2005).

The notion of access was also widely studied in geography and economics in the 1970s, with the development of time geography and temporal metrics (Hägerstrand, 1975). This approach emphasises the importance of time in human activities, in particular the ways in which mobility and access are regulated by temporal patterns. The schedules of transport services and facilities act as external constraints upon the actions and movements of social actors. Having flexible working hours, for instance, allows one to avoid traffic congestion and have greater freedom to choose among a wider range of modes of transport. Contrarily, working evenings, nights or irregular shifts often necessitate travelling by car. Moreover, these time constraints jeopardise the possibility of a rich social life. Recent studies in England on the relationship between time and access show that the absence of a social 'routine' makes organising and accessing activities difficult (Shove, 2002; Cass et al., 2005). These works also show that policy makers often design access relative to work, school and other public services and facilities, rather than to private (commercial) facilities or personal relationships (families, friends) (Urry, 2007b). Additionally, the issue of access is still thought of in terms of physical access (that is, transport), rather than time, which often results in constraining schedules (Neutens, 2010).

Skills

Over the past twenty years, skills have become a key concept in the social sciences, around which a wide range of issues, including social inequality, have been explored (Sen, 1997). In particular, the pragmatic, practice-oriented, sociology focuses on the plurality of an actor's skills (Genard, 2008). The question of skills is also addressed by the literature using Bourdieu's notions of economic, social and cultural capital that are accumulated and incorporated by individuals.

Being creative and knowing how to play with mobility options requires an increasingly large set of skills to link proximity, travel and long-distance communication in everyday life. These skills are predominantly associated with the ability to plan and improvise in space and time, and

to familiarise with places. Mobility skills also include knowing how to drive, use public transport, get around and read a map (Kaufmann et al., 2010). Similarly, certain everyday skills, like knowing how to read, speak or understand the local language, also influence the ability to be mobile (Church et al., 2000; Lamont et al., 2013). As resources that are not possessed equally by all actors they generate inequalities. Differences in skills result from a multitude of factors, including physiological abilities such as being able to orient oneself, managing stress, using different modes of transport and communication, imagining the course of a day and projecting oneself. More simply, walking, driving, flying and taking the train all require certain physical and mental skills that are linked to age (children, the elderly) and disability (obesity, vision/hearing problems) (Church et al., 2000). While only a complete absence of these skills would prevent a person from being mobile, they can, nonetheless, influence the level of comfort and the chances of being able to adapt to unforeseen events.

Some studies show that mobility skills can also be utilised by lower income actors to compensate for limited access to communication and transport systems (see for example Maksim, 2011). Juggling special offers on cell phones, low-cost flights and last-minute travel can increase an individual's motility, avoiding the restrictive prices of standard fare travel. This depends on the individual's ability to anticipate and respond to price changes. Similarly, the ability to organise trips with relatives and friends, such as borrowing a vehicle or carpooling, is often essential for non-car-owning households (Cass et al., 2005).

Mobility plans and aspirations

Drawing on Paul-Henry Chombart de Lauwe's works on the importance of aspirations, the literature on plans has grown considerably in recent decades, notably from an individualist perspective based, in particular, on the notion of experience. François Dubet (1994), noting a breakdown in the logic of action, called for a sociology of experience, that is, 'a sociology of behaviours dominated by the heterogeneity of their constitutive principles and by the activity of individuals who have to make sense of their practices within this heterogeneity' (Dubet, 1994: 15). The notion of experience allows us to link a theoretical project with an empirical sociology of action. Framed around a combination of logics of action, the concept of experience is characterised by three key features: (1) the heterogeneity of the cultural and social principles that organise behaviours, which can stem as much from instrumentality as from the integration of values, routines, and emotional aspects; (2) the

critical distance people maintain regarding their practices and the available opportunities; (3) the absence of an a priori organising principle in the construction of the social world (Dubet, 1994: 16–19). In this context, the acquisition of motility and its transformation into movement is built mainly on plans and aspirations.

The central role of plans in this sense mirrors the literature on access. One of the obstacles faced by policies aimed at providing good public transport access in poor neighbourhoods is related to the dimension of planning. It is undoubtedly becoming easier to travel outside one's neighbourhood, as effective and cheap offers do exist, but to go where and do what? To fulfil what desires? (Urry, 2007b). Many studies show that it is difficult for some disadvantaged people to 'tear themselves away' from their place of residence to take part in plans involving movement (see for example Le Breton, 2005; Oppenchaim, 2011). Having or not having plans results from a form of inequality that Raymond Boudon already cited as one of the reasons for unequal opportunities in terms of professional mobility (Boudon, 1995).

Several studies focus on mobility intentions and dispositions of individuals and households, with regard to migration and residential choices, such as aspirations to live elsewhere (Lu, 1999; Kaufmann et al., 2001; de Groot et al., 2011a, 2011b). Other studies focus more specifically on work-related mobility and the choice between migration and long-distance commuting to get a job or after a corporate relocation (Ahn et al., 1999; Eby and Russell, 2000; van Ham and Hooimeijer, 2009; Cassel et al., 2013).

Together, access, skills and plans define the individual's and the household's ability to be mobile. More than merely comparing haves and have-nots, the motility literature highlights the plurality of possible patterns of motility (Vincent-Geslin and Kaufmann, 2012).

Measuring motility with mixed methods

To better understand and explain the relationship between motility and high mobility, and how motility evolves over time, we used both qualitative and quantitative methods. The evolution of motility over time was examined based on panel data. Cross-sectional data were used to analyse how high mobility is experienced by people relative to their motility.

Addressing motility relative to high mobility first requires a reflection on its specific features. While issues relative to access and mobility plans are relatively straightforward, the existence and nature of specific high mobility skills appear to be more complex. Mobility skills cover a variety

of dimensions. However, these dimensions are still little understood and, as a result, were not all tested in the quantitative questionnaire. The qualitative study explored in greater depth a larger set of skills linked to high mobility. These skills are structured around three key dimensions: knowledge, time management skills and spatial management skills.

These skills are primarily cognitive. We observed that the individuals most comfortable with their high mobility were those with language and technology skills, especially in using smartphones and computers. These individuals were also those with the best knowledge of road and public transport networks. For example, drivers are very skilled at driving, know their routes and the dangers, and know how to use GPS and collaborative tools, like speed camera detectors. Public transport users are familiar with schedules, lines and alternative routes in case of strikes or technical problems.

Time and space management skills include the ability to organise and anticipate trips by scheduling appointments in advance.

> Yes, even now, I try as much as possible to make all my appointments for my rounds before leaving for the week, sometimes one week to the next. Which means I make between two and four appointments a day. Four is extremely rare. (Pierre, 50 years old, sales engineer, overnighter, living in an urban centre)

Another sign of such organisation is the ability to use travel time for working (see Chapter 9). This can be during travel or down time at a hotel. Highly mobile people, especially those regularly absent from home, are often particularly skilled in maximising their time away from home.

Improvisation and rescheduling skills are also important time management skills, given the risks associated with appointments or travel conditions:

> Some appointments are shorter, some are longer. When they're shorter, and I've got time on my hands, I fill in. I've got a list of replacements, extra visits to do. Sometimes, when I know a place well enough, I go without it…I go and see so and so, a client or potential client. (Pierre, 50 years old, sales engineer, overnighter, living in an urban centre)

> Sometimes, there are certain clients that aren't open, so you have to switch and do another a bit further away and then backtrack. Because there are delivery hours. This morning I had one [person] complaining

because I got there too early. We're used to it, he complains all the time. He's a perpetual moaner. But I told him I had no choice. I'd finished all the deliveries in Erquy and did him on the way back. Well, but you're too early. So I said, yeah, but the next client isn't going to say I'm too early ... And I can't just sit around and wait a half hour in front of his door. (Claude, 51 years old, delivery driver, daily long-distance commuter, living in a small urban centre)

Time and space management skills are also illustrated by mobile people's ability to use travel time and spaces effectively, to feel at home in unfamiliar places and to know how to find their way around (see Chapter 9). Conversely, highly mobile individuals who do not have these skills experience a higher degree of anxiety and stress in regard to their mobility and do not plan high mobility practices in the long term. Moreover, social skills, such as openness to change, ease of making or breaking contact, and managing social relationships at a distance, are part of a broad understanding of motility (see Chapter 4).

Motility typology

The typology of motility presented in this section was specifically developed in relation to high mobility, and so does not measure motility in everyday life. In particular, we placed emphasis on people's ability to uproot themselves and resettle elsewhere, and their aptitude for reversibility.

The typology is based on approximately 15 variables relative to the three dimensions of motility: access (contextual and personal), skills and mobility plans. Mobility plans were measured based on a series of questions asking respondents to rate their willingness to be highly mobile for a job or a promotion. Five forms of mobility were included: daily long-distance commuting, weekly long-distance commuting (dual residences), frequent overnight business trips but also moving to another region and to another country.[1] Following Kaufmann et al. (2010), a factor analysis was run on these variables and a hierarchical classification (cluster analysis) was applied based on factor scores. A six-group solution was chosen. The motility types are presented in the following section.

Panel data require the use of specific methods. As we wanted similar typologies for 2007 and 2011, we used a multi-date method (Piron et al., 2004). We built a single typology using pooled data (from both waves) and distinguished the 2007 individuals from those in the 2011 survey.

This technique allowed for relatively stable groups over time, insofar as a single typology was created.

The three dimensions of motility – access, skills and plans – evolve at different rates over time. Chapter 4 partly explored this issue by distinguishing different ways of acquiring mobility skills and plans, in childhood, youth or adulthood. Overall, it appears that these skills are built gradually over the course of mobility experiences and over a relatively long period of time. More generally, skills – especially linguistic skills – among adults appear to be fairly stable. In the European Union, only a minute fraction of people continue to learn new languages as adults (European Commission, 2012). In the same vein, transport infrastructures evolve slowly.[2] However, personal access to mobility (for example the possession of new technologies or a personal car) and mobility plans are likely to change in the short term. The quantitative part of the study helped to measure these changes. While access to laptop computers and the Internet clearly increased between the two waves, we did not observe a significant change with regard to car ownership. Willingness to be mobile for job reasons changed significantly between 2007 and 2011. While willingness to undertake high mobility increased, more irreversible forms, like interregional and international migration, declined. Finally – and unexpectedly – skills such as being able to read a map or orientate oneself in space decreased between the two waves. At first glance, this undermined the idea of motility increasing with mobility experience. However, closer observation shows that this decrease was only significant among non-mobile people in 2007 and 2011. Overall, it appears that skills and mobility plans evolved significantly less among highly mobile people than among non-mobile people.

A plurality of motility types

Six motility patterns were identified based on the empirical typology. Table 6.1 and Table 6.2 present the profiles of the motility patterns for 2011.[3] The first pattern – the unmotile – was comprised of people with particularly low motility. This was the largest group in our sample (24.1 per cent). Although their access to transport infrastructure was close to average, their personal equipment in terms of mobility was low, especially with regard to laptop ownership. This group was also characterised by weak language skills and a lack of willingness to be highly mobile. Socio-demographically, this group was the oldest in the sample (Table 6.2). This may be an age effect, as motility may decrease with age due to declining physical abilities (Church et al., 2000) or difficulty adapting

Table 6.1 Profile of motility patterns in 2011 (mean)

	Unmotile	Reluctant to be mobile	Willing to be mobile	Reversibles	Non-reversibles	Very motile	Total
Contextual access (at X minutes from home)							
Highway (20 min.)	.87	.85	.80	.95	.97	.95	.89
Regional train (20 min.)	.90	.86	.82	.98	1.00	.88	.90
High-speed train (20 min.)	.59	.58	.48	.70	.57	.67	.60
Airport (45 min.)	.64	.58	.63	.63	.85	.72	.66
Personal access							
Laptop computer	.48	.64	.55	.73	.77	.75	.63
Internet	.89	.96	.88	.98	1.00	.96	.94
Car	.90	.95	.89	.81	.98	.91	.91
Skills							
Number of languages spoken	.30	.70	.37	.70	.69	.67	.56
English proficiency	.00	.96	.09	.95	1.00	.91	.61
Ability to read maps and orient oneself in space	.62	.71	.74	.65	.85	.73	.70
Ability to consider a long-distance move (50 km) as an opportunity	.54	.56	.60	.33	.94	.80	.61
Willingness to be highly mobile							
Interregional migration	.13	.14	.46	.19	.49	.80	.31
International migration	.07	.09	.42	.18	.43	.69	.26
Daily long-distance commuting	.28	.11	.81	.54	.32	.84	.42
Dual residences	.06	.02	.62	.11	.06	.76	.22
Frequent travel	.17	.15	.76	.59	.53	.93	.44

Source: Cross table, total population, age 29–58 in 2011, JobMob II, 'countries equally weighted'.

Table 6.2 Motility types in 2011 according to socio-demographics

	Unmotile	Reluctant to be mobile	Willing to be mobile	Reversibles	Non-reversibles	Very motile
29–38 (ref.)						
39–48	1.40*	1.09	1.84**	1.09	.66*	.41***
49–58	2.16***	1.25	1.10	.93	.46***	.52**
Woman (ref.)						
Man	.77*	.42***	1.96***	1.24	1.54*	1.49*
Secondary education (ref.)						
No post-compulsory education	.59**	1.29	.96	2.01***	1.04	.78
Higher education	.30***	1.52**	.63*	1.95***	1.81**	1.08
Lives with partner and child(ren) (ref.)						
Lives alone	.51***	.40***	2.68***	.95	.70	3.34***
Lives with partner, without children	.90	.85	1.28	.61*	1.19	2.04**
Lives without partner, with children	.58*	1.24	1.07	.46	1.98*	1.62
Average income (ref.)						
Low income	1.48**	.71*	1.26	1.26	.56**	.74
High income	.55**	1.03	.85	2.12***	.78	1.22
Significance of the model	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
N (unweighted)	1496	1496	1496	1496	1496	1496
χ2	165.27	91.29	66.40	52.20	52.77	98.52
Degree of freedom	10	10	10	10	10	10
Model -2 log-likelihood	1479.26	1490.47	1119.11	1194.62	1053.64	987.67
Pseudo R2 (Nagelkerke)	.16	.09	.08	.06	.07	.12

Notes: *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001.
Source: Logistic regressions, odds ratio, total population, aged 29–58 in 2011, JobMob II, 'countries equally weighted'.

to or using new technologies, such as the Internet or smartphones. But it can also be a life course effect. People in later stages of their life course are more likely to seek a stable living environment than people in earlier phases, and therefore are less willing to make major residential changes (Fischer and Malmberg, 2001). Having a (working) partner, being married, having children, owning a house and being employed locally are all conditions that anchor people to their area and hinder high mobility. Further supporting this idea, we noted a greater proportion of home-owners among those with low motility. People with low motility report being particularly attached to their living environment, be it their place or country of residence. Additionally, low motility was associated with low income. In previous studies, income was found to be an important factor in influencing mobility potential (Urry, 2007b; Kaufmann, 2008; Fol, 2009).

People reluctant to be mobile constituted the second motility pattern (22.6 per cent of the sample) This group had low levels of high mobility willingness as in the previous group, but their mobility skills were far superior. The socio-demographic makeup of this group was also different, particularly with regard to income and education levels. People reluctant to be mobile were typically well-educated and had middle or high incomes. This discrepancy between skills/access and willingness to be mobile is interesting. The desire for immobility is also prominent among those who are better equipped in terms of mobility skills and higher resources. This rejection of high mobility seems to be long-term in nature, as people from this category are less likely to have been long-distance commuters or overnighters during the course of their careers. However, they are more likely to have migrated, perhaps to avoid long commutes or nights away from home. The sedentariness of this group is also linked to a strong attachment to home. Finally, these first two groups, both with little willingness to be highly mobile, are primarily made up of women.

Directly opposed to the previous group are the people willing to be mobile (13.6 per cent). These people are typically characterised by limited skills, average access and a strong willingness to be highly mobile. While the reluctant group reflects an image of chosen immobility, the latter group appears more forced to be mobile by unfavourable economic, or possibly social, circumstances. Their lower education level, their poor linguistic skills and the fact that few have ever migrated in their life does not stop them from reporting to be willing to migrate or travel frequently. Housing indicators reflect disadvantaged living conditions. People in this category are three times as likely to live with family or

friends rent free than to be homeowners. Men and single people have a higher probability of belonging to this group.

The fourth motility pattern, reversibles (14.9 per cent of the sample), is comprised of people with good access to transport systems and mobility technologies, good mobility skills and strong willingness to be highly mobile, such as long-distance commuting and frequent travel. The socio-demographic composition of this group is quite heterogeneous. There are no clear tendencies regarding age, gender and social class. Both people with low and high educational levels are over-represented in this category compared to people with a medium educational level. They also tend to live with partners and children and have high incomes. The willingness of these individuals to engage in high mobility does not preclude previous experiences of migration. Hence, the majority of these individuals have already lived abroad or moved to another region for work. Their high mobility willingness appears to be related to a moderate to strong attachment to their place and country of residence.

Non-reversibles (13 per cent) are characterised by very good access and skills (the best in the sample). They also tend to be open to inter-regional or international migration, but also to go frequently on business trips. The group's name refers to its weak willingness to make long commutes on a daily or weekly basis. These individuals are primarily young, well-educated men and few of them have low salaries. Their strong willingness to migrate is often coupled with a weak attachment to a place and country of residence. The predominance of individuals in rental housing also reflects this pattern. Moreover, single parents are more likely to belong to this group. Hence, for these people raising their child(ren) alone, moving to another region or country appears to be more feasible than long daily or weekly commutes, despite the implications of uprooting and resettling.

The last group, the very motile (11.8 per cent), sharply contrasts with the first. The people in this group have very good access and skills, and are open to any form of high mobility and migration. Even dual location households with weekly commutes, unpopular among the other groups except the willing to be mobile, is conceivable for them. Demographically, the predominant makeup of this group was young males (single or not) without children. Few were homeowners. Their strong willingness to be highly mobile was accompanied by a weak attachment to the country of residence and previous experience of living abroad. Private life and family obligations do not stop these individuals from envisaging any form of work-related mobility.

The empirical typology highlights contrasting motility patterns. People's motility can be classified according to two main dimensions. The first concerns skills and access. The unmotile and the willing to be mobile have skills and access that are markedly inferior to the other groups. The second dimension relates to willingness to be highly mobile. Four groups can be distinguished, two at each extreme: the unmotile and reluctant to be mobile (weak disposition) and the willing to be mobile and very motile (strong disposition). The reversibles and non-reversibles fall between the two, favouring one form of mobility or another.

Motility in the long term

After considering individuals' motility in 2011, we now look at how motility changed over time. This section begins by exploring the changes identified for each motility group before analysing changes in an individual's willingness to be highly mobile, a powerful factor in driving actual motility change.

The distribution of the six motility patterns remained relatively stable between 2007 and 2011 among our panel sample, around 60 per cent of individuals stayed in the same category. Marked changes are only identified within particular groups, as displayed in Table 6.3. The group referred to as reversibles, for instance, increased significantly during this period. This group consists of those who described themselves as being open to reversible forms of mobility, such as daily long-distance commuting and frequent business trips. The proportion of this group increased from 10 per cent of the sample in 2007 to 15 per cent in 2011. The change observed in this group echoes the tendency for

Table 6.3   Changes in motility type between 2007 and 2011 (as % of the total)

2007 \ 2011	Unmotile	Reluctant to be mobile	Willing to be mobile	Reversibles	Non-reversibles	Very motile
Unmotile	20.7		5.8			
Reluctant to be mobile		15		4.1	3.4	1.5
Willing to be mobile	2.6		6.5			1
Reversibles		2.6		4.1	1.2	1.1
Non-reversibles		3.4		2.5	6.3	2.3
Very motile		1.2		3.4	2.1	5.6

Note: Only the changes that concern 1% or more of the total sample are indicated.
Source: Cross table, panel sample, total population, aged 25–54 in 2007, JobMob II, 'countries equally weighted'.

people to settle over their life cycle. However, the groups that are the least willing to be mobile decreased (the unmotile and reluctant to be mobile, 3.4 and 3.1 percentage points respectively). This suggests a general increase in willingness to be highly mobile in all four countries. The refusal of any forms of mobility seems to create difficulties when it comes to securing employment. Hence, many consider moving, daily or weekly long-distance commuting as a possible option. As we will discuss in the next Chapter, economic constraints play an important role in the imperative of mobility and flexibility in the labour market. Long-distance commuting seems to be one of the more acceptable forms, because it offers residential stability. While the very motile remained stable (approximately 12 per cent), the willing to be mobile increased by 2.6 percentage points. Thus, the proportion of people characterised by a discrepancy between weak skills/access and a strong disposition to mobility increased between the two waves.

In most cases, changes in motility pattern between the two waves were linked to changes in mobility plans. People thus strongly reconsidered their willingness to be highly mobile and to migrate. Conversely, we observed very little change in people's level of skills and access over time, at least in the short term. Some of the people willing to be mobile became very motile, which could be explained by either (1) an improvement in personal equipment (laptop, Internet) or skills, or (2) an increase in an already high disposition to high mobility and migration.

More reversible mobilities, like daily long-distance commuting – forms that are less demanding on private and family life – were increasingly favoured, versus interregional and international migration or dual location households. This points to increased residential stability. Overall, changes over time in people's willingness to be highly mobile suggest an adaptation to changing economic, familial and personal contexts.

Changeability in high mobility willingness

This section examines how mobility plans evolve over time by determining why some people were more willing to be highly mobile four years after the first survey, despite the fact that mobility willingness tends to decrease with age. As mentioned earlier, mobility willingness decreased with age for almost all forms of mobility. Only for daily long-distance commuting was this trend less clear. A well-known finding is that people living in the same region for a long time are less prone to move than people who have recently moved (among others: Ahn et al., 1999; Clark and Whiters, 2008; Fischer and Malmberg, 2001). Regarding the socio-demographic determinants of mobility willingness,[4] we

observed that men were not only more mobile than women, but were also more willing to be mobile. Household structure likewise exhibited a strong influence on mobility plans, with single people reporting being more willing to be mobile than people living with partner and/or children. Overall, willingness to be mobile increased with level of education, supporting previous results (Fol, 2009). However, this pattern differed for daily and weekly long-distance commuting. More educated people were less tempted by these forms of mobility. Finally, economic circumstances played a role in people's willingness to consider high mobility. Overall, low-paid and unemployed people were more willing to be or become mobile.

We now consider changes over time in people's willingness to be mobile. Table 6.4 shows results from logistic regressions, where we estimated the odds of increasing individual willingness for each form of mobility. The first column aggregates the willingness to the five forms of mobility. As in the cross-sectional analysis, age significantly influenced how mobility willingness changed over time. Mobility willingness decreases with age, except in the case of daily long-distance commuting. While education had no impact on a change in mobility willingness, gender proved a significant factor. Men, who were already more willing to be mobile, were also more likely to become increasingly willing to be mobile over time, especially in the form of weekly commuting and interregional migration.

Economic and family logic also had an impact on mobility plans. First, people who stayed single were more willing to move to another region. Similarly, people who changed partners between 2007 and 2011 were much more willing to move to another region than those who stayed with their partner. This willingness to migrate may express a desire to mark a new stage in their life, after a separation or a period without a partner. Second, people who lived alone in 2007 then lived with a partner in 2011 had approximately 2.5 times higher odds of being willing to commute long-distance. This form of mobility appeared to be the most adapted in the early years of cohabitation, probably because it allowed partners to find a balance between a distant job and not spending nights away from home. A childbirth had an even more pronounced influence on mobility plans that partner changes. The birth of a child between 2007 and 2011 decreased the odds of being more willing to be mobile by half. The effect was particularly strong for weekly commuting (nearly four times lower odds) and frequent overnight business trips (more than two times lower odds) compared to people who did not have a child between 2007 and 2011. Forms of mobility that require spending many

Table 6.4 Predictors of increasing mobility willingness between 2007 and 2011

	Increasing willingness to be highly mobile	Increasing willingness to migrate interregionally	Increasing willingness to migrate internationally	Increasing willingness to daily long-distance commute	Increasing willingness weekly long-distance commuting	Increasing willingness to frequent overnight business travel
30–38 years (ref.)						
39–48 years	.71*	1.07	.88	1.60**	.68	.78
49–58 years	.54*	.48**	.67	1.78**	.68	.55**
Woman (ref.)						
Man	1.27	1.54**	1.10	1.20	1.68**	1.17
Secondary education (ref.)						
No post-compulsory education	.86	.86	.69	.76	.88	.66*
Higher education	.79	.91	.72	.75	.94	1.22
Work rate: stable (ref.)						
Work rate: decrease	1.44	1.24	1.39	1.75**	1.13	1.55*
Work rate: increase	1.05	1.07	.95	.79	.79	.71
Did not have a child 2007–2011 (ref.)						
Had a child between 2007–2011	.48***	.47**	.76	.80	.24***	.33***
Still with the same partner (ref.)						
Still single	1.16	1.82**	1.30	1.33	.85	1.00
Now in a couple	1.06	1.55	1.19	2.41**	1.47	1.46
Has a new partner	.96	2.01*	1.76	1.50	.27	.45
No longer with partner	1.09	.84	1.74	1.15	1.66	1.01
Stable income (ref.)						
Income decrease	1.57**	1.56*	2.03**	1.51*	2.27***	1.02
Income increase	.83	.71	.95	.93	.68	.59**
Significance of the model	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
N (unweighted)	1245	1300	1269	1273	1273	1275
χ2	62.85	69.75	43.11	55.33	111.08	66.92
Degree of freedom	14	14	14	14	14	14
Model -2 log-likelihood	1580.98	1075.88	994.00	1372.19	1071.20	1348.15
Pseudo R2 (Nagelkerke)	.07	.09	.06	.06	.14	.08

Notes: *p < .05; **p < .01;***p < .001.
Source: Logistic regressions, odds ratio, panel sample, total population, 25–54 in 2007, JobMob II, 'countries equally weighted'.

nights away from home appear especially incompatible with recent childbirth (see Chapter 8 for more details regarding the links between family and high mobility).

From an economic standpoint, changes in income strongly impact changes in people's willingness to be highly mobile and to migrate. When the financial situation deteriorated, respondents often became more willing to increase their mobility. The most marked differences concerned the two forms of mobility the least considered by respondents, namely international migration and weekly long-distance commuting. The decrease of employment rate (often related to a loss of a job in the case of men) has a similar, although weaker, influence to that of decreased income on mobility willingness. Similar results were highlighted by Ahn et al. (1999) in a study on changes over time in job seekers' willingness to migrate. Willingness to migrate increased when household income dropped (end of unemployment benefits or a decrease in the income of a household member). Hence, a decrease in work activity or the loss of a job had a strong impact when there was also a significant decrease in household income.

Overall, both economic and family situation had a strong influence on people's plans to be highly mobile. In the next chapter this analysis is supplemented with a macro-economic approach to better understand the influence of economic contexts on an individual's willingness to be mobile.

How does motility explain high mobility?

The previous section explored how people were equipped to deal with high mobility from a cross-sectional and longitudinal perspective. We now examine to what extent people who are more motile are also more mobile.

We used a series of logistic regressions[5] to show the link between the motility patterns presented earlier and the recourse to different forms of mobility (Table 6.5). We successively considered high mobility (all types), daily long-distance commuters, overnighters, people who refused work-related high mobility (rejectors), those who had never had to be highly mobile (unchallenged) and formerly highly mobile individuals.

Results indicate that people reluctant to be mobile were those least likely to be highly mobile in 2011. This suggests that their social positions and skills afforded them to be in line with their mobility plans, that is, to avoid high mobility. Unmotile people, characterised by their weak mobility potential, had 30% lower odds of being highly mobile in

Table 6.5 High mobility experiences in 2011, according to motility patterns and socio-demographics

	Mobility (all types)	Long-distance commuters	Overnighters	Rejectors	Unchallenged	Formerly mobile
Unmotile	.68*	1.16	.15**	1.72**	1.58***	.59***
Reluctant to be mobile	.50**	.66	.40*	1.59*	1.10	1.01
Willing to be mobile	.98	1.11	1.95*	1.27	1.00	.99
Reversibles	1.90***	2.49***	1.60	1.17	.69**	1.06
Non-reversibles	1.49*	.67	2.81***	.76	.83	1.17
Very motile	1.07	.71	1.87*	.32**	1.01	1.36*
29–38 (ref.)						
39–48	1.39	1.27	.76	.58*	1.01	1.08
49–58	1.17	1.29	.90	.46**	1.23	1.05
Woman (ref.)						
Man	1.68**	1.86*	1.98*	1.15	.51***	1.57***
Secondary education (ref.)						
No post-compulsory education	.86	.88	1.02	1.22	1.10	.89
Higher education	.91	.97	.54	1.33	.98	.95
Lives with partner and child(ren) (ref.)						
Lives alone	1.58*	.60	.94	.78	.92	.97
Lives with partner, without children	1.10	1.02	1.18	1.43	.63**	1.33
Lives without partner, with child(ren)	4.05***	3.48***	2.23	1.02	.51**	.99
Average income (ref.)						
Low income	.93	.86	1.11	1.04	1.68***	.58***
High income	1.13	.96	1.27	1.81*	1.21	.62**
Significance of the model	.000	.002	.000	.000	.000	.000
N (unweighted)	1496	1496	1496	1488	1488	1488
χ2	60.39	35.33	53.73	45.96	109.94	67.76
Degree of freedom	15	15	15	15	15	15
Model-2 log-likelihood	959.71	616.07	448.60	865.75	1915.42	1852.54
Pseudo R2 (Nagelkerke)	0.08	0.07	0.12	0.07	0.10	0.06

Notes: *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$;***$p < .001$.

Source: Logistic regressions, odds ratio, panel sample, deviation contrast method for motility patterns, total population, aged 29–58 in 2011, JobMob II, 'countries equally weighted'.

comparison with other motility patterns. This was not the case for reversibles and non-reversibles, who were more often mobile. As discussed in Chapter 3, men, people living alone and single parents had higher odds of being mobile (see also Green et al., 1999; Sandow, 2008; Sandow and Westin, 2010).

The only statistically significant relationship between motility and daily long-distance commuting existed among reversibles. This group had 2.5 higher odds of being long-distance commuters than people with other motility patterns. We found that the unmotile and the reluctant to be mobile were rarely overnighters due to their lack of willingness. Conversely, the people willing to be mobile were likely to practise forms of high-mobility requiring frequent absences from home. Frequent overnight business travel requires sharp skills, such as managing schedules and spaces, or communicating in different languages. Non-reversibles were those most likely to practise this kind of mobility (2.8 times more). While they declared being fairly unwilling to commute weekly, they were not necessarily opposed to frequent overnight business travel – the other form of overnighting.

Motility opens up important possibilities for analysing the relationships between motility and immobility. In particular, we found that the unmotile were more likely to have already refused a job requiring high mobility. By the same token, for many, no such opportunity had ever presented itself. As a result, this group reported fewer mobility experiences in their careers. Unmotile people's limited exposure to mobility may be related to specific job markets, centred mainly on local areas. The fact that those with low incomes were less likely to have had to make a choice regarding high mobility supports this explanation.

The people reluctant to be mobile were also more likely to have refused high mobility. However, this refusal seemed to be related to having more room for manoeuvre in their life choices, unlike the unmotile. A higher social position often allowed people to conduct their lives in line with their mobility plans, whether these plans concerned continuing, stopping or refusing high mobility. For example, those with high incomes had nearly two times higher odds of having refused a job that required high mobility. While this may reflect the fact that well-paid jobs are more exposed to high mobility, it also shows that high earners have the choice to refuse, unlike some low-paid and precarious workers.

The very motile people differ somewhat from the unmotile and the reluctant to be mobile in two respects. First, they have three times lower odds of having refused a job that would have required high mobility.

Second, they are much more likely to have been highly mobile at some point in the past, despite the predominance of young people in this category. This may reflect unstable careers marked by successive periods of short-term employment contracts involving high mobility or migration.

Our analyses suggest that people's motility comes from specific exposure to high mobility. Those with better skills and access appear freer to adopt the behaviour they wish. In particular, the people reluctant to be mobile do not have to activate their mobility potential and keep it in a potential state. Moreover, the concept of motility helps to gain insight into individuals' high mobility practices. The socio-demographic variables used, with the exception of gender and single parenthood, highlight more limited effects on individuals' high mobility.

Motility and modal practices

Motility also enables us to better address issues of everyday travel and modal practices. Several studies have used motility to explain how people travel (Flamm and Kaufmann, 2006; de Witte et al., 2008). In this section, we first examine modal practices and commuting time, using cross tables (Table 6.6). Then we focus more specifically on highly mobile people using qualitative material.

Analysis shows that the least motile people used public transport far less often than reversibles, non-reversibles and reluctants to be mobile, who reported higher use of daily (or almost daily) public transport use. We ran additional logistic regressions, which included motility and socio-demographic variables, to characterise modal practices more precisely (not presented here). We found that car users were over-represented among the unmotile people or those reluctant to be mobile. It is interesting to note the small proportion of car users in the two groups with highest motility, the people willing to be mobile and the very motile people. Men and those with low education levels were more likely to travel by car. Multi-modality – that is, use of public transport and a car on a daily or almost daily basis – was practiced mainly by reversibles and the very motile people. However, we found no multi-modality among the people willing to be mobile. Finally, people who travel little or with other modes of transport were particularly over-represented among the people willing to be mobile and the very motile people (25.7 per cent and 21 per cent, respectively). Three factors may explain this strong representation. First, there was a higher proportion of people who either did not work or had little work. The high proportion of individuals with low incomes belonging to this category confirms this hypothesis. The second possible explanation

Table 6.6 Main mode of transport (total population) and commute time (employed population) in 2011, by motility type (%)

Main mode of transport	Unmotile	Reluctant to be mobile	Willing to be mobile	Reversibles	Non-reversibles	Very motile	Total
Public transport	1.2	8.4	6.1	10.5	9.3	6.2	6.5
Car	78.2	77.1	68.2	72.9	72.5	66.7	73.7
Multimodal	3.4	3.7		6.1	3.1	6.2	3.7
Other modes or non-mobile	17.2	10.8	25.7	10.5	15.0	21.0	16.1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Cross table, chi2 = 60.252, *p* < .001, Total population, aged 29–58 in 2011, JobMob II, 'countries equally weighted'.

Commuting time

Less than 30 min	80.1	81.5	74.5	79.0	80.3	80.7	79.7
30 min–1 hour	11.8	12.7	17.0	4.9	10.2	12.6	11.6
1 hour or more	8.1	5.8	8.5	16.0	9.5	6.7	8.8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Cross table, chi2 = 24.303, *p* < .01, employed population, aged 29–58 in 2011, JobMob II, 'countries equally weighted'.

is telecommuting; nearly 30 per cent of very motile people occasionally work from home. The third possible explanation is the use of other modes of transport (walking/cycling, scooters, carpooling). However, we could not verify this effect because of data limitations. Regional influences and the degree of urbanity, which are discussed in the following chapter, may also influence people's access to transport services. Overall, it appeared that the most motile people tended to either be multi-modal or use public transport more than others, who tended to travel by personal car.

Concerning commuting time, nearly 80 per cent of our sample had a commute of less than 30 minutes. Only the people willing to be mobile had significantly longer commutes with a quarter of this group having commutes of more than 30 minutes. Few reversibles fell into the intermediate category (30–60 minutes), they fell more into the next category of high mobility. These individuals either had relatively short trips, like most of the population, or lengthy trips. Furthermore, few people reluctant to be mobile had long commutes. While the concept of motility is relevant for addressing modal practices, it appears less appropriate for predicting travel time, since the latter is more influenced by transport mode than motility. The qualitative interviews showed that some participants were classified as daily long-distance commuters because of their specific choices in terms of modal practices. This was the case for Mathias, who spends more than two hours commuting (versus one and a half hours previously) since deciding to commute by coach. For some public transport users, daily travel time is less an issue given the increased comfort (Vincent-Geslin, 2010).

The qualitative study opened several interesting avenues for reflection on the link between motility, mobility and modal practices. Many overnighters belonged to the very motile category. Their high mobility practices were in keeping with family and personal traditions, which equipped them with useful skills for travelling. Additionally, the ability to adapt to new places, orient oneself and easily create social ties are developed during – often international – migration experiences early in life (see Chapter 4). People regularly absent from home for job reasons likewise had better communication and technology skills. They had laptops and smartphones for communicating with family and colleagues, and navigation tools like GPS and speed camera detectors:

It's a help, but usually I find my way pretty well. Well, there's also the penalty point system in France, which means that 50,000 km a year with no traffic violations, with the automatic radars and speed limit changes on different road sections is almost impossible. So, in fact I

have two GPSs. I have a Coyote alerter and a TomTom, and I use them both. (Martin, 50 years old, IT administrator, overnighter and daily long-distance commuter, living in a periurban area)

These highly mobile individuals have also good access to high-speed transport infrastructures. They alternate between plane, car and train travel with ease, demonstrating their skill for getting about. Finally, they enjoy travelling for their jobs, including internationally, and even aspire to continue doing so:

No, then I was also in Poland, I was in the Czech Republic, Italy, Germany. All for work. I actually liked it, I enjoyed it. I wanted to do it! (Philippe, 51 years old, sales engineer, overnighter, living in a large suburb)

Long-distance commuters were more likely to belong to the willing to be mobile group. This group has weaker skills and access, which is associated with exclusive car use. This is illustrated by Thierry, who has various professional activities and far-flung workplaces. One of his jobs is teaching music in private schools in villages on the outskirts of Lyon. Firstly, these villages have a poor public transport service. Secondly, he often works evenings and weekends. Because of his irregular hours and complex work schedule, driving is a necessity for him:

The day you find me a bus that goes to Crémieu, Tignieu, Chavanoz, with a schedule that fits my schedule, I'll take [it]. [I tried] once, [to get to] Chavanoz, but I wouldn't do it again. There was no bus back. In Crémieu…I did it because my car was broken down. To start at 9am in Tignieu, I had to get a bus at 6am. That's pretty hard. Crémieu is also very underserved. These are villages that are very poorly served. You can't have my schedule. You can't finish at 9pm, because when I finish at 9pm there's no bus from Chavanoz to take me back home. It doesn't exist. (Thierry, 49 years old, music teacher, daily long-distance commuter, living in an inner suburb)

Despite relatively poor access, an old car and weak mobility skills, Thierry shows a strong willingness to be mobile due to economic constraints:

You have to find work. Anyway, here in Lyon, there's so much demand that it's hard to find. It's either working independently or getting a position in a music school, which is quite rare in Lyon. (Thierry)

These different profiles offer an insight into some of the qualitative results and show the possible links between motility and mobility practices. Between the absolute constraint of job insecurity and altermobilities, that is, modes of transport alternative to the car – where travel time is less an issue – high mobility includes a wide variety of motility-based situations.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we first demonstrated the importance of the concept of motility for understanding an individual's potential to be mobile. The analytical framework we developed shows the diversity of individual mobility capacities and their evolution over time. Skills and individual mobility plans, initially described in Chapter 4 and 5, were analysed more deeply here.

Based on an empirical typology stemming from the quantitative data, six contrasting patterns of motility were identified according to skills, access and disposition to specific forms of mobility. People's belonging to a particular pattern was relatively stable between the two survey waves. Changes of group were mainly due to changes in people's willingness to become highly mobile. Some were less interested in high mobility and migration, notably after a childbirth. Conversely, others, including people with strong economic constraints, tended to become more open to high mobility and migration, even when access and skills were limited, suggesting potential situations of inequality. Economically forced to be highly mobile, skills and access must be acquired on the job by those who lack them or those who had not initially planned to become highly mobile. Moreover, motility types are good predictors of mobility practices. Reversibles had more chance of being daily long-distance commuters. Similarly, very motile people were more likely to be regularly absent from home for work-related reasons. Perhaps more importantly, this motility analysis explains the rejection of high mobility and/or never having had to be exposed to it. Unmotile people, for example, were those most likely to have never had to face high mobility, possibly because of their business sector. The people reluctant to be mobile were more likely to reject high mobility, despite having good mobility access and skills. These people probably have more room for manoeuvre and higher resources in their professional and residential choices. This highlights an essential mechanism of motility, namely that motility often remains in a potential state. Many people with an aptitude for high mobility in one form or another do not use it. For this group of people, motility is a resource that is called

upon when needed, a kind of insurance. Differences in people's ability to be highly mobile show that mobility itself is regulated by broader forms of inequality. Economic constraints, the need to find work and earn more money weigh heavily on people's willingness to become highly mobile. In line with this, the following chapter analyses the association between territories, economic constraints and high mobility practices.

However, motility indicators did not account for all the nuances of qualitative analysis. The measure of skills did not include an exhaustive inventory of the knowledge needed to travel and to travel in good conditions. For instance, social skills were not elaborated upon in this particular study. Mobility plans were measured only from the disposition to high mobility as perceived by participants. Future research on motility would benefit from considering these additional dimensions. Despite this, motility proves to be a useful concept for analysing the relationship between individuals and high mobility, and for identifying some bases of inequalities, which we describe in greater detail in the next chapter.

Notes

1. For each form of mobility, possible answers were 0 = not willing, 1 = under certain conditions, 2 = willing.
2. Following this logic, we decided not to restate the questions regarding language skills and contextual access in the second wave of the German and Spanish surveys. Thus, for these variables, the 2007 values were used, except in Switzerland and France where questions on contextual access were restated. Changes in these two countries between 2007 and 2011 were mostly insignificant, confirming the hypothesis of stability over time.
3. One additional logistic regression model was used to characterise the motility groups. It included the following variables: experience of living abroad for studies or work (more than six months); experience of moving for job-related reasons; housing type (owner, tenant, house-sharing/living with relatives or parents rent free); attachment to current residence; attachment to town/city of residence. The analysis is not shown here, but significant results are highlighted in the text.
4. This was based on a variance analysis (each variable is tested separately), which is not presented here.
5. A deviation contrast method was applied to the motility variable to estimate the impact of each motility pattern in comparison to its overall effect. The socio-demographic variables were added as control variables.

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7
Territories of High Mobility: Micro and Macro Analysis

Emmanuel Ravalet, Yann Dubois and Vincent Kaufmann

Introduction

In the preceding chapters we mainly analysed high mobility through the lens of interpersonal differences based on individual histories and socio-demographic factors. In this chapter we especiallyfocus on the spatial dimension of high mobility behaviours and motility. The goal of this chapter is to evaluate the influence of the residential contexts on how people practise, think about and project themselves in high mobility.

Choosing a living environment that suits the entire household has long-term consequences. It affects the places and the jobs accessible to household members. In a world marked by unstable family and career structures, it can be difficult to ensure relative proximity between places of daily life. That is when high mobility comes into play. In this chapter we consider places of residence and employment that significantly shape everyday life. In addition to territorial levels (countries, regions, areas), we distinguish territories by their degree of urbanity, that is, the density of their amenities, access to road, rail and airport infrastructures and their economic health (unemployment rate).

First, we review the literature on the spatial embeddedness of house-holds and their impact on high mobility behaviours. We then present the indicators used to characterise the residential contexts, that is, the degree of urbanisation, spatial access and unemployment rate. We next explore the impact of residential contexts on high mobility practices, modal choice and how high mobility is experienced by individuals. Following the analysis presented in the previous chapter, we examine how residential contexts impact motility. We conclude with a discussion about job search areas and their relationships to the form of high mobility envisaged.

Territories of high mobility: theoretical contextualisation

High mobility is often practised to balance the conflicting demands of employment and private life. High mobility situations are specific to each household and individual. In particular, they strongly depend on the location of the home and job(s). In the first part of this chapter, we discuss how households and individuals are embedded in space, and the role played by mobility in general and high mobility in particular.

Residential and job locations

Sociological literature has long overlooked the role of space in under-standing social phenomena (Friedland and Boden, 1994; Sheller and Urry, 2006; Urry, 2007; Gieryn, 2000). This is also the case with regard to spatial mobility. This is surprising given that social life is strongly shaped by the spaces of everyday life, and by residential and job locations in particular.

Residential choices are primarily made at the household level. In particular, they are associated with specific preferences in terms of housing types and living environment. Residential preferences and choices are therefore strongly conditioned by the household structure and the presence of children. Different locations between households with and without children result in a family specialisation of residential areas (Ravalet, 2009). The preference for houses or more spacious accommodation is not necessarily limited to families. It has contributed to a sprawling of residential areas from city centre toward periphery and countryside. The proximity of services, shops and schools is also an important criterion for residential choice. However, central areas with better amenities are often the most expensive. Households are therefore limited in their residential choices by their housing budget allowance. The social environment also strongly influences residential location. Lifestyle-based approaches, in particular the literature on gentrification, have stressed the importance of the compatibility between residential context and an individual's values and preferences (Ley, 1996; Florida, 2004; Pattaroni et al., 2012). These processes combine to create residential segregation. More generally, the real estate market is characterised by a tenuous balance between housing supply and demand (Gillio and Ravalet, 2012). The fact that some families do not find concrete solutions for their residential aspirations aptly illustrates this (Thomas, 2011). Regardless of the reasons for choosing a location, residential choices are often long term. Moving is disruptive, especially in the presence of school-aged children, and cannot be undertaken with great frequency. This is particularly true for

homeowners (Pochet and Routhier, 2002). There is therefore a kind of structural inertia to residential mobility, which is also reinforced by an increasing attachment to the residential area over time (Vincent-Geslin and Kaufmann, 2012).

The workplace plays also a central role in people's spatial mobility and the spatial distribution of their activities. However, evidence has shown that job choice was only marginally influenced by its location (Bunel, 2009). Using census data for the Lyon metropolitan area in France, Pochet and Routhier (2002) showed that many households do not list the workplace as a main reason for their residential choice. The effect may be more marked in difficult economic contexts, such as the 2008 recession, characterised by a limited number of adapted job offers and a lack of stable positions. Faced with job loss or the impossibility of finding a job close to home, job seekers have three options (Van Ham et al., 2001). The first is the status quo, that is, staying in the current job or remaining unemployed. The second is to accept a local job, even if it does not correspond to the desired job or skill level. The third option is to seek a job that will require long-distance commuting or migrating.

According to some scholars, modern capitalism is characterised by an imperative of mobility and flexibility in the labour market (Boltanski and Chiapello, 1999; Harvey, 1989). The rise of precarious employment and short-term contracts increase the labour market instability (Wenglenski, 2006). This is especially the case for less qualified workers (Bihr and Pfefferkorn, 1999; Fenton and Dermott, 2006). The deregulation of the labour market has instituted mobility and flexibility as major social values, or social norms (Bacqué and Fol, 2007). Regularly changing jobs has become an integral part of today's career development (Ng et al., 2007). Moreover, employers often expect their employees to travel if their business requires it, be it for short business trips or longer stays abroad (Kaufmann, 2008). Similarly, in most European countries, governments and unemployment laws encourage job seekers to relocate. For example, according to Swiss unemployment law, job seekers must accept any job offer deemed suitable provided that the commute does not exceed four hours a day (LACI, 2014). Moreover, continental migration is strongly encouraged by the European Union. This is seen to optimise the functioning of national labour markets and the European economy in general (Van Houtum and Van der Velde, 2004).

Faced with unemployment and job insecurity, people are often forced to turn to high mobility or migration (Vignal, 2005; Ahn et al., 1999). In a large national survey, Schneider et al. (2002) estimated that more than half of the German population of working age had been obliged or partly

obliged to become highly mobile over the course of their career (see also Limmer, 2004). If having a job means being highly mobile, many German workers agree to be mobile. In the same vein, migration and long-distance commuting are more common after instances of unemployment (Eliasson et al., 2003).

Spatial mismatch

Residential and job locations change over time. Yet, it is not always easy to adapt residential locations to often temporary job situations. When labour and housing markets are tight, work-related spatial mobility increases and residential mobility becomes more complex. As a result, high mobility is often associated with unstable social, family or professional situations (Belton-Chevallier, 2009). An appropriate spatial arrangement between housing and jobs is even more complicated for dual-earner couples (Green et al., 1999). Finally, home ownership and a local and strong social network (family and friends, neighbours) limits the prospect of moving and, as such, hinders access to more distant jobs (Helderman et al., 2006; Battu et al., 2008). All these factors have contributed to a general increase in commuter distance in recent decades.

The increasing distance between home and workplace is not equally reflected across the population. The concept of spatial mismatch refers to residential segregation and limited job opportunities in the living area for disadvantaged groups (Kain, 1968; Fieldhouse, 1999; Gobillon et al., 2007). Residential segregation has important employment consequences for social groups for whom residential mobility or long-distance commuting is difficult or unaffordable. In particular, long-distance commuting or frequent overnight trips may be prohibitively expensive for non-car-owning households (Fol, 2009; Le Breton, 2005).

High mobility as a solution to the distance between home and workplace

People can opt for high mobility to cope with job–housing spatial mismatches. In this chapter we question whether this is the case for everyone across all residential contexts. Many studies highlight social differences with regard to spatial mobility. Some scholars argue that mobility in general, and high mobility in particular, primarily concerns professional elites from global cities (Castells, 2001; Birtchnell and Caletrío, 2013). In contrast, disadvantaged populations are seen as mainly embedded in the local. For Cresswell (2006), the existence of 'kinetic elites' supposes the existence of a kinetic proletariat. Beyond the intensity of mobility practices is also the question of the conditions

and experience of mobility (see Chapter 3). In particular, to what extent people choose or are forced to be mobile? Under which conditions do they travel? In this chapter, the concept of motility (see previous chapter) is used to examine these different dimensions.[1]

Today, being spatially mobile is a value and a norm (Bacqué and Fol, 2007; Kaufmann, 2008). However, travelling is not cost free. It requires substantial resources, of time, money, access and energy. Those unable to incur these costs or those who do not comply with this norm are likely to be marginalised (Church et al., 2000; Kenyon et al., 2002; Larsen et al., 2006; Lucas, 2012). There is a large body of evidence on vulnerable populations confronted with rising transport costs (Karl, 2004; Nicolas et al., 2012). The findings presented in Chapters 3 and 5 confirm key socio-demographic differences, both in high mobility practices and motility.

These social factors are expected to intersect with spatial factors. The degree of urbanisation and access to transport infrastructures (highways, railways, and airport) that characterise residential environments are likely to impact forms of high mobility and motility. The influence of the residential context on distance travelled, travel time and modal choice has been illustrated in many studies (Naess, 2005; Schwanen et al., 2002; Bagley and Mokhtarian, 2002). In the Netherlands, Van Ham et al. (2001) showed that people living in locations with poor access to suitable employment opportunities were more likely to commute or migrate over long distances for a job. The size, density and form of urban areas also impact the mode of transport used to get to work (Vincent-Geslin, 2012). Based on register data in Sweden, Eliasson et al. (2003) showed that people are more likely to commute to surrounding regions when job opportunities in these areas are good. Conversely, they are more likely to opt for migration when job opportunities in surrounding regions are scarce.

The national context is also likely to influence high mobility practices and motility. A series of cultural factors (housing aspirations, family norms, attitude toward movement) and structural factors (density of population, high-speed transport networks and the housing and labour markets) are likely to have consequences for how people practise high mobility. The 2007 JobMob survey showed that individual differences were more important than international ones in high mobility practices (Meil, 2008). However, studies exploring these cross-national differences and how they change over time are lacking.

Territorial characteristics as predictors of high mobility

Despite a growing interest in mobility research in the past 15 years, we know relatively little about the influence of geographical factors on work-related high mobility practices. Studies exploring both residential and everyday mobility are rare. Moreover, most studies on everyday mobilities have focused on daily long-distance commuting, with little attention given to weekly commuting, long-distance relationships and frequent business travel. Longitudinal studies and cross-national comparisons are likewise lacking. Using panel and international data this chapter has two aims: first, to evaluate the influence of the residential context (access to transport infrastructure, degree of urbanisation, economic health) on high mobility practices, high mobility experiences and motility; Second, to examine how these elements evolved between 2007 and 2011, a period marked by a major economic crisis?

Data and method: four countries for greater territorial diversity

In this chapter, we mainly used the European panel data for a representative sample. The oversample of highly mobile people in France was used to analyse the travel conditions (means of transport, travel distance, time and speed) of the long-distance commuters. This material was supplemented with territorial information from the European programme ESPON[2] and from Eurostat. All these databases were collected based on a single methodology for all countries. The same territorial subdivisions (country, region and municipality) were used across the databases. Accessibility in 2006 (rail, road, air and multimodal) and unemployment rate in 2006 and 2011 were extracted from the ESPON data. Degrees of urbanisation in 2011 derived from Eurostat data. We assumed that degrees of urbanisation and contextual access remained stable between 2006 and 2011.

The degree of urbanisation was based on density and contiguity of residents.[3] Areas were classified as either weakly, moderately or heavily urbanised. This information is available at the LAU2 scale, corresponding to the municipality (see Figure 7.1). Access is calculated using the position of populations in NUTS3 territorial units and the time necessary to reach populations in the other units.[4] NUTS3 units correspond to *départements* in France, *provinces* in Spain, *districts* (Kreise) in Germany and *cantons* in Switzerland. Finally, unemployment rates were calculated at the NUTS2 level (regions in France, government regions or
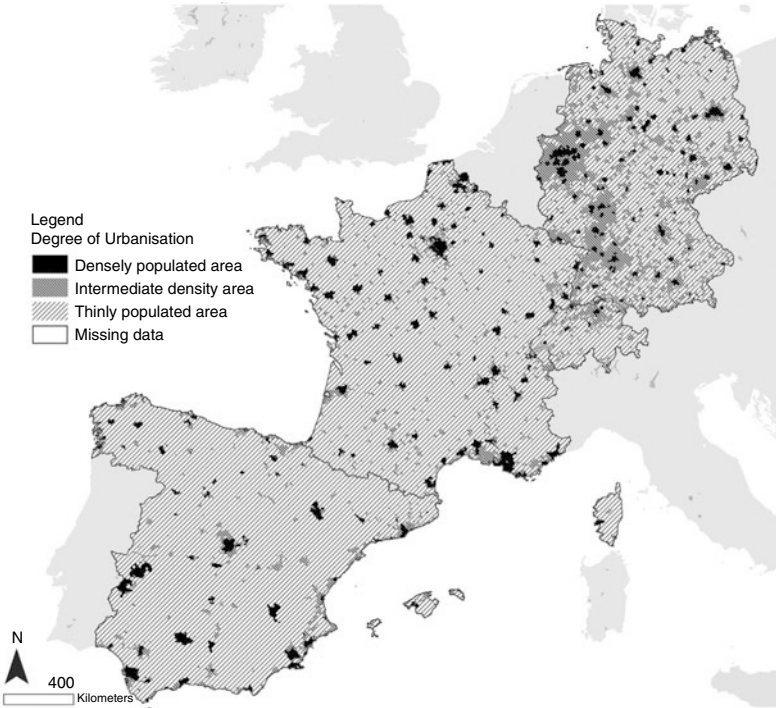
Figure 7.1 Degree of urbanisation of municipalities in the four countries

Regierungsbezirke in Germany, autonomous communities in Spain and regions in Switzerland) (see Figure 7.2).

Tables 7.1–7.3 show the distribution of respondents from the panel sample by degree of urbanisation, potential access and change in unemployment rate for each country. The distributions varied greatly across the four countries, particularly for accessibility and unemployment evolution. These differences were primarily associated with poorer access and higher unemployment rates in France and Spain than in Germany and Switzerland.

These geographical indicators revealed diverse territorial situations. This was done at different sub-scales and on a countrywide scale. A cross-national analysis helps to explore a wider variety of administrative, cultural, economic and spatial differences than is possible on a regional level. Interpreting national differences is difficult, however. For this
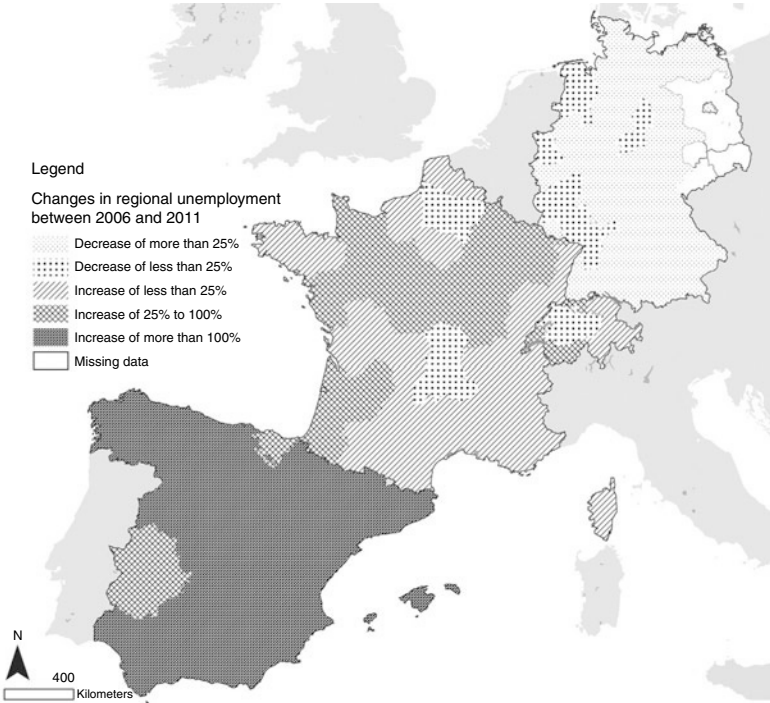
Figure 7.2   Changes in regional unemployment rate between 2006 and 2011 in the four countries

reason, the analysis mainly focuses on the differences resulting from the aforementioned variables (access, degree of urbanisation and unemployment rate).

To be or not to be highly mobile: spatial determinants

Our data enable us to examine high mobility situations in 2007 and 2011 and the changes between the two survey years. In this section, we analyse the influence of urbanisation, access and unemployment in the area of residence on high mobility practices, first separately and then together. Analyses were conducted separately for long-distance commuters and overnighters. People in long-distance relationships were excluded from the analysis because there were too few cases. Figures 7.3 and 7.4 show that the degree of urbanisation had little impact on high mobility rates

Table 7.1 Distribution of respondents by degree of urbanisation of their area of residence and by country (%)

	Lives in a highly urbanised residential context	Lives in a moderately urbanised residential context	Lives in a weakly urbanised residential context
Germany	40	39	21
France	38	20	42
Spain	46	31	23
Switzerland	20	50	30

Source: Crosstable, panel sample, total population aged 25–54 in 2007, JobMob II, 'panel nation analysis' weighting.

Table 7.2 Distribution of respondents by multimodal access of their area of residence (%)

	Poor access	Fairly poor access	Fairly good access	Good access
Germany	5	14	30	51
France	42	25	15	18
Spain	72	6	22	
Switzerland	8	21	42	29

Source: Crosstable, panel sample, total population aged 25–54 in 2007, JobMob II, 'panel nation analysis' weighting.

Table 7.3 Distribution of respondents by change in the unemployment rate in their area of residence between 2007 and 2011 (%)

	Decrease in unemployment of more than 25%	Decrease in unemployment of less than 25%	Increase in unemployment of less than 25%	Increase in unemployment of 25–100%	Increase in unemployment of more than 100%
Germany	74	26			
France		9	63	27	1
Spain				9	91
Switzerland	1	38	27	33	

Source: Crosstable, panel sample, total population aged 25–54 in 2007, JobMob II, 'panel nation analysis' weighting.

in 2007 and 2011. The only significant finding was that people living in densely populated areas were more likely to practise long-distance commuting in 2007 than those living in less urbanised contexts. This finding was not observed in 2011. The degree of urbanisation had no impact on the rate of overnighters.
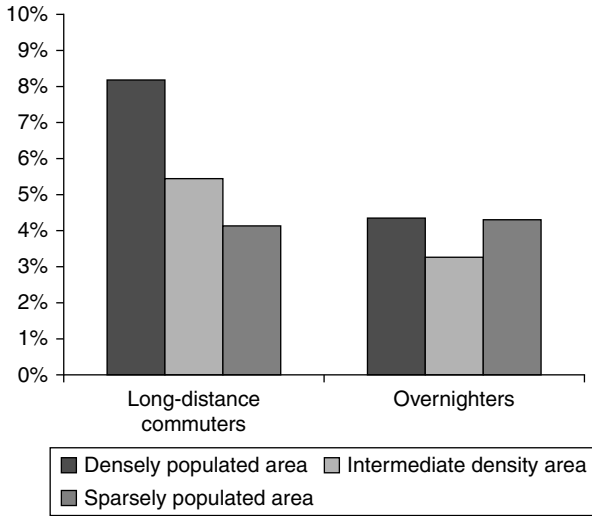
Figure 7.3   Proportion of overnighters and long-distance commuters by degree of urbanisation of the area of residence in 2007

Source: Histogram, panel data, total population aged 25–54 in 2007, JobMob II, 'countries equally weighted'.
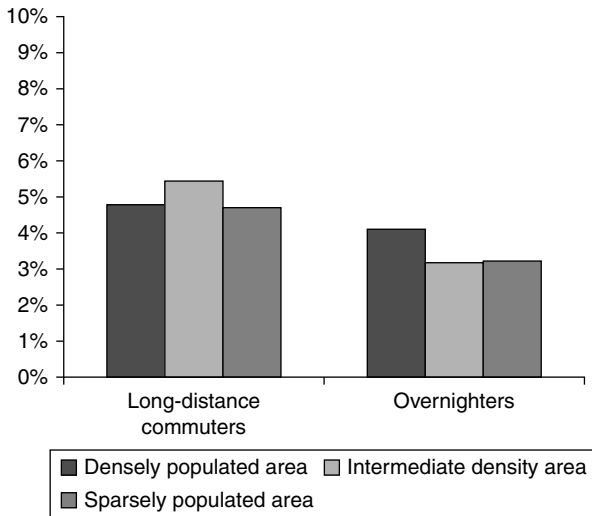
Figure 7.4   Proportion of overnighters and long-distance commuters by degree of urbanisation of the area of residence in 2011

Source: Histogram, panel data, total population aged 29–58 in 2011, JobMob II, 'countries equally weighted'.

The long-distance commuting rate varied with accessibility of the area of residence between 2007 and 2011. In 2007, the long-distance commuting rate was significantly higher among people living in areas with good access than among those with poorer access. In 2011, these differences were not significant. The proportions of long-distance commuters and overnighters also varied with the change in the unemployment rate in the area of residence between 2007 and 2011. Figure 7.5 shows that long-distance commuting was less frequent in areas where unemployment increased. One reason may be the financial cost of commuter travel since 80 per cent of highly mobile respondents from areas most affected by the economic crisis and unemployment mentioned that their mobility caused them high financial costs. A second reason was the increasing proportion of unemployed people, who are, by definition, not highly mobile for job reasons. Conversely, overnighting was more common in areas with either very good or very bad economic health. However, economic situations differed strongly between the two contexts. In the areas that were most affected by the 2008 recession, half the overnighters declared that their mobility had allowed them to find employment (versus approximately 15 per cent in the other areas). Our analysis suggests that the decrease in long-distance commuting and rise in overnighting in areas of economic hardship was because daily long-distance commuting was no longer sufficient for finding a job. People who reside in such areas must be willing to travel further.
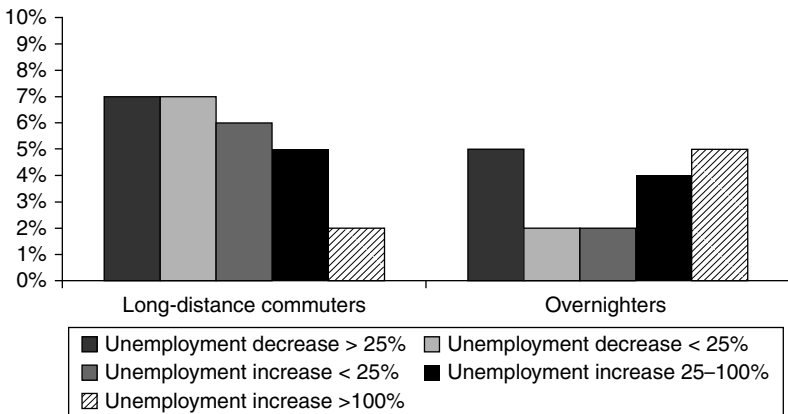
Figure 7.5 Proportion of overnighters and long-distance commuters in 2011 by changes in unemployment rate in the area of residence between 2007 and 2011

Source: Histogram, panel data, total population aged 29–58 in 2011, JobMob II, 'countries equally weighted'.

The significant impact of unemployment on high mobility practices should be considered in relation to the cross-national findings shown in Chapter 3. The areas characterised by a rapid increase of unemployment were predominantly Spanish regions.

The socio-demographic profile of highly mobile people varied little across residential contexts. Analyses (not shown) were also limited by the size of the highly mobile sample. As shown in Chapter 3, men were more likely to be highly mobile than women. This was the case in both large cities and the countryside for the four countries, regardless of the region's economic health. The most striking differences concerned the better paid and the better educated, who were less represented among highly mobile people living in rural areas (weakly urbanised). The increase in the proportion of overnighters in areas affected by economic crisis, however, affected all social classes. The potential impact of the economic crisis was difficult to measure based solely on high mobility practices. In the next sections, we turn to individuals' motility and perceptions of their high mobility experiences.

Motility for high mobility: spatial determinants

Mobility potential of individuals is largely represented in the literature through the relationship between job changes and spatial mobility. To cite only a few, we find the terms 'spatial ease' (Baccaïni, 1997), 'individual's spatial flexibility' (Van Ham, 2001) and 'individual openness to migrate' (Huinink et al., 2014). In this study, we use the concept of motility, which we presented in the previous chapter, to capture people's potential ability to be spatially mobile.

Motility, degree of urbanisation and access

In the analysis of motility, access to transport infrastructure was one dimension considered. Respondents were asked about the existence of highways, airports, regional and high-speed train near their home. The self-reported access was consistent with the contextual access data provided by ESPON and used above.

People with weak motility tended to reside in less urbanised areas. Conversely, those with strong motility tended to live in heavily urbanised areas. This first trend confirmed the patterns that we found for access in the previous chapter. Furthermore, there was an over-representation of people classified as both reversible and non-reversible patterns in the most urbanised areas. Conversely, the willing to be mobile group more often lived in the least urbanised areas. This meant that people living in

city centres had more leeway to choose which forms of mobility they preferred to practise to improve their professional situation or prevent it from worsening. Living in urbanised areas allowed people to choose between expanding their job search to surrounding areas they could access daily or weekly or migrating to avoid such commutes. Such choices were less common in rural areas, where more people declared they were open to all types of high mobility without necessarily having good skills or access.

Motility, nation and economic crisis

People's motility was unequal across countries and these differences increased between 2007 and 2011. Tables 7.4 and 7.5 show the distribution of motility patterns (see previous chapter) by country in 2007 and 2011.

Table 7.4 Motility types by country of residence in 2007 (%)

	France	Germany	Spain	Switzerland
Unmotile	33	10	40	25
Reluctant to be mobile	26	32	15	32
Willing to be mobile	9	10	22	3
Reversibles	7	12	8	12
Non-reversibles	13	19	7	18
Very motile	12	17	9	10
Total	100	100	100	100

Notes: Chi2 =198.79, *p* < 0.001.

Source: Crosstable, panel data, total population aged 25–54 in 2007, JobMob II, 'panel nation analysis' weighting.

Table 7.5 Motility types by country of residence in 2011 (%)

	France	Germany	Spain	Switzerland
Unmotile	27	13	33	24
Reluctant to be mobile	23	28	7	31
Willing to be mobile	15	7	29	5
Reversibles	14	21	6	19
Non-reversibles	15	16	6	15
Very motile	6	16	20	6
Total	100	100	100	100

Notes: Chi2 = 290.16, *p* < 0.001.

Source: Crosstable, panel data, total population aged 29–58 in 2011, JobMob II, 'panel nation analysis' weighting.

Apart from in Spain, reversibles (people who refuse to migrate but are willing to commute) were more numerous in 2011 than in 2007. In 2011, people were four years older and globally more firmly attached to their area of residence than four years earlier. People tend to seek residential stability over the course of their lifetime. This may be due to the presence of children in the household, a stable job or home ownership. Yet, home ownership alone does not explain the increase in local attachment over time. In 2011, the proportion of homeowners among reversibles was 50 per cent in Switzerland and 80 per cent in France. This shows that tenants can also be firmly attached to their area of residence. Rather than being more locally attached with age, the Spanish and French participants – those most hard hit by the 2008 recession – reported a growing tendency to long-distance commute, overnight or migrate between 2007 and 2011. The panel data showed an increase in those willing to be mobile while the unmotile and reluctant to be mobile decreased in those two nations.

As shown in the previous chapter, people classified in the willing to be mobile motility pattern declared they were disposed to all forms of high mobility, but had weak mobility skills and limited access. Despite a high willingness, practising mobility may be burdensome for these individuals. This group increased by 21 per cent between 2007 and 2011. While the willing to be mobile group appeared forced to be mobile by unfavourable economic, or possibly social, circumstances, the reluctant to be mobile group reflected a situation of chosen immobility. This latter group decreased by 10 per cent between the two survey years. The Spanish were over-represented among the former group, reflecting both the effects of the economic crisis and the constraint of high mobility associated with finding or keeping a job. Germans were over-represented among the very motile and under-represented among the willing to be mobile.

Figure 7.6 shows that increased unemployment in the area of residence between 2007 and 2011 was associated with a higher willingness to migrate, overnight, commute over long distances or do frequent business trips. The association was observed regardless of whether or not respondents were directly affected by unemployment. This is consistent with the above consideration about the situation in Spain.

Conditions and perceptions of mobility situations

In what conditions do highly mobile people travel? How do they feel about their practices? Does residential context influence these conditions and perceptions? We seek to answer these questions in this section, which focuses specifically on highly mobile individuals.
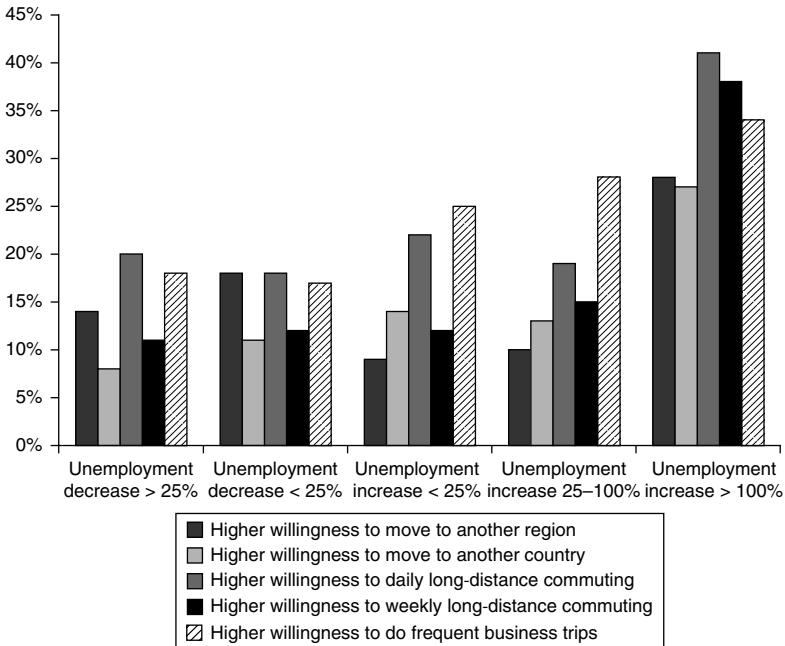
Figure 7.6 Proportion of the population whose disposition to each form of mobility increased between 2007 and 2011, by changes in unemployment rate in the area of residence

Source: Histogram, panel data, total population aged 25–54 in 2007, JobMob II, 'countries equally weighted'.

Means of transport, distance and speed

In 2007, people living in the least urbanised areas with poor access were less likely to be long-distance commuters than those living in urban centres. Beyond this general observation, we analysed the modal practices and travel speed of long-distance commuters. At the European level, on average, we observed greater car use among daily long-distance commuters living in less urbanised areas. Moreover, when people used public transport in such areas, they typically used it in addition to the car. These trends were confirmed by the data collected in France among 250 highly mobile individuals. In this country, rural long-distance commuters' modal practices were associated with:

- faster travel speeds (53 km/h on average versus 37 km/h for daily long-distance commuters in denser areas);

- greater distances travelled (133 km return trip versus 91 km);
- longer commuter times (159 min. return trip versus 133 min.).

Some evidence shows that daily long-distance commuting tends to be more common in rural areas or small- to medium-sized cities than in larger urban centres (Ohman and Lindgren, 2003). This is because job offers are more limited in these areas (Van Ham et al., 2001). The faster average travel speed of rural residents can also explain this finding when distance thresholds are used. The use of time thresholds in this study could explain why long-distance commuting was not significantly impacted by the place of residence.

In the four countries, we also found that travel distance, time and speed varied considerably among urban long-distance commuters. This reflected large differences in travel conditions within a city or between cities. Thanks to interurban transport modes, commuters living in dense urban centres can sometimes travel great distances.

How the highly mobile perceive their situation

Irrespective of the residential context, the highly mobile in our European sample found undeniable advantages in their practices. High mobility allows individuals to maintain a place of residence (urban or rural) and job that are relatively distant from one another. Through overnighting, long-distance commuting or a long-distance relationship, they can continue to live (at least part of the time) in the place to which they are attached. High mobility is therefore a way of balancing conflicting demands of work and local attachment in time and space.

In the JobMob survey, highly mobile respondents were asked about the advantages and drawbacks of their mobility situations. Table 7.6 shows some answers broken down by changes in unemployment rate in the area of residence between 2007 and 2011. Results show that the prospect of unemployment in the area of residence can foster high mobility practices. High mobility is not instrumental in preventing unemployment. However, it helped people to find a job after a period of unemployment. High mobility allowed 60 per cent of previously unemployed people to find a job in areas where unemployment had risen considerably. However, it did not allow them to keep their residence, which is consistent with the strong growth in overnighting among Spaniards (see Chapter 3). In relation to this, 40 per cent of highly mobile people in economically impoverished areas said they felt at home nowhere.

Table 7.6 Advantages and drawbacks of high mobility in 2011 by changes in unemployment rate in the area of residence between 2007 and 2011 (%)

	Decrease in unemployment of more than 25%	Decrease in unemployment of less than 25%	Increase in unemployment of less than 25%	Increase in unemployment of 25–100%	Increase in unemployment of more than 100%
Mobility made it possible to prevent a period of unemployment	68	53	65	37	58
Mobility made it possible to find a job after a period of unemployment	26	18	21	13	58
Mobility made it possible to keep one's residence	68	76	83	77	48
Never feels at home	13	9	10	13	40

Source: Crosstable, panel data, total population aged 29–58 in 2011, JobMob II, 'countries equally weighted'.

Job search areas: exploratory reflection

While overnighting increased in Spain between 2007 and 2011, daily long-distance commuting decreased. In areas where unemployment increased the most, people declared themselves more willing to overnight and migrate than in other places. These results shown earlier in the chapter suggest that long-distance commuting is not sufficient for getting by financially or professionally in the regions faced with economic difficulties.

These results led us to develop a model of job search areas divided into four zones (Figure 7.7). Finding a job in Zone 1 means that there is neither a need to long-distance commute nor to move. Zone 1 is the local home-to-work mobility zone. Zone 2 requires workers to commute over long distances. The boundary between Zones 1 and 2 is an isochronous line corresponding to a time unit of one hour between home and work (time threshold for long-distance commuters in this study). Finding a job in Zone 3 requires taking a second residence or moving, as the distance is too great for daily commuting. Zone 4 is the territory of unexplored opportunities or the impossible. People do not consider the job opportunities that exist in this zone.
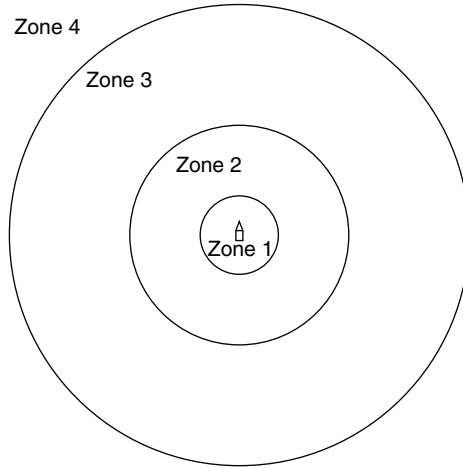
Figure 7.7   Job search zones associated with forms of high mobility

The range of the zones depends on people's mobility skills (see previous chapter). Speaking English, for instance, is likely to extend Zone 3 to include job opportunities abroad in English-speaking business sectors. Beside skills, an individual's motility type also influences the relative size of Zones 2 and 3. For non-reversibles Zone 2 does not exist. For this group, Zone 3 therefore begins at the boundary with Zone 1. Conversely, reversibles – reluctant to move – limit their job search to Zones 1 and 2. Zone 3 does not exist in their case. The unmotile stay in Zone 1 (local mobility), thus limiting the scope of their employment opportunities. This partly explains why they are comparatively more likely to become unemployed during crisis periods. Among the unmotile in 2007, 12 per cent lost their jobs between 2007 and 2011, versus 6 per cent among those willing to be mobile in 2007, even though both groups had similar levels of education and income. Ahn et al. (1999) found similar results in Spain. Their study showed that job seekers who had a positive attitude about potentially moving to find a job had a better chance of finding one. However, the influence of motility on the decision-making process should not be seen as deterministic. An unmotile person, for instance, may be required to accept a job outside Zone 1. However, such decisions are hard to make and people may have difficulty coping with the situation. Finally, faced with unemployment, many people expand their job search to include Zones 2

and 3, regardless of their skills. We also found that people made trade-offs to access jobs in Zone 3 without necessarily moving. In particular, they opted for very long commutes, sometimes with a *pied-à-terre* near the workplace.

Figure 7.8 depicts an example of job search areas in France that takes the development of transport infrastructure into account.[5] At the local level, better transport infrastructure allows for the expansion of Zone 1, the local home-to-work mobility zone. A high-speed train line or new highway extends Zone 2 at the expense of Zone 3. This may partly explain the increase in long-distance commuting practices we observed in Switzerland between 2007 and 2011. High-speed infrastructure is also accompanied by an atomisation of the long-distance commuting zone. This reinforces the tunnel effect between cities. Finally, improving residential mobility allows for an expansion of Zone 3 and increases employment opportunities. All these developments in transport infrastructure can be understood from the perspective of facilitating access to employment. They are likely to reconfigure place and social attachments. However, the impact of such developments on individual lives strongly
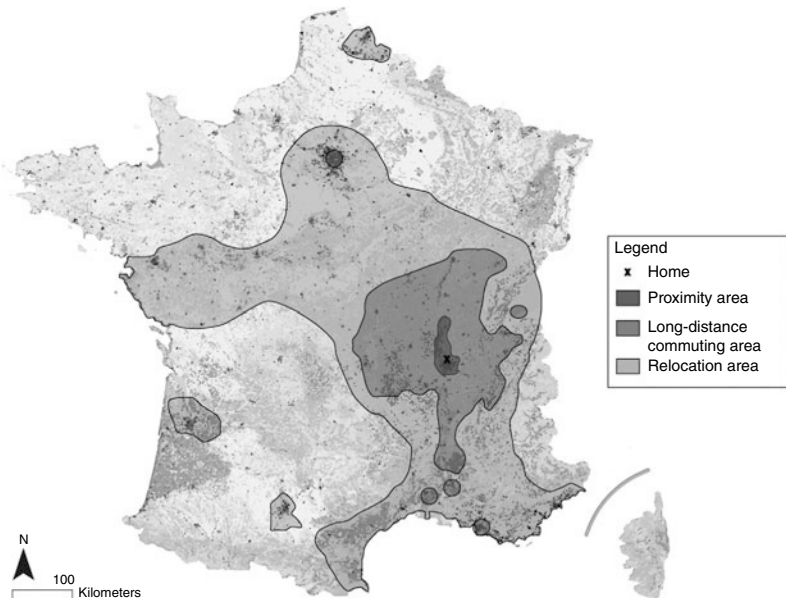
Figure 7.8   Example of job search areas by forms of high mobility

depends on the individual's motility, resources and the social context in which they are embedded, such as family and work.

Conclusion

Can a territory's amenities and access favour high mobility? This first question received a nuanced response during our investigations. We did not observe a clear link between high mobility practices, density of population and access. In 2007, long-distance commuting was most frequent among people living in the most urbanised areas with the best access. Overnighters were scattered between large city centres, periurban areas and rural areas. This important finding shows that the potential receptiveness to mobility projects in territories (in particular their transport infrastructure) has little impact on high mobility practices (when measured by travel time). Such practices can develop in a large city, town or rural environment. De facto, it also shows that the patterns of high mobility we studied are extremely diverse. By choosing time rather than distance thresholds to define highly mobile people, we were able to identify high mobility practices that otherwise would be overlooked. Finally, it appears that the spatial tension between career goal and private life exists in all residential contexts.

The changes observed between 2007 and 2011 revealed a second important finding. A region's or country's economic health is closely related to high mobility practices. The areas most affected by the 2008 economic crisis – including most Spanish regions – offered a remarkable case study in this respect. For economically vulnerable people, high mobility is increasingly becoming a norm from which it is difficult to escape. Yet high mobility remains an ambivalent phenomenon. It proves to be a key component of finding a job in a difficult economic climate. However, it is required of workers regardless of their resources and motility. In regions faced with economic difficulties, high mobility is therefore no longer used as a way of balancing personal and professional life. Rather, it has become a way of meeting the demands of a tight labour market.

Defending the right to spatial mobility is a way of favouring access to jobs. However, it is also necessary to find ways of mitigating the negative consequences of a mobility imperative, from which a segment of the population will automatically be excluded. Our analysis shows the difficulty of politically influencing both territorial development and the individual's motility. To do so, political actors at all levels and in all areas must work together.

Notes

1. On the existence of a mobility-specific capital, see Kaufmann et al. (2012).
2. For more details about this programme: http://www.espon.eu/main/
3. http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/ramon/miscellaneous/index.cfm?TargetUrl= DSP_DEGURBA
4. http://www.espon.eu/main/Menu_Publications/Menu_TerritorialObservations /trendsinaccessibility.html
5. Note that the zones represented on this map were created based neither on precise isochronous measurements nor on participants' information. The purpose of this map is illustrative only.

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8
Family Development and High Mobility: Gender Inequality

Gil Viry, Stéphanie Vincent-Geslin and Vincent Kaufmann

Introduction

Having a job that involves long commutes or frequent absences from home challenges individuals in their personal and family lives. High mobility demands time, money and physical and mental energy, which may conflict with family obligations. When the highly mobile person is the parent of young children, domestic work, childcare and household management must often be provided by others, such as the non-mobile partner, relatives and/or professional care-givers in or outside the home.

Yet, the interactions between high mobility and family life are complex. They must not be considered solely as two conflicting spheres of activity. In general, having a child tends to reduce a couple's likelihood of and willingness to move or commute over long distances (Kulu, 2008; Huinink and Feldhaus, 2012). However, parenting can also make high mobility more attractive. For instance, some young parents decide to move to 'family-friendly' suburbs, further away from urban centres, even if it requires longer commutes (Kaufmann et al., 2001; Charmes, 2005). While high mobility may be seen as an obstacle, it can also be practised and perceived as a way of combining geographically distant family and professional activities.

Several recent works have shown that major personal events, such as cohabitation, childbirth, divorce and widowhood, often coincide with changes in residential and mobility arrangements (Cooke, 2008; Geist and McManus, 2008; Hofmeister, 2005; Ortar, 2008; Vincent-Geslin, 2010). Cohabitation, for example, may require one of the partners to move away from the workplace in order to join his or her companion. For new dual-earner couples, combining two workplaces can also result in one or both partners having to make long commutes, until better

work–home spatial arrangements are made (Clark and Dieleman, 1996). In some cases, work-related spatial mobility accelerates family change. For instance, wives who give up their job to follow their spouse to another region or country (tied movers) are more likely to desire a child (Clark and Withers, 2008; Myers, 2010).

Gender and family studies continue to show that a household's residential and mobility arrangements tend to prioritise men's professional careers and women's domestic work (Crane, 2007; Turner and Niemeier, 1997). Women fit their employment around the perceived needs of their husband and children more often than men do. In particular, women decrease their job activity and work-related mobility with the arrival of a child more often and to a greater extent than their male counterparts. Couples may move closer to the woman's workplace. Alternatively, she may find a job closer to home so as to reduce the home–work–(school) commute and facilitate her participation in domestic and family tasks. In some cases, moving the family unit is not seen as the best solution, for example when grandparents live nearby. In this case, couples may opt for an arrangement where the man spends part of the week (or month) away from the family, but closer to his workplace (Bertaux-Wiame and Tripier, 2006; Vignal, 2011). Such arrangements are often viewed as cyclical or temporary.

These residential and mobility arrangements are often seen as the best possible trade-off by both partners (Green, 1997). Although they may allow some couples to maintain a dual career, they tend to conform to traditional gender roles. These roles are produced and reproduced through people's daily activities and are reinforced by the collective ideology that men build a professional career and masculine identity through employment, while women's employment is 'supplementary' (see for example Lapeyre and Le Feuvre, 2004). Differences in male and female employment histories can be understood through the logic of *gendered master status* (Krüger and Levy, 2001; Levy and Widmer, 2013). Female identity is built around the family sphere, and male identity around the professional sphere, their priority field. The partners may participate in the non-priority sphere, provided that the logic of subordination remains intact in each sphere. Accordingly, women can continue their professional careers and be highly mobile as long as they are significantly involved in the domestic work and their partners can pursue their professional careers. Traditional gender roles are particularly strong in liberal welfare regimes without active family policies, such as the UK and Switzerland, but also in conservative welfare regimes such as Germany[1] and Spain, where the state is committed to the preservation of traditional family life and the male breadwinner model (Esping-Andersen, 2013[1990]).

The analyses presented here specifically concern two family events: childbirth and separation/divorce. With the exception of a few recent studies in Germany (Rueger et al., 2011; Kley, 2012) and Sweden (Sandow, 2011), the relationship between these events and high mobility has mainly been investigated using cross-sectional data. But cross-sectional analysis fails to capture the dynamic nature of this relationship. This chapter uses longitudinal data from France, Germany, Spain and Switzerland to explore how people adapt practices and perceptions of high mobility to family events and, vice versa, how high mobility influences the likelihood of having a child or separating from a partner. The following research questions are proposed:

(1) Are long high mobility histories associated with late/reduced fertility or infertility?
(2) Does having a child or separating from a partner change high mobility practices and dispositions to high mobility?
(3) Does having been highly mobile or willing to being highly mobile influence the subsequent likelihood of having a child or separating from a partner?
(4) Finally, are there gender and cross-national differences in these questions?

Using sequence analysis, we show that women with long high mobility histories were less likely to have children. This was also true for highly-educated women who experienced a short episode of high mobility between their 20s and early-30s. This effect was particularly strong in Germany and Spain. Path analysis based on panel data additionally shows that in Germany and Switzerland, highly mobile women without children were more likely to separate from partners than their less mobile counterparts. Although a childbirth considerably reduced both men's and women's willingness to be highly mobile, it only reduced significantly the high mobility practices of women who already had children. Finally, recently separated mothers were more likely to become highly mobile.

Fertility and high mobility

The difficulty of balancing the competing demands of family life and work-related high mobility may lead some highly mobile people – in particular women – to postpone parenthood to achieve career goals. This can result in late births, successive pregnancies or lower fertility. Studies in Germany and Austria showed that women who moved or travelled frequently for work were more often without children (Boyle et al., 2008; Rueger et al.,

2011; Schneider et al., 2002). This result was not observed for men. Based on two representative samples of the German population Rueger et al. (2011), for example, showed that highly mobile women with partners were less likely to marry or have children than less mobile working women.

To investigate the relationship between high mobility and fertility in our study, a four-group typology of high mobility histories was constructed from the full sample of respondents aged 35 and over at the second wave of the survey (including the mobile oversamples, see Chapter 5). Using the same data (*n* = 1843), individual fertility histories were built based on the year of birth of respondents' children. The TraMineR module for the statistical environment R was used to visualise and analyse the sequences (Gabadinho et al., 2009). We identified five typical patterns of fertility histories, following the same clustering approach as for the mobility histories in Chapter 5. Contingency tables were used to analyse relationships between the two typologies. The advantage of this approach was twofold. First, the fertility sequences account not only for the number of births but also their timing and rhythm. Second, the analysis does not establish high mobility as the sole cause or consequence of fertility. Rather, it postulates a mutual influence of mobility behaviours and fertility, as the above literature shows.

Figure 8.1 displays the distribution of the number of children by year of age and by type. Because of an insufficient number of cases, the years corresponding to ages 56–59 were not shown on the graphs. Type 1 individuals – Early fertility – (*n* = 285) had their first child between the ages of 15 and 23, usually followed by a second child in the years following. In rare cases, a third child was born. Type 2 individuals – Mid-20s fertility – (*n* = 482) had their first child between ages 25 and 30 and a second child in the years following. As with Type 1, a third child was rare. Type 3 individuals – Late fertility – (*n* = 464) had their first child at around age 30, often followed by a second child. Type 4 individuals – Low and late fertility – (*n* = 264) were either older people who had no children or people who had only one child between ages 33 and 40 and, in rare instances, a second child. Finally, Type 5 individuals – No fertility – (*n* = 348) had no children at the time of the survey.

Tables 8.1 and 8.2 show contingency tables of high mobility history types by fertility history types for men and women respectively. Figure 8.2 shows a histogram of high mobility history types by fertility history type for women. Overall, the association is statistically significant among women but not among men.[2] Of the women who had never been highly mobile during their careers, 10 per cent did not have children at the time of the interview. By contrast, 18 per cent of women with long-term mobility
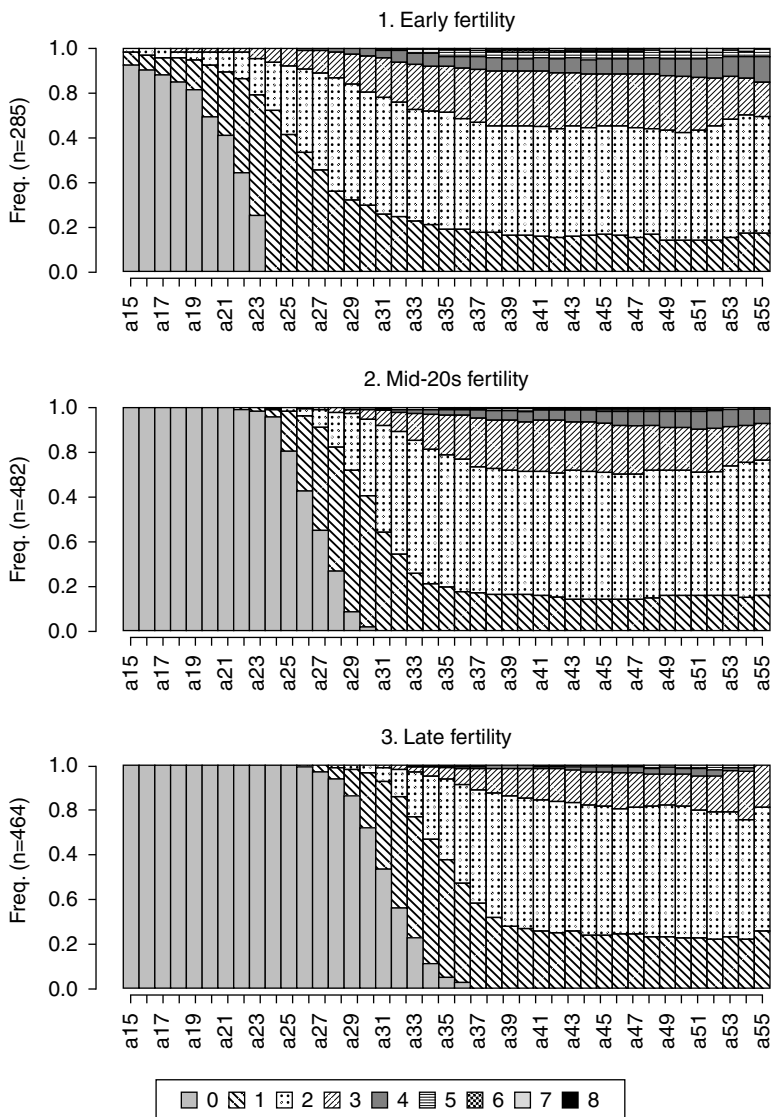
Figure 8.1 Continued
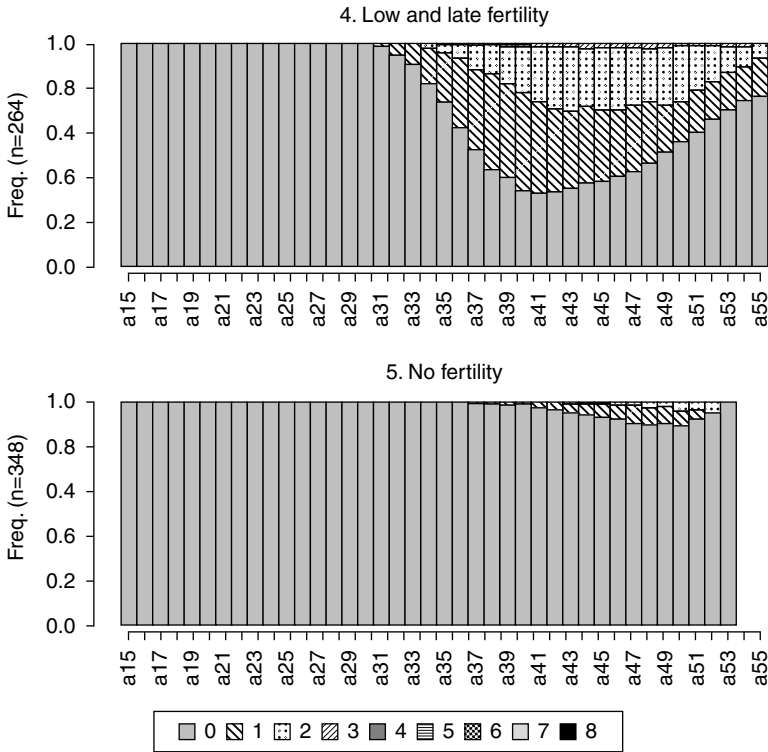
Figure 8.1   Typology of fertility histories

Source: Distribution graphs of number of children (frequency) by age (15–55), population aged 35 and over in 2011, JobMob II, unweighted.

Reading: At 35, approximately 20% of individuals from Type 1 – Early fertility, had one child; 50% had two children; 20% had three children, and 10% had four or more children.

histories (Type 3), 22 per cent of ongoing daily long-distance commuters (Type 4) and 23 per cent of those who experienced a short episode of high mobility early in their careers (Type 1) did not have children. This last example shows that the timing of mobility episodes – and not just the duration – plays a crucial role in fertility behaviour. The period of high mobility we observed among these women between their 20s and early 30s often coincided with partnership and family formation. As the qualitative interviews and analysis below suggest, high mobility during this period often reflects a personal investment in a career path or job insecurity that can delay or discourage women from starting a family. It is also interesting to note that women who entered the labour market early and experienced high mobility episodes in their early 20s (Type 2) were

Table 8.1 Fertility history type by high mobility history type – women (%)

	Non-mobile	1. Early career mobility	2. Early and short mobility	3. Long-term mobility	4. Ongoing daily long-distance commuting	Total
Early fertility	24.3	19.4	14.9	17.6	20.7	20.6
Mid-20s fertility	30.1	23.9	33.8	25.7	20.7	28.2
Late fertility	23.8	20.6	20.8	23.0	29.3	22.9
Low and late fertility	11.9	12.8	17.5	15.5	6.9	13.3
No fertility	9.9	23.3	13.0	18.2	22.4	14.9
Total (N)	100 (445)	100 (180)	100 (154)	100 (187)	100 (58)	100 (1024)

Source: Crossed table, Cramer's V = .10, $p <$ .001, women aged 35 and over in 2011, JobMob II, unweighted.

Table 8.2 Fertility history type by high mobility history type – men (%)

	Non-mobile	1. Early career mobility	2. Early and short mobility	3. Long-term mobility	4. Ongoing daily long-distance commuting	Total
Early fertility	8.2	9.0	8.1	10.2	9.7	9.0
Mid-20s fertility	23.3	22.2	28.9	20.8	26.4	23.6
Late fertility	30.2	25.0	30.4	26.7	26.4	28.0
Low and late fertility	14.2	18.1	17.0	14.8	15.3	15.6
No fertility	24.1	25.7	15.6	27.5	22.2	23.8
Total (N)	100 (232)	100 (144)	100 (135)	100 (236)	100 (72)	100 (819)

Source: Crossed table, Cramer's V = .06, n.s., men aged 35 and over in 2011, JobMob II, unweighted.

much less likely to have experienced early fertility (15 per cent against 24 per cent for non-mobiles). But unlike the other mobile groups, they were almost as many as the non-mobiles to have children because they had a high fertilityin their mid-20s. The same analyses conducted on each country separately showed significant effects for women in Germany (V = .16, $p <$ .01) and Spain (V = .18, $p <$ .01). Only trends were observed in Switzerland, while the effect was very marginal in France.

Contrary to our expectations, high mobility histories – even long-term ones – were not clearly related to late fertility (Types 3 and 4) or low fertility (Type 4). Women with early and short mobility histories
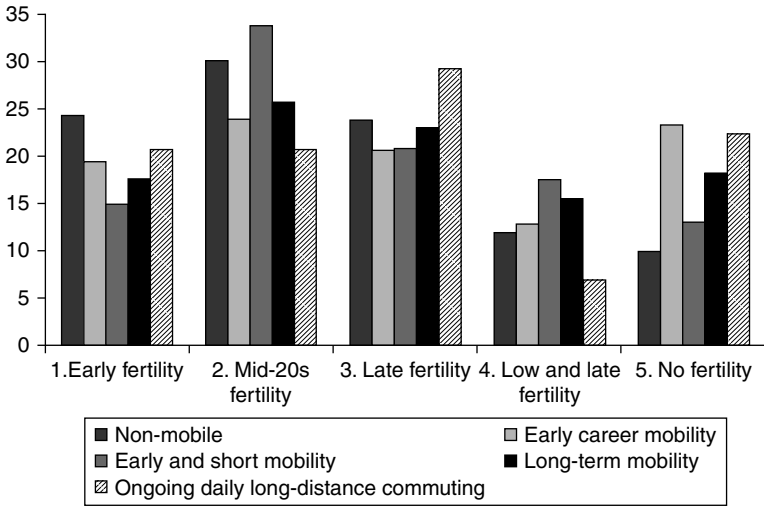
Figure 8.2   High mobility history type by fertility history type – women (%)
Source: Histogram, women aged 35 and over in 2011, JobMob II, unweighted, *n* = 1024.

(Type 2) and those with long mobility experiences (Type 3) tended to be over-represented among low and late fertility histories (Type 4). However, this over-representation was not observed in late fertility histories (Type 3). Only ongoing long-distance female commuters were over-represented among late fertility histories (29 per cent against 24 per cent for non-mobiles). However, we exercise caution in interpreting this result due to the small number of women represented in this category.

For men, the relationship between high mobility and fertility histories is not significant overall. However, it is interesting to note that men with early and short mobility experiences were less likely to be without children than the other categories, including men who had never been highly mobile during their careers. Overall, our results show that women with long-term high mobility histories and short high mobility episodes between their 20s and early 30s in Spain and Germany were more likely to remain without children than women who had never been highly mobile.

These findings suggest greater difficulty of reconciling parenthood and work-related high mobility for women than for men in Germany and Spain. Career breaks caused by maternity can be an important reason for this gender inequality. Overall, couples with young children tend to prioritise male work-related mobility and female work-related immobility because of traditional gender roles (see the next section). Comparatively more traditional family policies and norms in conservative welfare

regimes such as Germany and Spain may explain the stronger gender effects in these countries than in France. Childcare is predominantly seen as the responsibility of parents – mainly mothers – and immediate family. In France, parents use more extra-familial care structures and mothers are more often full-time employed.

Becoming a parent and high mobility

In this section, we examine whether people who had children between the two sweeps changed their high mobility practices and willingness to be highly mobile. We also determine to what extent high mobility practices or willingness to be highly mobile at the time of the first survey wave impacted the likelihood of having a child in the following four years.

A model of the causal structure between a set of variables was tested, as displayed in Figure 8.3. Path analyses were performed using Mplus version 6 software (Muthén and Muthén, 2012) to estimate the linear relationships between variables, as defined by the model. In this kind of analysis, variables can be both dependent and independent. The model estimates path coefficients, which are partial regression coefficients. They represent the net weight of a predictor variable on a dependent variable, when the effects of the other predictors are held constant. For example, the negative effect of childbirth on high mobility practices means that respondents who did not have a child between the two survey waves remained or became highly mobile more often than those who did have a child, when other variables are held constant.
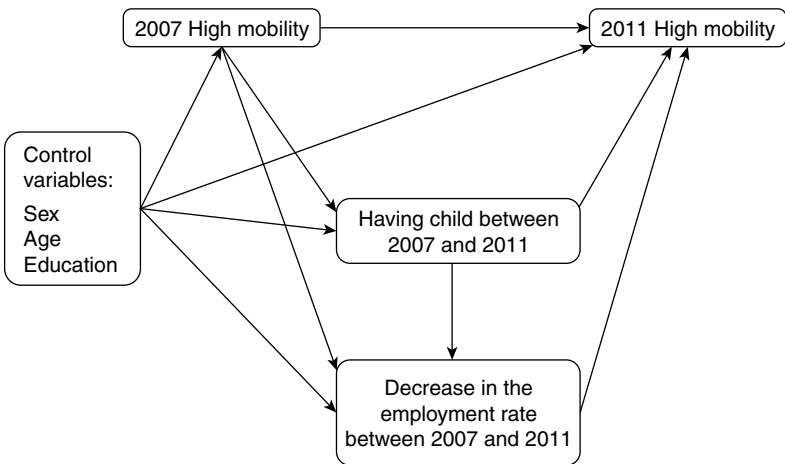
Figure 8.3   Conceptual model

The analytical sample was composed of employed people aged 40 and under in 2007 (*n* = 591). High mobility practices in both 2007 and 2011 were considered a binary variable (yes/no), aggregating all forms of work-related high mobility as defined in the JobMob survey: daily long-distance commuting, frequent overnight business trips and weekly commuting (overnighting), and people in long-distance relationships. Willingness to be highly mobile in both 2007 and 2011 were measured on a scale of zero (not open to any form of high mobility) to ten (open to any form of high mobility).[3] The control variables included in the model were gender, age cohort (three categories) and educational level (three categories). Salary level was not retained in the final models because it presented insignificant coefficients. While initially included, marital status was also eliminated because of its strong colinearity with parenthood. A decrease in the employment rate (shift from full-time to part-time work, work interruption) was also included to test whether a childbirth directly decreased high mobility practices, or indirectly, through a lower employment rate.

Two models were tested: model A included high mobility practices and model B the willingness of being highly mobile at each survey wave. Coefficients were first estimated for the total population, and then separately by country of residence, gender and the interaction between gender and parenthood (in 2007). Multi-group models were used to simultaneously test the model on these different sub-populations in order to identify moderator effects (Muthén and Muthén, 2012).[4]

Figures 8.4 and 8.5 show the results of the two models for the whole population. Table 8.3 shows the results of the multi-group analyses. The path coefficients associated with the control variables were not included in the figures and table. The adjustment indices of model fit were satisfactory for all models considered.[5]

Results of model A show that respondents who were working for pay in 2007 and had a child between the two survey waves tended to reduce their practices of high mobility during this time ($\beta = -.31$, $p < .05$). This decrease in mobility occurred regardless of a decrease in employment rate. However, the effect was relatively weak and not statistically significant in the multi-group analyses, except for women who had already had a child in 2007 ($\beta = -.66$, $p < .05$). Nonetheless, the coefficients were high for first-time mothers and men who were already fathers, suggesting strong variability within these categories. Among these two groups, having a child was more associated with a decrease in the employment rate. No decrease in mobility was observed for first-time fathers.

Results for model B show that having a child greatly reduces both men's ($\beta = -.85$, $p < .01$) and women's ($\beta = -.93$, $p < .01$) willingness to be highly mobile. Only women who already had a child in 2007
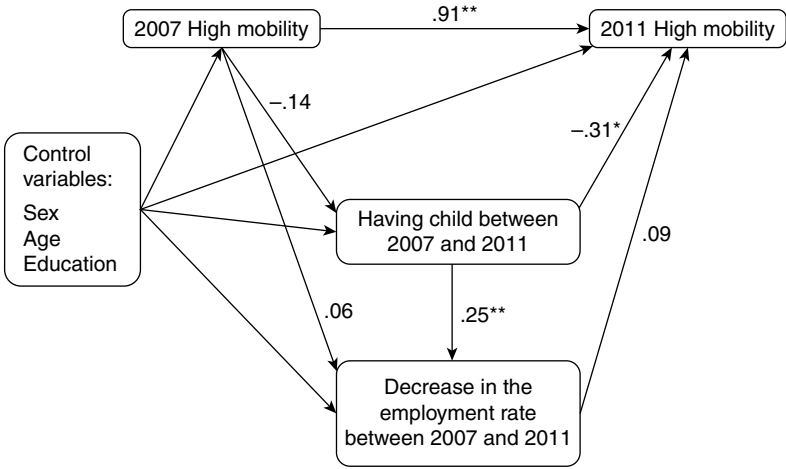
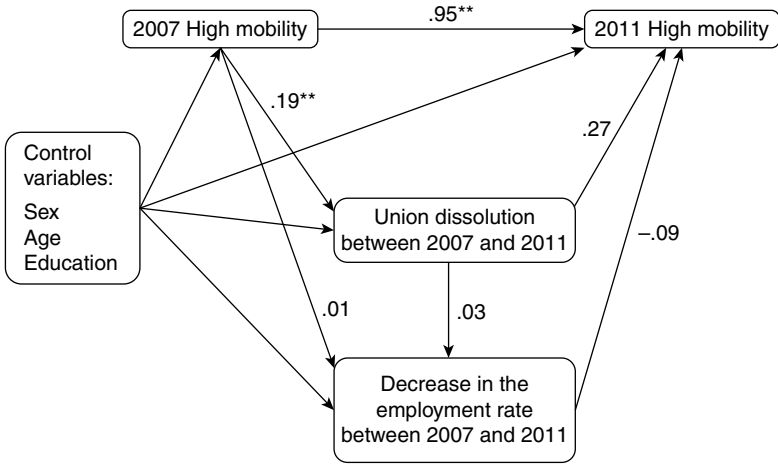*Figure 8.4*   Path analysis results – model A: high mobility practice

Source: Standardised path coefficients, ***** *p* < .05; ****** *p* < .01; employed population, aged 40 and under in 2007, JobMob II, *n* = 591; CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .00, 'countries equally weighted'.
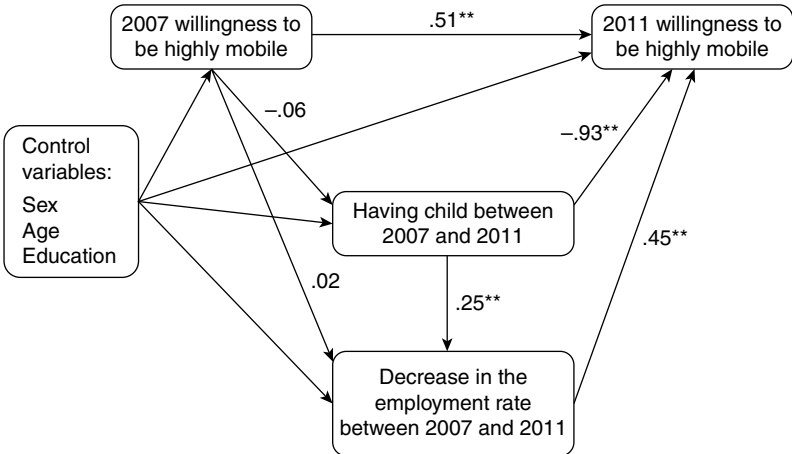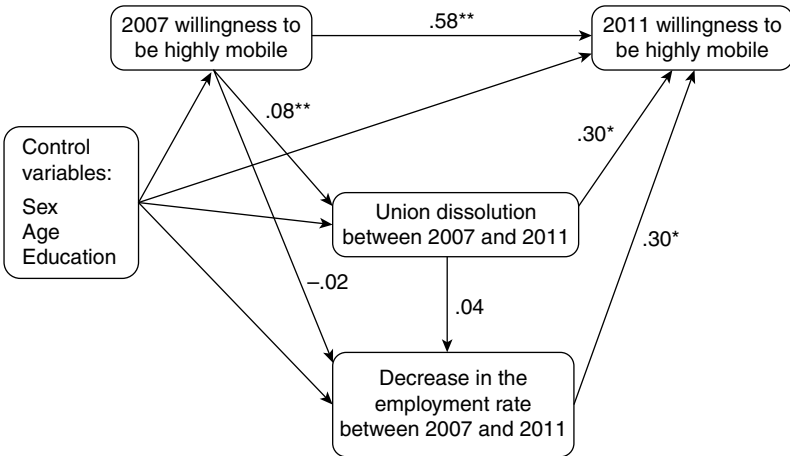

Figure 8.5   Path analysis results – model B: willingness to be highly mobile

Source: Standardised path coefficients, ***** *p* < .05; ****** *p* < .01; employed population aged 40 and under in 2007, JobMob II, *n* = 591; CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .00, 'countries equally weighted'.

remained equally willing to be mobile, because their willingness was already low. The effect was particularly strong in Spain and, to a lesser extent, Switzerland. Men who already had a child in 2007 and declared themselves willing to be highly mobile were less likely to have another

Table 8.3 Results of multi-group path analyses – parenthood

	Sex		Interaction between sex and parenthood (2007)					Country of residence		
	M	W	M without child	M with child	W without child	W with child	All	Fr	Spain	Switz
Model A: having a child – high mobility practice										
Mob 07 → Mob 11	.84**	1.09**	.92**	2.09	2.57	.98*	2.42**	-.18	.84**	.75**
Mob 07 → Child	-.20	-.05	-.25	-.15	-.20	.29	-.04	-.09	.05	-.26
Mob 07 → ↘Job	.09	.03	.04	.15	-.06	.06	.04	.26	.02	.06
Child → ↘Job	.19	.26**	.00	.41**	.63**	.03	.15	.08	.17	.37
Child → Mob 11	-.21	-.55	.09	-2.17	-1.70	-.66*	.02	-.87	-.20	-.23
↘Job → Mob 11	.05	.11	.55	1.72	.48	.16	-.01	-.34	.28	.34
Model B: having a child – willingness to be highly mobile										
Willing 07 → Willing 11	.51**	.52**	.57**	.46**	.29*	.63**	.59**	.51**	.37**	.41**
Willing 07 → Child	-.05	-.07	.06	-.17**	-.07	.04	.05	-.07	-.16**	-.10
Willing 07 → ↘Job	.00	.04	-.05	.09	-.01	.03	.08	-.12	-.03	.15*
Child → ↘Job	.18	.28**	.01	.44**	.64**	.05	.18	.08	.14	.48*
Child → Willing 11	-.85**	-.93**	-.94**	-.96**	-2.16**	.11	-.60	-.64	-1.25**	-.63*
↘Job → Willing 11	.42*	.51	.27	.73**	.83	.30	-.02	-.05	.78**	.48**

child in the years that followed (β = −.17, *p* < .01). Again, this effect was particularly strong in Spain. Finally, men (β = .42, *p* < .01), and particularly fathers (β = .73, *p* < .01) whose employment rate decreased (in some cases ending in unemployment), appeared significantly more willing to be highly mobile. This effect was very strong in Spain and Switzerland but was observed in neither Germany nor France (see Chapter 7).

The drop in willingness to be highly mobile following a childbirth – sharper than that observed in actual high mobility practices – suggests that rapidly ending high mobility is not always possible, even when it is sometimes desired. The results were more pronounced among mothers than fathers. However, the trend was similar for both sexes. High standard deviation among men indicates strong variability in behaviours.

Life story interviews conducted in France allowed for further analysis. Some female participants saw high mobility as incompatible with having a child. This perception was particularly strong among overnighters. Christelle, a sales representative, was on the road five days a week for work. Her feelings about her travel were very positive. However, she chose to look for a more sedentary position in order to start a family:

> Really, the only reason I stopped travelling so much was that I wanted to have children. It's a little complicated when you're away the whole week. That's why I wanted to change jobs. But in some way, they're constraints I imposed on myself. It's not that I was fed up with travelling. It's that, at some point, you have to make a choice … Concretely, even though my husband had a job that allowed him to take on childcare responsibilities at the time, I didn't see the point of having a child to not see him Monday to Friday. (*Christelle, 34 years old, sales representative, stopped high mobility, living in a periurban area*)

Some highly mobile women thus chose to stop overnight business trips once they decided to have a child. For male overnighters, the arrival of children had far less impact on their job activity or work-related travel than for female overnighters. Women often became the primary homemakers, taking care of the house and children and managing the family's social agenda:

> I always say I have an amazing wife because she handles everything when I'm not there. Me, I don't do anything around the house. The bank accounts, I don't know, the children, I didn't know much, I took care of them on weekends only. Well, I did the whole weekend,

it's true, but during the week I didn't do anything, when the kids were sick. ... Even when my wife gave birth, I was on the other side of France. I came back late at night. Well, it's stuff ... [that] isn't easy to manage alone. You need to put things in context. It must not always be easy. That's it. (Philippe, 51 years old, sales engineer, overnighter, living in a large suburb)

In some cases, female partners of men who overnight frequently gave up their own jobs to take care of the children. This was especially the case in large families or when the female job also required high mobility.

So, it's true that at the very beginning, it was a bit complicated because we lived in Tours, and she worked 150–200 kilometres away, and me 60. So, well, she got up at 5am, took the train at 6 ... But that didn't last long. A year and a half, something like that, for my wife in any case ... My wife stopped working. Basically ... around the time [of the birth] of the first. So, basically, it was her who dealt with all those constraints – constraints accentuated by the fact that I was working at least every other weekend. (Patrick, 56 years old, journalist, daily long-distance commuter, living in a periurban area)

In other cases, women reoriented toward jobs and occupations that offered them greater geographical fixity. This was sometimes achieved through home-based businesses. This was the case for Pierre's wife, a mother of four, who ended her career as a hospital nurse to become a childminder:

It wasn't easy, and it's true that my wife still wanted to work ... little by little, she still tells me that she sacrificed her life. A mother who sacrificed her career for her children. Now she says she's very happy, very fulfilled with the children she minds. I feel that sometimes she wants to get out, so to speak – to meet people. You're at home minding four children, it's not always as fulfilling as meeting other colleagues in your team. (Pierre, 50 years old, sales engineer, overnighter, living in an urban centre)

Through these arrangements, female partners of highly mobile men tended to slow down or end their own careers, thus reinforcing traditional gender roles. Men's high mobility, particularly in the form of overnighting, appeared to be strongly associated with the professional immobility of their female partners.

Couples had different ways of perceiving the interaction between work-related high mobility and parenthood. This strongly depended on how

couples saw the place of children in mobility decisions. When couples were confronted with a job opportunity that required geographic relocation, some interviewees – often men – believed that pursuing a career took precedence over their children's familiar environment. Michel, a member of the French armed forces, and his family moved many times over the course of his career. For Michel and his wife, having two children was never an obstacle when it came to moving. On the contrary, they felt it would help develop their resilience. Bob and Mathias, on the other hand, refused any job opportunity that would have involved uprooting their family. These attitudes changed depending on the timing of the mobility opportunity. Philippe twice opted for taking a *pied-à-terre* closer to his workplace, as his children were very young or about to be born:

> Me, I asked to wait a bit, since my wife was pregnant and I didn't want to move in those conditions. So I stayed another year in Nantes before moving to the Paris region … That's it. So I often slept at a hotel, because I had to travel from Nantes to Strasbourg and elsewhere, which meant long trips for me. On my way back on Fridays, I took the opportunity to be in Paris to look for accommodation. I investigated the housing market, real estate agents. (Philippe, 51 years old, sales engineer, overnighter, living in a large suburb)

Children's education also requires parents to adapt their high mobility practices. Michel and his wife never saw having children as an obstacle to the moves necessary for Michel's military career. However, they opted for a second residence at critical moments in their children's academic development:

> [her] We stayed one more year [in Alsace] because Gaëlle was going into Year nine and Michaël into Year 12 when he was going to be transferred. So I thought, if we plan well, Michel does one more year, and that way Michaël's in Year 13 and Gaëlle's in Year ten.
>
> [him] And, besides, I had to go back to school. So I went back to school … The last year I spent … six months out. Six months of apprenticeships … I was only away during the week … I left Sunday evening and came back Friday afternoon. (Michel, 57 years old, armed forces member, overnighter, living in a rural area)

These elements show how mobility arrangements are made and re-made to balance competing demands of family and professional life over the family life course. In particular, it shows how individuals shift from one form of mobility to another, notably relocation and reversible forms

of high mobility, such as commuting and overnighting. Decisions about how to balance a mobile career and family life tend to prioritise the perceived needs of children and male partners over the pursuit of women's careers.

Union dissolution

In this section we explore whether individuals who separated from their partners between the two survey waves changed their high mobility practices and willingness to be highly mobile. The second aim is to determine whether high mobility practices, or a strong willingness to high mobility, at the first survey wave influenced the likelihood of union dissolution in the following four years.

In a longitudinal three-year study in Germany, Kley (2012) showed that women who commuted long distances had less marital stability. This effect was observed only in the former East Germany, while a full-time job was already a good predictor of marital instability in the former West Germany. Sandow's Sweden-based study (2011) showed that long-distance commuting increased the likelihood of separation for men and women alike. Based on a representative Austrian sample, Boyle et al. (2008) additionally showed that couples who moved frequently – especially long distances – were more likely to separate. The authors interpret these results by suggesting that high mobility is a relatively stressful practice that increases the probability of separation. Moreover, repeated long-distance moves and high mobility are often undertaken primarily for the benefit of a husband's career. This may increase marital tension and wifely resentment.

Path analysis models similar to those in the previous section were tested for union dissolution between the two survey waves. The analytic sample was comprised of employed people who had a stable partner in 2007 (*n* = 1127). As in the previous section, models A and B included high mobility practices and willingness to be highly mobile, respectively, at each survey wave.

Figures 8.6 and 8.7 show the results of the two models for the whole population. Table 8.4 shows the results of multi-group analyses. The path coefficients associated with the control variables were not recorded in the figures or table. The adjustment indices of model fit were satisfactory for all models considered.

The results for model A show that, in the years between the survey waves, highly mobile women without children in 2007 separated more often than non-mobile ones (β = .39, p < .05). This effect was strong in

Figure 8.6 Path analysis results – model A: high mobility practice

Source: Standardised path coefficients, * *p* < .05; ** *p* < .01; employed population having a stable partner in 2007, JobMob II, *n* = 1127; CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .00, 'countries equally weighted'.

Figure 8.7 Path analysis results – model B: willingness to be highly mobile

Source: Standardised path coefficients, * *p* < .05; ** *p* < .01; employed population having a stable partner in 2007, JobMob II, *n* = 1127; CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .00, 'countries equally weighted'.

Table 8.4 Results of multi-group path analyses – union dissolution

| | Sex | | Interaction between sex and parenthood (2007) | | | | Country of residence | | | |
	M	W	M without children	M with children	W without children	W with children	All	Fr	Spain	Switzerland
Model A: union dissolution – high mobility practice										
Mob 07 → Mob 11	.94**	.97**	.76**	1.02**	2.14*	.71**	2.60**	4.15	.71**	.67**
Mob 07 → Dissolution	.19	.18*	.14	.19	.39*	.04	.52**	-.29	.06	.31*
Mob 07 → ↘Job	-.10	.08	-.17	-.09	.15	.05	.04	.49	.00	-.01
Dissolution → ↘Job	.03	.00	-.16	.13	-.33*	.10	.03	.48	-.41**	.02
Dissolution → Mob 11	.20	.41	.22	.22	.31	.62**	-.62	3.26	.37	.23
↘Job → Mob 11	-.14	-.08	-.28	-.13	-.55	-.02	-.09	-1.63	-.10	-.03
Model B: union dissolution willingness to be highly mobile										
Willing 07 → Willing 11	.60**	.57**	.55**	.72**	.47	.61**	.71**	.50**	.61**	.44**
Willing 07 → Dissolution	.10**	.04	-.08	.19**	.10	-.02	.05	.11	.03	.15**
Willing 07 → ↘Job	-.06*	.01	-.11*	-.09*	-.06	.02	.02	-.11	-.06	.03
Dissolution → ↘Job	.05	.01	-.25	.20	-.25	.10	.05	.39	-.40*	-.01
Dissolution → Willing 11	.35	.22	.91**	-.04	-.56	.55**	.40	.78**	.55	.22
↘Job → Willing 11	.53**	.16	.26	.75**	-.70	.24	.07	-.04	.68*	.27*

Source: Standardised path coefficients, * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; employed population having a stable partner in 2007, JobMob II, $n = 591$; CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .00, 'countries equally weighted'.

Germany and Switzerland, but was not observed in the two other countries. A similar trend was observed for men – especially fathers – but the effect was not statistically significant. There was no effect in the case of mothers. The fact that high-level career women were more likely to challenge traditional gender norms may explain the higher likelihood of separation among highly mobile women. According to the gendered master status logic, this situation may reinforce tensions between partners and increase the risk of union dissolution.

A second finding is that mothers who had separated from their partners were more likely to become highly mobile ($\beta = .62$, $p < .01$) than those that had not. Further analyses showed that a vast majority of these mothers became daily long-distance commuters. The long commutes of single mothers (in particular among low-income and ethnic minority groups) have been highlighted elsewhere (Crane, 2007; Maksim, 2010; Preston et al., 1993). Single mothers were more likely to be fully employed and make daily trips to accompany their children, increasing their travel time budgets. The desire of ex-partners to live close to one another to facilitate contact with their children – and sometimes to co-parent – may also limit the possibility of moving closer to the workplace.

Finally, the results for model B show that union dissolution increased the willingness to be highly mobile among men without children ($\beta = .91$, $p < .01$) and women with children ($\beta = .55$, $p < .01$). The effect was not observed for the two other categories. While this trend was observed in all countries, it was particularly strong in France. An effect observed only in Switzerland was that fathers who declared themselves very willing to be mobile for their jobs in 2007 were significantly more likely to have separated in the years that followed ($\beta = .19$, $p < .01$).

Qualitative interviews helped to interpret the results of statistical models. In particular, they highlighted that highly mobile people have difficulty balancing the demands of family/conjugal life and work-related high mobility. Overnighting proved particularly challenging for couples. First, work-related absence resulted in emotional and sexual deprivation:

> At the very beginning, I did 48 hours straight. There, yes, we started to be a bit starved. Yes, I missed cuddling, talking. We were happy to get home. Now, those rhythms have disappeared. We don't have the right to work more than 24 hours, so no. (Bruno, 40 years old, firefighter, overnighter, living in a large suburb)

During the mobile partner's absence, other household members share experiences from which the former is *de facto* excluded. The mobile

partner does not share common references and may feel out of step with household members. This may lead to a sense of distance, which requires a period of mutual adaptation upon returning home (see Chapter 9). This distance can result in a loss of bearings in the family sphere. Some describe this as 'acting like you are at a hotel'. This is related to a disinvestment from family life and a dilettante, consumerist way of relating to home and family. This was the case for Bob when he worked as a sales representative and was away the entire week. He tended to 'occupy' the family home in a functional way at weekends, like at a hotel. He described the growing lack of communication with his spouse and his disinvestment from the everyday life of the family, especially that of his children. His daughters came to see him more as a stranger than a father. Such absence negatively impacts the quality of relationships with partners and children. Family members are unable to find their place in this new spatial and temporal configuration. Moreover, the practical responsibilities – particularly caring for children – fall mainly on the non-mobile partner, usually the woman:

> After a while it's heavy because we had to schedule who was dropping off the kids, who was collecting them, who was doing what. And a lot of the time it was, you're leaving such-and-such day, but how am I going to manage in the evening? Don't leave that day, leave this day. (Sébastien, 33 years old, business manager, stopped high mobility, living in an inner suburb)

This uneven division of household tasks often created a sense of injustice due to the freedom that work-related travel offered or seemed to offer.

> Because the partner stays at home, she feels like the one who leaves is having a great time partying and doing things. In fact, we're bored to death in a room watching DVDs. (Sébastien, 33 years old, business manager, stopped high mobility, living in an inner suburb)

Finally, some jobs that required overnighting provided an opportunity to forge closeness and strong ties with colleagues. Some described their colleagues as a 'second family', from which the partner may feel excluded. This feeling may become a source of tension or conflict. More broadly, highly mobile people's passion and investment in their jobs created distance between partners and reinforced the feeling of absence. When overnighters showed a strong investment in their careers and professional aspirations, they appeared not only physically absent but also somewhat disinvested, which strengthened the feeling of absence from the family.

All these factors resulted in difficulties for couples and families. Some of the overnighters we interviewed had become aware of these problems quite suddenly during their careers and were sometimes obliged to make radical decisions. They were forced to weigh their professional life and aspirations against their marriage and family:

> In the end, it almost cost me my marriage, so…We said enough, we stopped fast…I stopped everything in three months. I stopped everything. (Bob, 57 years old, site manager, daily long-distance commuter, living in a periurban area)

> There was a tipping point when they told me it was Paris. It was a low point in my life. It was either I go to Paris, manage France and get divorced – to make a long story short. It was going to happen. Or I stop and do like I did…to one agency handling two counties [*départments*]. A tipping point…and I thought whoa! You're definitely having a great time, you can climb even higher, or you think about your kids and wife. (Sébastien, 33 years old, business manager, stopped high mobility, living in an inner suburb)

Such situations often occurred for those (1) who did not anticipate the reality of a job involving travel, absence and its impact on family life, and (2) who did not negotiate and discuss their decision to become highly mobile with their family. Prior research suggests that couples faced with high mobility tend to report lower couple satisfaction when high mobility is a point of contention in the family (Viry et al., 2010) or for highly mobile mothers of young children (Feldhaus and Schlegel, 2015). These factors are linked to socialisation to high mobility practices and skills, such as anticipating consequences, ability to handle social relationships at a distance and ubiquity skills (see Chapter 4).

Despite these difficulties, absence from home was also cited as a factor in a couple's longevity by people who had practised overnighting for a long time. This was often the case for people who were mobile through their choice of occupation and among travellers (see Chapter 4). Absence from home allows both partners to invest in their own interests and milieus. These partners describe themselves as highly independent and overnighting is seen as supporting this mutual independence (Kaufmann and Widmer, 2006).

> In some ways, maybe if we had spent the week together, we wouldn't have been able to stand it either, to be honest. We're rather independent…So I also think that this is the secret of couples in some ways, I think. Otherwise, we might have split up. Yeah, definitely.

(Philippe, 51 years old, sales engineer, overnighter, living in a large suburb)

Relationships are more balanced when both partners are regularly absent from home for their jobs. Even if this involves complex daily organisation, both partners share the same spatial and time constraints and thus experience less tension and asymmetry in their relationships:

What created a balance, if you will, is that professionally, with the on-call system, we have about one weekend a month, since she works on a rotating monthly shift. She's got a job that penalises family life a bit. My job has that a bit as well. I try to coordinate my travel with her schedule in mind. Last night, I wasn't home. I was in Paris. But anyway, she was on call for the night. So that wouldn't have changed anything. We try to find a modus operandi with these two constraints – my travel plus hers. Sometimes we see each other a bit less than normal couples do, but maybe that's what keeps us together. Because it's not just one partner who imposes the constraints in the way of we function. (Martin, 50 years old, IT administrator, overnighter and daily long-distance commuter, living in a periurban area)

Furthermore, all interviewees insisted that absence, on a positive note, made the partners refocus attention on their relationships when they were together and truly share the time they spent together:

Maybe the fact that our relationship has lasted. Maybe the fact that we don't see each other…that there's this travel? No, but it's true. The little we see each other on the two days we can get, we do lots of things together. We reserve those two days for us. (Jean, 50 years old, train driver, overnighter, living in a large suburb)

The idea that work-related absence can be a positive factor in conjugal life was one-sided. This was the representation of mobile people, not of their partners, who were not interviewed the qualitative part of the study. This opinion is nonetheless useful in qualifying the exclusively negative impact of high mobility on a couple's relationship.

Conclusion

In this chapter we examined interdependencies between family development and work-related high mobility. Existing evidence suggested

that women would have more difficulty balancing the competing demands of parenthood and high mobility than men. In particular, we expected greater union instability and lower fertility among highly mobile women than among highly mobile men. These findings have been largely supported by both quantitative and qualitative analyses, but with important differences across countries.

Using sequence analysis, we showed that women with long high mobility histories and those highly educated who experienced a short high mobility episode between their 20s and early 30s were more often without children than less mobile employed women. One possible explanation is less stable partnerships among highly mobile women. Using panel data, we showed that highly mobile women without children separated more often than their less mobile counterparts. These effects were particularly marked in Germany, and to a lesser extent in Spain and Switzerland. This demonstrates the difficulty women face in combining high mobility and family life. Traditional gender norms, including the image of the 'good wife and mother' at home, can result in greater tension between partners when women travel intensively for work than when men do (Hofmeister, 2003).

Most parents of small children (though not all) adopt residential and mobility arrangements that facilitate the mother's involvement in domestic work (for example, finding a job in close proximity to home). Such arrangements only partly result from negotiations or conscious strategies developed by the two partners. Rather, they seem normal, or even natural, because of traditional gender-role ideologies. Consistent with the gendered master status principle, these arrangements sometimes allow couples to maintain a dual career, especially when there are no small children in the household. But, in the presence of small children, these arrangements tend, overall, to reinforce a traditional division of labour between partners. As such, work-related high mobility tends to support and sometimes even reinforce gender inequality within households when men are highly mobile.

At the same time, long-distance commuting and overnighting are resources that allow families to combine a remote workplace and a residential location they are attached to (Vincent-Geslin, 2012). The reversibility of these mobility practices allows mobile partners – more often men – to partake in daily or weekly family events, that is 'doing family' through shared everyday practices (Morgan, 2011). However, the qualitative interviews revealed key differences between regular overnighting and daily long-distance commuting, with the former being less reversible. Not returning home in the evening appears to make it much more difficult to

participate in the daily lives of families. Most women perceive this form of mobility as incompatible with their maternal role. As for men, they note difficulties in staying connected to the everyday life of the family.

Households are embedded in social norms and constraints where high mobility often appears as the best solution. However, high mobility is not always experienced positively by mobile people. Two findings illustrate this point. First, results from panel analyses showed that willingness to be highly mobile sharply decreased for both men and women with a childbirth. However, reducing work-related mobility often proved impossible, at least in the short term, as actual mobility practices decreased only marginally with the arrival of children. Second, single mothers were more likely to become long-distance commuters. The double task of juggling home and work responsibilities is especially demanding for single mothers. These women have strong spatial and time constraints, which partly explains their negative perception of high mobility (see Chapter 3).

The disparities between men and women highlighted in this chapter differed substantially between countries. Combining motherhood and high mobility appeared more unlikely in Germany, Spain and Switzerland than in France. Traditional gender norms are particularly marked in the first three countries, with mothers reducing their rate of employment and/or work-related mobility once the child is born. Childcare is mainly the responsibility of the parents and immediate family. In France however, a comparatively larger proportion of mothers continue to work full time, and couples often use extra-familial care structures.

The findings highlighted in this chapter indicate unequal relationships between men and women facing work-related high mobility in Europe. However, these general trends may obscure a wider variety of patterns in the interrelation between family development and high mobility behaviours. In particular, difficulties balancing high mobility and family life are likely to vary over the family life cycle. Further longitudinal analysis based on interviews with both partners would be necessary to better understand the underlying mechanisms of how mobility and family changes intersect. This will help inform mobility policy and reduce the negative impact of high mobility on women and families.

Notes

1. In the past decade, family policies in Germany have significantly changed toward more equality between wives and husbands, in particular with the

right to shared parental leave in 2007. However, these recent changes may only be observed among the younger generations in our sample.

2. The analysis was repeated by excluding people from the youngest cohort (aged 35–42), who had not completed their fertility period. The results did not differ substantially from those presented here.

3. For each form of high mobility, possible answers were 0 = not open, 1 = under certain conditions, 2 = open. For each separate wave, responses were totalled to give an overall score of high mobility willingness.

4. The B models were also tested by including a control variable indicating whether respondents had changed their high mobility practices between the two waves. The results did not differ significantly from those presented here and are not shown.

5. Two adjustment indices were used to estimate the validity of the model tested – the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA). A model is considered to fit the data well if the CFI is greater than 0.95 and the RMSEA is lower than 0.06 (Hu and Bentler, 1999).

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9
Travel Time Use and Place Attachment among Highly Mobile People

Stéphanie Vincent-Geslin and Emmanuel Ravalet

Introduction

This chapter focuses on how highly mobile people use travel time and spaces of high mobility. These individuals spend a great deal of time travelling in places that are often far away and sometimes unfamiliar. To what extent do they become attached to and identify with these spaces of high mobility? How do they use their travel time? What meaning do these spaces and does travel time have for them?

In the literature, attachment to mobility spaces and the use of travel time are related. Travel time has long been considered wasted, unproductive time. Recently, a number of studies have challenged this assumption. They show that this time does have a use. Mobile people may engage in activities during their travels (Rocci, 2007; Flamm, 2004; Lyons and Urry, 2005; Lyons et al., 2007; Vincent-Geslin, 2010). There are also the conditions of the journey itself that are important, such as landscapes, comfort, the pleasure of driving, a break between activities (Mokhtarian and Salomon, 1997, 2001; Papon et al., 2007, 2008; Diana, 2006; Vincent-Geslin and Joly, 2012). Travel time can be perceived as time saved and as an enjoyable experience during which the mode of transport becomes a 'living place' in its own right (Rocci, 2007; Papon et al., 2008). Travel time can even be perceived as a gift (Jains and Lyons, 2008). It can give the traveller the chance to engage in personal activities that would otherwise be impossible to undertake.

Similarly, travel spaces were designed to be non-spaces, seen as lacking identity, sociability and history. Transit spaces such as airports are the archetypal example (Augé, 1992). 'Place attachment refers primarily to

affective, but also cognitive and behavioral, bonds between individuals or groups and one or several places' (Altman and Low, 1992 cited in Gustafson, 2001: 668). Attachment is built by spending time in places (Elder et al., 1996; Herting et al., 1997). It is also built through pleasant experiences (Milligan, 1998; Duneier, 1992) and through routines, like shopping (Cuba and Hummon, 1993; Hummon, 1992).[1] Yet, place attachment and mobility are part of two distinct research traditions. 'The first perspective values place attachment while often regarding mobility as a threat to a person's affective bonds with place, whereas the second perspective favours mobility and, sometimes, explicitly or implicitly, devalues place attachment. Both perspectives tend to regard place attachment and mobility as opposite, and sometimes even mutually exclusive, phenomena' (Gustafson, 2001: 669).

In this chapter, following Gustafson (2001), we propose going beyond these two approaches to show that there are many ways of using travel time and attaching to place in high mobility practices. What are the major forms of place attachment? How are they built through high mobility experiences? We examine how highly mobile people use their travel time and what meaning they give it. These issues go back to one central question this book seeks to address about the reversible – or irreversible nature – of high mobility. The more productive travel time is and the stronger attachment to places is, the more irreversible high mobility experience is from an existential standpoint. As seen in Chapter 1, travelling becomes mobility when it also involves transformation and experience (McKenzie, 1927). Mobility is irreversible when it provides rich experiences, creates new familiar places and new social relationships, because it transforms the traveller significantly. Spatial reversibility, that is, the possibility of travelling fast, far and returning home frequently, is combined with a more or less strong existential irreversibility, depending on the transformation associated with travelling.

Using qualitative data and photo elicitation interviews collected in France, we first explore the different ways highly mobile people use travel time. Second, we investigate how they build attachment, habits and familiarity with the spaces of their mobility. Travel time and mobility spaces provide *affordances* (Gibson, 1979), that is, opportunities for mobile people. The agency potential of these environments combines with the mobility potential[2] of those travelling in them. These combinations create different configurations of mobile lives. We draw on photographs taken by the highly mobile themselves. Ten highly mobile participants, either daily long-distance commuters or overnighters, agreed to take photographs of important and meaningful aspects of

their journeys. During a second interview, participants described the photographs and explained their meanings. Photographs were interpreted through a conversation between the researcher and the participant (Rose, 2003, see also Chapter 2).

Research evidence suggests that highly mobile people use their travel time in numerous ways. These include relaxing, socialising or working. Travel conditions provide different affordances for different types of activities. For instance, having regular public transport hours can be an opportunity for socialising. Quieter travel time, on the other hand, is more adapted to working. The perception of travel time does not only depend on the activities done during the trip. It also depends on other factors, such as the person's interest in their job, the possibility of choosing between modes of transport, or having routines.

In this chapter, we identify three profiles of overnighters regarding place attachment. The first was characterised by a feeling of uneasiness when travelling. These individuals, who we called worrywarts, experience anxiety in hotels, restaurants and trains. They also exhibit minimal attachment to mobility spaces. As such, their mobility remains very reversible. The second pattern we named the regulars because they create landmarks in their mobility routines. For example, they develop an attachment to certain hotel chains and services. These landmarks help neutralise high mobility experiences, but they mainly act as functional attachments. Finally, explorers experience high mobility as an opportunity for discovery. Their attachment to places is both functional and emotional. This makes high mobility experiences less reversible for them.

The use of travel time among highly mobile people

How highly mobile people – long-distance commuters or overnighters – use their travel time depends on the affordances their travel conditions offer them. Three types of travel conditions can be identified. First, there are the *physical conditions* offered by the modes of transport themselves: travel tools and technical systems (GPS, schedules application), travel information, ergonomics and physical comfort. For example, are travellers standing or sitting? Is there enough space for their legs? The choice of transport mode is critical in determining these physical conditions. Several studies have shown that travel time in public transport is more productive (Lyons and Urry, 2005; Vincent-Geslin and Joly, 2012). With car travel, by contrast, the driver must remain focused on driving. As a result, some highly mobile people opt for public transport, even if this means a longer commute. However, car drivers also use travel time

and spaces, in particular for work-related activities. The car sometimes becomes a 'moving office' as some participants reported (see especially Laurier, 1999; Laurier et al., 2007). Second, travel time use is linked to the *situational conditions* in which the journey takes place. These include the people or objects that accompany the traveller, the type of travel (occasional or regular), the reason (business or pleasure) and the conditions of the trip itself (for example crowds, duration, time of day, standing or seated, driver or passenger) (Belton-Chevallier, 2010; Laurier, 1999; Laurier et al., 2007; Lyons et al., 2007; Van der Waerden et al., 2009). Highly mobile people must adapt to traffic and other interruptions that may prevent them from using their travel time as planned. To do this, they develop strategies, such as travelling at less busy times for greater comfort or choosing specific routes to avoid traffic. Third, these adaptation strategies are linked to the *personal conditions* of travel time use, that is, personal capacities and skills to use travel time (for example, expert knowledge of transport networks).

While all highly mobile people use their travel time in some way or other, they do not perceive it similarly. Activities and perception are two distinct dimensions of travel time use. We turn to these in the two next sections.

Activities done when commuting

The qualitative interviews highlighted the different activities done during trips. The photographs taken by respondents revealed some key aspects of their everyday mobility. Transport modes such as cars, trains or buses are essential to highly mobile lives. Yet, so are the mobility tools for using travel time constructively. Laurence and Léonard, for instance, cited their MP3 players as indispensable for their commutes (Figure 9.1). Listening to music is a relaxing activity (Flamm, 2004). Transit spaces are places for relaxing, resting, listening to music and reading (Figure 9.2).

Commutes can also be used for socialising. This was notably the case for daily long-distance commuters. Routines associated with this form of high mobility increased the likelihood of encountering the same people:

> Sometimes I talk to people on the train. I chat with a man I met, who I saw on such and such a train and saw at a demonstration one day, for example. So now, we say hello to each other and chat. Because Paris is very small. The world itself isn't so big, but Paris is very small, we meet people here (Michelle, 53 years old, civil servant, secretary at a university, daily long-distance commuter, living in a large suburb)

Figure 9.1   Laurence's MP3 player
Source: JobMob qualitative study, France, 2012–2013.

Regular commutes are therefore an opportunity for engaging in social activities during travel. This is especially the case for those who are comfortable talking to people:

> I talk very easily. I can be next to somebody and strike up a conversation. (Michelle)

Finally, socialising also depends on the physical conditions of the journey. Specific train carriage designs can provide more intimate spaces where it is easier to meet. The new single occupancy carriage limits opportunities to socialise, according to Michelle, 'We don't sit in the same place anymore' and 'the seats are very high and you can't really see people'. These findings highlight the fragile nature of social links in travel spaces. These fragile ties can be damaged by changes of schedule, ergonomics or layout. For example, these informal relationships can be interrupted by the elimination or creation of a new line.

Travel time can also be used productively for work-related activities. This is especially the case when the job is itself inherently mobile. Jean, a train driver, took photos of the '2–3 square metres' of his high-speed

Figure 9.2   The commute by coach: a place to relax (Mathias)
Source: JobMob qualitative study, France, 2012–2013.

train cabin. He described this cabin as being the most representative of his 'world' (Figure 9.3). Being in the cabin demands great concentration. Half an hour before each departure, after his shift begins at the depot, Jean goes to the cabin to do a series of technical tests (brakes, traction and roll stability control). During the trips, which he usually does alone, he focuses on the different noises and sounds, the tracks and the dashboard. The latter provides key information such as stations, schedules or reference speeds, which he must take into account when driving. Although he is completely familiar with the space, there is no room for other activities. Listening to music or making phone calls, for example, is not permitted for safety reasons. Safety, in this case, makes the conflation of work and other activities impossible. This is not the case for Claude. As a delivery driver he uses his truck journeys, which are often at night, for other activities. For example, Claude eats meals and talks on the phone, although these activities are, in principle, prohibited.

Travel spaces can also be work spaces, both in cars and on public transport. Public transport, especially trains, allowed the overnighters interviewed in our study to work during their commutes. The activities they

Figure 9.3   The high-speed train cabin: 'my world' (Jean)
Source: JobMob qualitative survey, France, 2012–2013.

did on their journey were more often work-related on the way to work than on the return trip:

> Because when I'm in training, I usually prepare for it…And on the trip back I write up the meeting report, etc…I'm probably more likely to relax on the return journey than on the way there. There's also more accumulated fatigue. I usually relax. More stress going there, less stress coming back. (Aurélie, 24 years old, IT trainer, overnighter, living in a large suburb)

Here again, engaging in work-related activities during commutes depends on the physical conditions of the transport mode. In this respect, the train seems the most suited for working. Having a comfortable seat and an electrical outlet for a personal computer is also important. Personal factors are also influential:

> It's all right if it's a high-speed train because it's fairly calm. What makes me feel uncomfortable is when there are children screaming, for example. I really need a calm environment to be able to either rest

or work. It's true that, when there's noise, I don't feel comfortable. (Aurélie)

Work-related activities can also be done during car commutes. This is especially mentioned by overnighters. Figure 9.4 is a photograph taken by Philippe during a trip. It shows how he uses the time he spends on
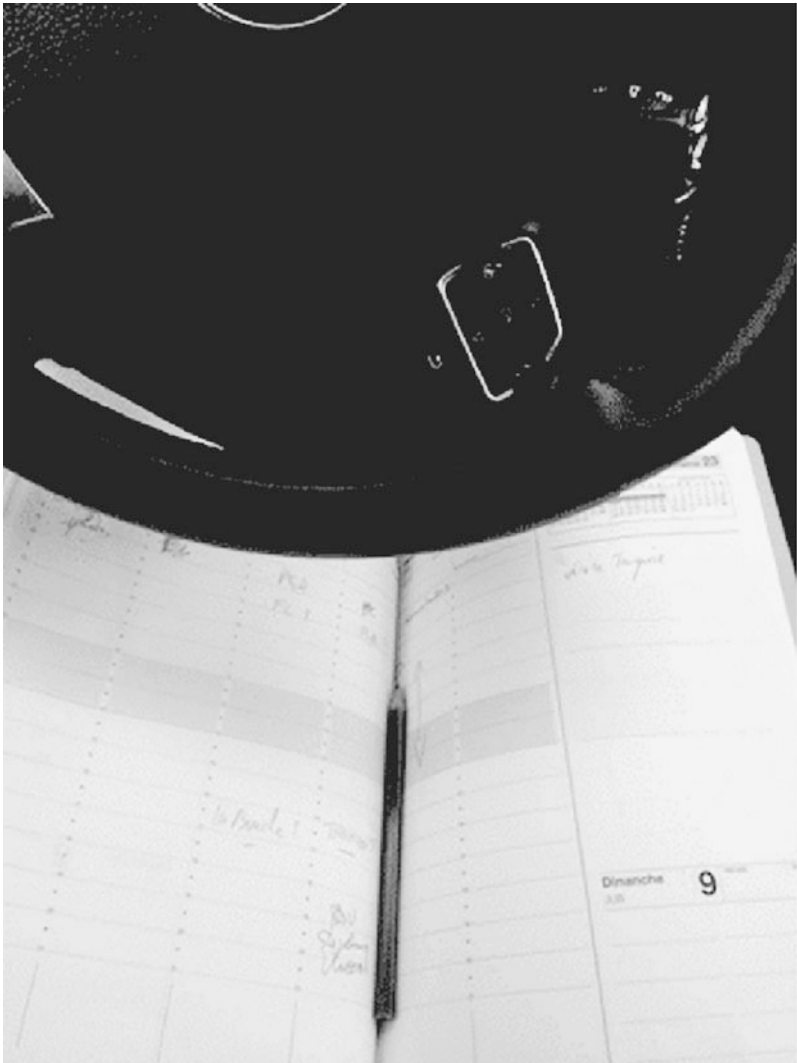
Figure 9.4   Philippe's mobile office
Source: JobMob qualitative study, France, 2012–2013.

the road to make appointments and organise his schedule. It also illustrates how to turn one's car into a mobile office (Laurier, 1999; Laurier et al., 2007).

The qualitative and photo elicitation interviews of highly mobile people have shown the wide range of activities that can be done during commutes. These activities exist, whether the time is actual work time (as is the case for mobile occupations) or not. They shed light on how physical and situational conditions combine to create affordances that are used by highly mobile people according to their skills and plans. Our qualitative analysis indicates that daily long-distance commuters tend to engage in more relaxing and social activities. The quantitative data confirmed that overnighters were more likely to work. Table 9.1 shows that the proportion of people that used travel time for working was two times higher among overnighters than daily long-distance commuters. The latter, however, were proportionally more likely to use travel time for leisure activities. Finally, the proportion of both daily long-distance commuters and overnighters who worked during their commutes increased between 2007 and 2011.

However, a description of activities alone is not sufficient for understanding how highly mobile people make use of travel time. We must also examine how highly mobile people perceive and experience this time.

Perception of commutes

The perception of travel time was mainly discussed by daily long-distance commuters, whereas overnighters emphasised their absences (see next section). The perception of travel time among daily long-distance commuters ranged from being wasted time to a pleasant time (Vincent-Geslin and Joly, 2012). Between the two extremes lies a continuum of intermediary perceptions, depending partly on the perception of travel

Table 9.1 Use of travel time by high mobility type, in 2007 and 2011 (%)

Travel time is a time for:	Relaxation	Recreation	Work
2007			
Daily long-distance commuters	32	19	20
Overnighters	34	7	40
2011			
Daily long-distance commuters	44	16	27
Overnighters	31	12	47

Source: JobMob II, highly mobile sample, 'countries equally weighted'.

time use. The quantitative data showed that, in 2007, 29 per cent of daily long-distance commuters considered their commutes as wasted time, as against 21 per cent of overnighters. In 2011, this figure rose to 36 per cent for long-distance commuters and 30 per cent for overnighters.

The qualitative analysis showed that positive perceptions of commutes were mainly linked to the interest and pleasure commuters felt for their jobs. When jobs were perceived positively, acceptance of long commutes tended to be greater:

> There's also a great atmosphere in high schools, a team spirit that makes us feel good at work, so going isn't a hassle. (Emilie, 35 years old, secondary school teacher, daily long-distance commuter, living in a rural area)

> It also depends on your job. I think that if you like your job, when you go home, you can't wait to get home, but you're less nervous. You have to like your job. (Jacqueline, 60 years old, manager in the National Health Service, daily long-distance commuter, living in an inner suburb)

Perceptions of travel time were also more positive when the trips were done on public transport, as being better suited for relaxing or doing other activities:

> It makes my commute longer, but I prefer taking the bus because it's more comfortable than driving. (Mathias, 56 years old, legal officer, daily long-distance commuter, living in a periurban area)

However, public transport was not perceived positively by all highly mobile people. Regular use of public transport was also associated with negative imaginaries of crowds, lack of privacy, even dirt. Léonard described the three indispensable objects for his commute: (1) his transport pass; (2) his MP3 player that allows him to isolate and occupy himself during the trip; (3) a small bottle of hand disinfectant that he uses for hand decontamination in the underground (Figure 9.5). 'Where there is dirt there is a system. Dirt is the by-product of a systematic ordering and classification of matter, in so far as ordering involves rejecting inappropriate elements.' (Douglas, 2005) Clean and dirty are elements that symbolically organise the world. In Léonard's case, they organise travel spaces. By using antibacterial hand gel, he symbolically distinguishes between the underground or suburban train and other spaces of daily life.

Figure 9.5   Léonard's travel 'musts'
Source: JobMob qualitative study, France, 2012–2013.

Daily long-distance commuters with no other alternative than the car usually had the most negative experiences of their commute trips. They were more likely to perceive their journey by car as empty and useless:

> So, for me, having to drive is a waste of time. If I had [access to] public transport, I'd take the train. (Emilie, 35 years old, secondary school teacher, daily long-distance commuter, living in a rural area)

Negative perceptions were also linked to age, especially when commuting was a long-term routine. Over time, such trips seemed to result in fatigue and feeling worn down.

> It's been six years. I'm starting to get a bit fed up. I'm very happy to be retiring July 14th of next year…Fed up with commuting, the constraints…In fact, commuting is fine when there's no stress…For instance, in the Paris region, it's really a hassle because you never know when the train's going to come, you never know if it's going to be on time, you never know if it's going to go to its final destination, you never know if you're going to be able to go, you don't

know if you'll be able to get back. (Michel, 57 years old, armed forces member, overnighter, living in a rural area)

Finally, some daily long-distance commuters had a neutral perception of their commutes. This was especially true for commuters in the Paris region. For this group commuting was an integral part of Parisian life. For Gaby, public transport was satisfactory, because it allowed her to get to work with relative ease. Moreover, professional and leisure opportunities associated with metropolitan life and high mobility arrangements contributed to a neutral to positive perception of travel time:

Yes, because I've chosen to stay in Paris. So I deal with the transport and am not unhappy with it. Most of my leisure activities are in Paris. When I say leisure I mean outings, theatre, cinema, things like that, are often in Paris. So, in terms of transport, it's great. (Michelle, 53 years old, civil servant, secretary at a university, daily long-distance commuter, living in a large suburb)

In interviews, commuter travel appeared to be akin to a routine. Routine refers to a daily act that is done more or less automatically and unconsciously. Such action requires no thought and is taken for granted:

You get used to it. In fact, you don't think about it anymore. (Thierry, 49 years old, music teacher, daily long-distance commuter, living in an inner suburb)

Such routines of commuting or regular business trips tended to create two contradictory realms of perception. On the one hand, it requires expert knowledge of transport networks and the route itself. The journey becomes easy and comforting because commuters have their landmarks, despite a sometimes difficult learning curve (Figure 9.6). Commuters came to feel at ease in their routines. This feeling was essential for using the time constructively and building place attachment.

On the other hand, the downside of routine is the repetitiveness and risk of weariness; the same trip, repeated every day, with no end in sight, without novelty or surprise. Reassuring landmarks can become boring or even oppressive. In Figure 9.7, Mathias illustrated the repetitive and monotonous nature of his daily morning commute. He described his commutes as 'not very interesting'. It was the dull and repetitive nature of his car journeys that encouraged Mathias to move toward *altermobilities*, that is, modes of transport alternative to the car (Vincent-Geslin, 2010).

Figure 9.6   The lack of information on public transport stops: the need for expert knowledge (Mathias)

Source: JobMob qualitative study, France, 2012–2013.

Today, while he must still do part of his commute by car, he also takes the bus. He particularly enjoys his walk between the bus stop and the workplace, which he describes as more entertaining and adventurous. This area is rather hostile to soft modes of transport. He must make his way through abandoned parcels, buildings and badly-parked cars to reach his bus stop (Figure 9.8).

The perception of commutes as positive or negative routines therefore depends on the traveller's personal characteristics, for example how well they know the route. However, it also depends on the physical and sentient characteristics of the spaces themselves. Claude, the truck driver, took photographs of the Brittany coast (Figures 9.9 and 9.10). He declared that he always enjoys the 'beauty of the coast', which is a constant source of wonder.

Attachment to places of high mobility

Unlike daily long-distance commuters, the overnighters we interviewed in the qualitative study rarely frequented the same places in a repetitive

Figure 9.7   A repetitive commute – not very interesting (Mathias)
Source: JobMob qualitative interview, France, 2012–2013.

Figure 9.8   Footpaths in a hostile area (Mathias)

Figure 9.9   The beauty of the Brittany coast (Claude)
Source: JobMob qualitative interview, France, 2012–2013.

Figure 9.10   The beauty of the Brittany coast II (Claude)
Source: JobMob qualitative interview, France, 2012–2013.

manner.[3] How do these overnighters create attachment in new and unfamiliar places? In this study, we focused on functional and transit places, such as hotel rooms, residences or restaurants. Attachment to a town or city for example was not examined. We considered different forms of attachment: functional, social and sentient (see for example Pattaroni et al., 2009). We analysed the strategies of overnighters to create spatial and social landmarks in unfamiliar places. We also analysed their feelings with regard to the familiar and the unknown. Do overnighters always create landmarks? If so, how? To what extent is the unknown a source of stress, anxiety or unease when travelling? To what extent do these highly mobile individuals seek out the unknown?

Based on our qualitative data, three profiles were distinguished among overnighters. These profiles represented ideal-typical attitudes in terms of place attachment and managing the unknown and the familiar. They revealed different relationships to high mobility and the places in which it occurs. Several dimensions were examined to build the profiles: (1) the feeling of stress or discomfort in unfamiliar spaces; (2) the need to create spatial and functional landmarks to limit this feeling or, conversely, the desire for novelty and discovery; (3) social relationships developed or maintained in mobility spaces.

Worrywarts

The first profile can be described as worrywarts. For these highly mobile individuals, overnighting is stressful and uncomfortable. This is especially the case if they are physically or psychologically unprepared, that is, if they have never experienced high mobility or never imagined themselves as being highly mobile (see Chapter 4). This group often has few spatial skills and poor access to transport infrastructures and mobile technologies (see Chapter 5). For example, they struggle to orient themselves, especially in new places. When staying at hotels, the functional dimension takes over, and they feel relatively comfortable in their rooms. However, they tend to settle in only minimally, to limit as much as possible the traces of their presence (Figure 9.11):

> Well, in fact, I actually don't really settle in. I tend to leave everything in the suitcase. Except my pyjamas and toiletry bag, which I put in the bathroom. Everything else stays in my suitcase. Ultimately I take out other items, which I put on the nightstand, like a packet of tissues, a bottle of water, that kind of thing. But not much else. (Aurélie, 24 years old, IT trainer, overnighter, living in a large suburb)

Figure 9.11   Minimal use of the hotel room (Aurélie)
Source: JobMob qualitative interview, France, 2012–2013.

Settling into one's hotel room goes hand in hand with a functional attachment to the surroundings. Although Aurélie mentions visiting, her main goal is to scout out a restaurant for dinner:

> I wandered around a bit, well I had a map. I wandered the streets a bit, to look for places to eat basically. And that's it…I ate at a restaurant and went back. (Aurélie)

However, the feeling of discomfort resurfaces for Aurélie when she has to eat alone at a restaurant. Several other overnighters also described eating alone at a restaurant as unpleasant or strange. For an anxious person like Aurélie, it was 'unimaginable' and 'horrible'. Anxious people use different fallback strategies to diminish the feeling of uneasiness. These strategies include bringing along a companion object, such as a book, magazine, mobile phone or digital book. Other strategies are also used, such as eating at off-peak hours (Figure 9.12), or ordering room service (Figure 9.13).

This feeling of discomfort nonetheless tends to dissipate over time. This occurs as the person becomes familiar with the hotel and restaurants in the area and the specific customs of the place:

> Indeed, maybe I'd get a bit more used to it. So the next morning, I'll be a bit less stressed out going to breakfast because I already figured out how it works, what there was, the choice, etc…A little more assured, let's say. (Aurélie, 24 years old, IT trainer, overnighter, living in a large suburb)

Figure 9.12   An empty restaurant (Aurélie)

Source: JobMob qualitative interview, France, 2012–2013.

For worrywarts, stress decreased with familiarity, routine and local knowledge. Thus, travelling to a new place each week was a constant source of stress for Aurélie. Ideally, she would always stay in the same hotel, which would allow her to find her bearings and develop familiarity:

> I finally got used to the Ibis chain. And all the rooms are identical in fact. So finally, you almost feel at home. It's an environment you're used to. Whereas, when you're at another hotel you don't know, you may be slightly less comfortable. (Aurélie)

Regulars

The second profile in some ways corresponds to the aspirations evoked by Aurélie, namely frequenting the same places. Unlike worrywarts,

Figure 9.13   A room service platter (Aurélie)

Source: JobMob qualitative interview, France, 2012–2013.

regulars did not experience stress relative to their mobility. This was directly linked to the process of entry into high mobility and the social-isation that preceded it (see Chapter 4). Regulars were those who had made high mobility their job, like Jean. They also included people like Philippe who were socialised to high mobility relatively early. Regulars had a neutral to positive perception of their high mobility. Their highly mobile lives unfolded in relatively familiar spaces. Nevertheless, they differed from each other in the social familiarity they developed in their daily mobility.

Regulars tended to be familiar with the spaces of their daily mobility. This familiarity was linked to their high mobility practices, which often brought them to the same places. This was the case for Jean, who had frequented the same company-owned dormitory for several years. It was also the case for Laurence, who shared an apartment with other resident doctors. Lionel also resided in the same civil aviation residences near Grenoble and Lyon. Philippe always stayed in the same hotel chains during his trips. Familiarity was built gradually through experience

and through strategies aimed at creating landmarks in mobility spaces. Regulars had little contact with unfamiliar environments because of their mobility situations. They even developed strategies and daily routines to limit exposure to unfamiliar environments. In so doing, regulars forged functional attachments based on familiarity with and knowledge of standardised places.

Nonetheless, regulars differed from each other in their social attachments. For some, spatial familiarity was accompanied by a purely functional relationship to mobility spaces. The choice of standardised hotel chains satisfied a need to recreate a personal space therein:

> Often in Ibis [hotels]. For years I only did Ibis hotels. I knew what I'd get, and it was standard, standard rooms. (Philippe, 51 years old, sales engineer, overnighter, living in a large suburb)

However, the use of their hotel rooms remained strictly functional. The room was carefully arranged depending on the length of their stay:

> I get my key, open my suitcase, unpack my suitcase because the suits get wrinkled otherwise...The shirts, no, I don't unfold them because, since I only stay two days, I have to refold them. Since I'm liable to do more harm than good, I don't unfold them...if it's only for one night, I don't really settle in. I open my suitcase but take out the bare minimum. If it's for several days, I settle in a bit. (Philippe)

During interviews, Philippe also shared his observations of restaurants. He described how lone sales reps sit at tables one next to the other at the end of the day, with a book or a glass of wine. They do not seek contact with the other mobile professionals. Philippe also busied himself with a book, newspaper or mobile phone to avoid loneliness. Gradually, Philippe decided to limit the time he spent eating in restaurants to return to the solitude of his hotel room more quickly.

Conversely, other regulars were more interested in meeting people. They sought out socialising practices in their spaces of mobility. Laurence, for example, placed great importance on moments of sharing and conviviality with her doctor roommates. She even planned shopping trips to prepare dinners together. Her photographs of the interns' home away from home show spaces of conviviality in the shared apartment. For example, they depict the shared sofa and television. These are areas where the flatmates spent time in the evening talking, despite their late working

hours. Another photograph shows the kitchen and table covered with the ingredients for the next evening's meal (Figures 9.14 and 9.15).

This was also true for Jean, the train driver. With his photographs of the company-owned dormitory, he contrasts the liveliness of these residences with the impersonal nature of hotels.

> The dormitories are nicer than hotels. At a hotel, you lock yourself in your room and don't see anyone. The hotel is really a bit tedious. You get there in the evening, take your key, go up, watch a little TV and go to bed. In the morning you go to breakfast, usually you go a little later, you're all alone. You don't see any railroad workers. You don't see anyone you could talk to. (Jean, 50 years old, train driver, overnighter, living in a large suburb)

Conviviality was an integral part of the long-term pursuit of these highly mobile jobs. They included moments of exchange and relaxation with colleagues. This is illustrated with an anecdote about a young colleague:

Figure 9.14   The living room at the interns' home, a place of sociability
Source: JobMob qualitative interview, France, 2012–2013.

Figure 9.15   The table and kitchen at the interns' home, a place of conviviality
Source: JobMob qualitative interview, France, 2012–2013.

> Once I had this young guy. He was in the traction [sector], so he could
> have made a good career for himself. But when he got to the dormi-
> tory, well, he went right up to his room and closed the door. The next
> day he came back, just to get his train. He didn't even have breakfast
> with us. I said that's not a job for him … we could tell he didn't like it.
> And when we got to Paris, he said I'm going up. I'm going to see the
> depot manager, I'm leaving. (Jean)

The joviality of company dormitories and the desire for social interaction
seemed to make up for the intense solitude imposed by the profession. A
train driver's world is intrinsically solitary. The only social activities are
these exchanges in dormitories and what is called the 'waiting hall'. The
waiting hall is the depot where conductors start and finish their shifts,
not far from the Gare de l'Est in Paris. Thus, Jean and Laurence created
not only functional attachments to places of mobility but also social
ones. In this way they differed from Philippe.

Explorers

We identified a third profile, the explorer. Unlike the two previous profiles, explorers did not attempt to create spatial landmarks by seeking out the same places or hotel chains. They emphasised the social dimension of travel by seeking contact with other highly mobile people. This allowed them to create social ties during their high mobility experiences. Place attachment was mainly social and sentient.

Pierre told us he was tired of the hotel chains that others prized for their uniformity. Instead, he tended to choose independent hotels for their unique qualities:

> I was in Alsace last week, near Haguenau. I don't know if you know it. I have a weakness for independent hotels. I'm a bit fed up with big chains, companies, Ibis. I rather opt for the Logis de France chain, where even if they're grouped in the guides, each hotel is different, like their motto says, hotels with a human face. And I know that near Haguenau, the owners are really nice, friendly. I'm not their best client, but they know me. I go there four times a year. There's a pool in summer…It's like sailors who have their ties, their port. That's not a good comparison…I know lots of things, customs, the people in these regions because that's part of meeting people. Knowing the region, the towns, the geography of the region, the habits, it's a plus. Nowadays travel has become meaningless. Better to know the people and places. (Pierre, 50 years old, sales engineer, overnighter, living in an urban centre)

Similarly, during meals on the road, Pierre tended to make contact with others. This was easier in small hotels. Contact was important to him even if it was only with the hotel employees. He likewise regularly attended sales representatives group meals, sometimes organised at the hotel restaurants:

> During the meal, it's true that it's sometimes demanding, especially in the evening, to have such a long meal. We don't leave the hotel. There are big tables where professionals who are travelling alone sit together. Not only sales reps but also technical people. We talk, we talk about the area, what we know, such and such hotel. Just chatting, unless we have something in common or share a passion. And that's nice, I admit, but rare. (Pierre)

Sometimes he struck up a conversation with other clients at the hotel bar, or with people he had met there before. However, because of time

constraints, these moments of much appreciated conviviality were relatively rare. Explorers therefore created attachments through specific, personal relationships to places based on their unique characteristics. They strongly differed from regulars who developed attachment through standardised spaces. This allowed explorers to create memories of pleasant moments and create familiarity in their high mobility routines.

Reversible mobilities?

As we mentioned in the introduction to this book, high-speed transport networks offer workers increasing opportunities to lead highly mobile lives. Travelling further, faster and more frequently offers mobile people a kind of spatial reversibility. However, beyond high mobility systems, is this spatial reversibility accompanied by the spatial, temporal, relational and existential reversibility described in Chapter 1? To what extent do highly mobile people develop attachment to places of mobility? How do they do so? What is the meaning of functional, social and sentient attachment for reversibility of highly mobile experiences?

For some daily long-distance commuters, spatial and temporal reversibility influences the way they experience high mobility. Léonard clearly reported how time constraints weighed on him as a long-distance commuter. He described how high mobility precluded the social life he wished he could have at work. This was the case both at the prefecture – where we interviewed him – and at the high school where he had taught the year before:

> I wasn't involved in the school's extracurricular life. I didn't know what kind of activities there were there. I couldn't offer to run classes. I didn't have time to spend an hour in the teachers' room after class for a respite or a chat. When I finished at 5pm – with an hour commute ahead of me – I had a cup of coffee and left. There's a whole social life in high schools outside of classes, and I felt like … my commute time excluded me. I felt that … it reinforced my sense of insecurity as a student teacher. I knew I was leaving in a year, so, on top of it I didn't have time to carve out a place for myself in the school. (Léonard, 34 years old, civil servant, representative of the Prefect, stopped high mobility, living in a large suburb)

Léonard's investment in his work sphere was essentially functional. This made it impossible to create other forms of attachment (social and sentient) or a real place for himself in that professional environment.

> The feeling of not being part of the high school, in the human sense. I was an administrative item, but nobody saw me in the corridors. You didn't see me talking to the admin staff. The students had identified me as a teacher, but not as a member of the school community. (Léonard)

Léonard pointed to the difficulty of balancing the conflicting demands of work and family in space and time, which is typical of long-distance commuters. This difficult balance reflected a certain degree of reversibility between the work and family spheres, insofar as Léonard invested little in the former because of time constraints. Temporal and spatial reversibility was nonetheless experienced as a constraint. It was seen as a source of frustration and left him with the unpleasant feeling of being only half there. The time pressure caused by long daily commutes was observed among most daily long-distance commuters. However, frustration was particularly strong in Léonard.

Among overnighters, reversibility does not play out the same way as among daily long-distance commuters. The three profiles described above exhibit different degrees and types of attachment to places. These various attachments suggest more or less marked forms of reversibility and irreversibility of high mobility. All overnighters use temporal reversibility through telecommunication tools, which allow them to stay in touch with family and friends. Philippe and Martin, for instance, made daily calls to their families. Pierre even helped his children with their homework from his hotel room:

> My eldest daughter, who's 17 now, sometimes resented me for not being able to help her with her homework because she had a maths exam the next day. My wife isn't very good at maths. I do maths exercises with her by phone from my hotel. (Pierre, 50 years old, sales engineer, overnighter, living in an urban centre)

Worrywarts and regulars demonstrated a certain degree of existential reversibility. They do so by staying in touch with family and friends and by limiting exposure to unfamiliar places by staying in standardised places. Furthermore, they avoided other highly mobile people in spaces such as restaurants. Conversely, explorers showed greater attachment to mobile places. This implied greater existential irreversibility, that is, a disruption of their and their relatives' everyday lives.

For this reason, some highly mobile people employed strategies to limit this disruptive impact. However, despite this, high mobility inevitably entails some degree of irreversibility. This was especially the case for

overnighters. Highly mobile people's experiences during their travels, and the experiences of their families when they are absent, are inevitably difficult to share. The common experiences and practices of daily life are often missing:

> But it's not easy for me because [we have to] catch up what we lose when we're not there. It's true, sometimes there are allusions – 'Oh yeah, you remember what so and so said the other day!' The other day was without me. You ask people to repeat. Well, when you're not there, you're not there. (Pierre)

Despite regular contact by phone or Internet, coming home can also be a shock due to the irreversible nature of absence:

> The worst thing is the first minute you get home. It's the worst of all. Why? Because you're in your bubble for a week, well, bubble of water, eh? And then you get home and everyone jumps on you in the first fifteen minutes. I call it the fifteen minutes of non-communication because it's insufferable…No, it's true because you're not ready to hear all about what the family did without you for a week. And vice versa, eh? And they're not ready to hear us say, well, yeah, I saw this, I saw that. There's a period of adaptation on both sides. (Philippe, 51 years old, sales engineer, overnighter, living in a large suburb)

The existential irreversibility of absence was also reinforced by the almost exclusive handling of housework, child rearing and day-to-day management of social relationships by the non-mobile partner – usually the woman. This responsibility can be experienced positively – as a kind of mutual autonomy of both partners. Conversely, it can also create tensions and weaken the marital bond. This can be reinforced by certain types of jobs wherein the reason for the absence is confidential (like in military operations) and/or where the *esprit du corps* is particularly strong (like in fire brigades). In such cases, non-mobile partners – often women – are excluded to an even greater degree (see Chapter 8).

Finally, from a temporal and existential standpoint, high mobility experiences are also irreversible in terms of the life course. As we mentioned in Chapters 4 and 5, high mobility experiences shape and reshape people's lives. High mobility experiences create a kind of precedent or latent disposition that is likely to be reactivated later in life.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we showed that highly mobile people do make use of travel time and mobility spaces. Travel time is not empty and useless time. Spaces of high mobility are not non-spaces. Travel time is used for a host of various activities, namely relaxation, socialising and working. Using travel time to engage in activities fosters a more positive perception of this time. However, constructive use of travel time is the result of both the potential offered by the journey itself and the potential of the highly mobile individual. For example, journeys in beautiful scenery are often used for contemplating or marvelling. However, driving leaves little room for other activities. In this respect, the photographs collected during the qualitative interviews speak louder than words. They reveal specific imaginaries of both travel time and travel conditions. These imaginaries determine how journeys are perceived. Nevertheless, the use of travel time by the highly mobile people interviewed in this qualitative study show little transformation of mobility spaces into 'true' living spaces. One possible exception was people who turned their cars into mobile offices. This reveals relatively weak attachment and strong spatial reversibility.

However, the mobility spaces that are eating and lodging establishments were subject to different degrees of attachment. When fear of the unknown was strong, attachment was limited. It became somewhat stronger in cases where high mobility became routine and standardised places. Finally, attachment was strongest among explorers. This group built specific functional and social attachments in the various spaces of their high mobility. These attachments showed various forms of temporal, spatial and relational reversibility. However, high mobility inherently entails some degree of existential irreversibility. This irreversibility was especially true for overnighters and can weigh on marital bonds and daily family life.

Notes

1. For a literature overview on place attachment, see Gieryn (2000).
2. Individual potential is developed over the life course and through high mobility experiences (see Chapter 4). It includes skills, knowledge and know-how (see Chapter 5).
3. Weekly long-distance commuters were not interviewed in the qualitative study (see Chapter 2). The qualitative sample comprised long-distance commuters and overnighters who travelled to various places for job reasons.

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10
Conclusions

Vincent Kaufmann, Gil Viry, Stéphanie Vincent-Geslin,
Emmanuel Ravalet and Yann Dubois

Introduction

High mobility is not an anecdotal phenomenon. Approximately half of the European population of working age is confronted with high mobility or has been so during their career. This population spends a great deal of time travelling to and for work, which implies frequent and repeated absences from home. This often results in complex trade-offs to balance personal and professional lives.

Unlike the prevailing image, highly mobile people are not all businessmen travelling around the world with a suit and briefcase. Overall, they are more likely to be men and women without children than mothers. In 2011, 13 per cent of working men aged 30–58 were highly mobile in the four European countries versus 7 per cent of working women. But singles and lone parents with dependent children – often lone mothers – are likewise more likely to be highly mobile than people living with partner and children. Social class is not a strong predictor of high mobility in the long term. While people with high levels of education and income are more likely to start being highly mobile, they are also more likely to stop their high mobility, pointing to fluctuating mobility practices over time. The large variety of profiles is a central element of high mobility in contemporary societies. The recent development of mobility has not only been spatial (increase of travel speed and distance), but also social. While just a half century ago long-distance travel was mainly related to the two extremes of the social hierarchy (professional and managerial elites on the one side and migrants from poor countries on the other), today it touches a far broader range of social positions.

Throughout the book, we found that the importance of the high mobility phenomenon lies mainly in what it reveals of societal changes.

From a theoretical viewpoint, high mobility challenges the conceptual apparatus of sociology, revealing changes in the spatiality of contemporary societies. In particular, high mobility illustrates the changing nature of what is nearby, what is connected and what moves, thereby changing their very meanings. From an empirical viewpoint, high mobility provides a powerful lens for exploring a broad range of dimensions of social life, such as socialisation, social inequality, sense of place, territory and potential receptiveness, personal life and gender. We now turn to a brief summary of our major findings and discuss them in relation to the initial research questions.

High mobility in the long term

A first research question was about the continuity and change in high mobility practices over the course of people's lives. This was investigated using panel, retrospective and biographical data. Drawing on mixed methods we found that, for some individuals, high mobility fits into a long-term life plan and continues throughout the career. These long-term practices are primarily associated with specific jobs and occupations. Ongoing daily and weekly long-distance commuting also results from particular spatial arrangements, such as work in metropolitan cities. In the long run, daily long-distance commuters, in particular men, often perceive their mobility as a need to balance their personal and professional life rather than as an opportunity. People who have been making frequent overnight business trips for many years have often developed a mobile way of life. Their high mobility histories are sometimes rooted in childhood experiences, like a habitus. Their high mobility is integrated into their everyday life and is associated with imaginaries of discovery and travel. They usually enjoy travelling and often feel comfortable taking any mode of transport and in unfamiliar places. They are armed with good spatial and social skills and develop attachments to mobile spaces not only in a functional, but also in social and sentient ways.

For many other workers, however, high mobility is associated with transitional periods. Unlike migration, these periods are not more likely to occur at earlier career stages. Overall, the likelihood of high mobility (except for long-distance relationships) remains fairly stable over a career. In particular, high mobility practices do not decrease in the prime fertility age range of 20–45. However, the relative stability in the total mobility rate masks a strong turnover of the mobile population. Some people, often with high education but also low income, regularly start and stop being highly mobile. Moreover, high mobility

behaviour appeared to be highly unpredictable. Highly mobile people who perceived their practices as temporary were not more likely to stop being highly mobile in the short term than those who perceived it as a permanent way of life. Highly mobile people acquire skills and develop routines through practical experiences. This reduces their stress and may increase their disposition to be highly mobile. Experiences of high mobility create potentiality, in particular in a context of job shortages in the residential area. Continuing or stopping high mobility is directly related to both job opportunities and contingent personal circumstances. Some high mobility histories proved to be particularly fluctuating, with a succession of short or long periods of high mobility. These histories are sometimes associated with highly-educated workers who shift jobs voluntarily in response to job opportunities. But they may also be related to job insecurity (short-term contracts, unemployment) and family changes (new partnership, union dissolution).

This diversity of high mobility situations explains that patterns of high mobility history are only weakly associated with career achievement when controlling for other effects (sex, age, education). In particular, long-term high mobility appears to have different effects on careers depending on the country of residence. While long-term high mobility generally had positive effects on careers in Switzerland and women's careers in France, it tended to be associated with job insecurity in Spain. This underlines the importance of investigating more deeply the social context and personal circumstances of high mobility in future investigations. What is certain is that high mobility reveals a far more complex reality than the dominant neoliberal discourse of the successful mobile worker who is totally committed to work and free from family obligations.

The hypothesis that high mobility in Europe is increasing across generations was not supported by our data. Except in Spain, the proportion of the population practising high mobility (when measured by travel time) has been stable over the past decades rather than increasing. The generations born in the 1960s and 1970s were not significantly more highly mobile than the generation born in the 1950s, although they were more likely to have experienced high mobility for at least one year. High mobility appears to be increasingly practised for short periods of time, resulting in more fluctuating mobility histories than in past decades. This result constitutes an interesting direction for future research about the effects of neoliberal policies on life trajectories and high mobility.

Mobility potential and its activation

The second research question concerned mobility potential or motility. Motility is one major dimension of high mobility and is an important factor in social stratification. The ability to travel (in good conditions), the interest in doing so and the ability to benefit from this mobility are not evenly distributed among the population. Two types of potentiality are involved here: individual motility and the potential receptiveness of a territory. The latter refers to the range of possibilities offered by a given territory in terms of mobility projects, in particular the availability and reliability of high-speed transport networks. Another central dimension of high mobility is the life course, as mobility requirements and motility are likely to evolve over life events and past mobility experiences. These three dimensions – motility, the potential receptiveness of a territory and the life course – underpin high mobility separately and in inter- action with each other.

The diversity of motility

Our results have shown that the population's motility is extremely diverse. While some people have little, others have a great deal of motility. The degree and form of motility are clearly linked to the form of high mobility practised, and are a resource for its development. The reluctant to be mobile have all the skills needed to be highly mobile but no plans for doing so. Those who are ready to be mobile have mobility plans, but do not necessarily have the access or skills needed to travel in good condi- tions. This points to situations of mobility-related inequality. There are those willing to commute long distances and travel frequently for their job, versus those who are more inclined to move and resettle in a new region or country. The qualitative interviews showed that the ability to constructively use travel time emerged as a crucial skill for experiencing one's mobility positively and making it a way of life. This was true both for everyday travel and in terms of relationships with relatives and friends.

   Longitudinal analysis showed that motility does change over the life course, especially through mobility plans. In particular, changes in mobility plans are associated with changes in the household struc- ture (childbirth, union dissolution) and in the job situation. Social inequality is revealed through the activation of motility when (1) people are forced to activate their mobility potential, (2) there is a discrepancy between weak skills/access and a strong disposition to mobility. In this regard, high mobility emerges as both a resource and a requirement for accessing employment.

Life course and family changes

Early experiences of migration during childhood tend to socialise people to high mobility. In particular, people who migrated often during childhood were more likely to be overnighters during adulthood. These early experiences favour the development of positive norms and values around high mobility and spatial and social skills. Nevertheless, this legacy is not deterministic. Other individuals with early socialisation to spatial mobility refuse to practise high mobility, when it is associated with negative memories, such as absent fathers, material and emotional instability and insecurity. We identified later forms of socialisation to high mobility in adulthood. In particular, work- and leisure-related travel experiences create dispositions (a potential) that individuals can reactivate throughout their lives, depending on the economic context, family and professional choices.

Our study has shown that there are strong interdependencies between family development, high mobility practices and a willingness to be highly mobile. Singles and lone mothers are more likely to become highly mobile compared with people living with partner and children. In a context of strong spatial and time constraints, lone mothers tend to perceive long commutes negatively. Starting or stopping a partnership is also associated with high mobility. A recent change in partnership may disrupt the spatial arrangement between work, family and housing. High mobility can help people adjust spatially to their new situation - sometimes temporarily. Having a child significantly decreases people's willingness to be highly mobile. However, reducing work-related mobility often proved impossible, at least in the short term, as high mobility practices decreased only marginally with the arrival of children. Longitudinal analysis showed that women with long high mobility histories and those highly educated who experienced a short high mobility episode between their 20s and early 30s were more often without children than less mobile women. One possible explanation is less stable partnerships among highly mobile women. Using panel data, we showed that highly mobile women without children separated more often than less mobile women. These effects were particularly marked in Germany, and to a lesser extent in Spain and Switzerland. This demonstrates the difficulty women face in combining high mobility and family life. Traditional gender norms can result in greater tension between partners when women are regularly absent from home for their job. In the same vein, qualitative interviews showed that, in most households, women stop jobs requiring regular absences from home if they have small children. High mobility, and in particular overnighting, tends to support, and

sometimes even reinforce, a traditional division of labour between partners. Men regularly absent from home reported difficulties participating in the everyday life of the family when they got home. Absences may then affect the quality of relationships with partners and children. In this respect, returning home every evening appeared to limit the feeling of absence for daily long-distance commuters. However, among men who had practised overnighting for a long time, high mobility was also cited as an important factor in a couple's longevity.

The potential receptiveness of territories

A clear link between territorial accessibility, amenities and high mobility was not observed. This means that highly mobile individuals can be found everywhere: in central areas of big cities; in medium-sized cities; in periurban and in rural areas. Only long-distance commuting had a direct link with the quality of the transport offer in 2007. The effect was no longer significant in 2011. This shows that the proportion of people ready to travel long hours for work hardly varies with the residential context. It is likely that we would have obtained different results using distance thresholds – rather than time thresholds – to measure high mobility.

Switzerland appears to be a country of long-distance commuters. This is partly due to the scope, density and pricing system (annual pass) of its rail supply. Moreover, economic conditions in the employment pool of the region prove to be strongly associated with high mobility. In particular, changes in the economic conditions of a territory have a major impact on its population's motility, especially regarding mobility plans. An increase in unemployment in a region or country raises the willingness to be highly mobile, not only among jobseekers but the entire population. This finding illustrates the strength of the mobility imperative in today's capitalist societies. This phenomenon was particularly observed in Spain, where the sharp rise in unemployment between 2007 and 2011 resulted in an increased willingness to be highly mobile. The effect was particularly strong among fathers who lost their jobs. After the 2008 economic recession, more people living in Spain became overnighters, and more rarely daily long-distance commuters, than before the recession. This suggests that daily long-distance commutes are not sufficient for getting by financially or professionally in regions faced with economic difficulties. Regardless of their access and skills, Spaniards were more willing than four years earlier to migrate or to have a second residence near the workplace and commute every weekend.

Coming back to reversibility

The last research question relates to the reversible nature of high mobility. A priori, the forms of long-distance travel explored in this study can be called spatially reversible high mobility, as they are characterised by the crossing of long distances, often at high speeds. However, can we consider that this spatial and temporal reversibility goes with an existential and relational reversibility, that is, an absence of existential and identity change?

Concerning the spatial dimension of reversibility, most highly mobile individuals intensively use high-speed modes of transport to reduce the friction of distance. Our sample revealed an almost general form of spatial reversibility. However, two nuances can be made. First, the weak links between the quality of access and most forms of high mobility suggest that spatial reversibility is a personal rather than a territorial attribute. In other words, reducing the friction of distance has to do with experience. Hence, it is not rare to find people who experience space as reversible even though they spend a lot of time travelling at slow speed. Second, the spatial reversibility observed is not always desired. Our study has shown that the motility of many highly mobile individuals does not correspond to their practices. For example, people sometimes practice long-distance commuting for family reasons even though they would personally opt for migration in other family circumstances. These results suggest that high mobility is related to individual life trajectories and the social (rather than territorial) conditions in which these trajectories unfold.

Regarding the temporal dimension of reversibility, our investigations show great differences among people according to their motility. The ability to use travel time constructively is key here. First, it makes high mobility a more positive experience by giving people time for themselves. It also allows for greater efficiency by enabling workers to use their travel time and time outside the home to work and to be more efficient in co-presence interactions. Our study shows that constructive use of travel time is a skill acquired through the very experience of high mobility. In qualitative interviews, several people attributed their highly mobile lifestyles and their ability to constructively use travel time to childhood or youth experiences. It is through the temporal dimension of reversibility that high mobility proves a way of life.

Regarding the existential and relational dimension of reversibility, marked differences appeared depending on gender, life course and the form of high mobility considered. In this respect, long-distance commuting differs significantly from other forms of high mobility, as returning

home each evening minimises the effects of high mobility on the sense of place and personal relationships, in particular for households. In this regard, daily long-distance commuting is a reversible mobility. For other forms of high mobility, long-distance communication partially mitigates the effects of absence on personal relationships, offering some degree of relational reversibility. Nevertheless, high mobility – long-distance relationships and overnighting in particular – inevitably led to existential irreversibility. People who were away for several days often found it difficult to reconnect with everyday life within the household and partake in meetings, events and little routines that constituted personal life.

Finally, high mobility is also irreversible from a life course point of view, as it ingrains itself in personal histories and contributes to the acquisition of specific skills. These skills act as a kind of precedent that is easily reactivated at various times in life. Conversely, when high mobility is a transition or short-term practice, it is more reversible from an experiential standpoint. As we have seen throughout this study, transitional high mobility is often the result of the loss of a job or a stagnant labour market, leading people to look for work elsewhere, even when they are not very motile. In this case, high mobility is experienced as a more reversible behaviour than migration, the other alternative.

What policy perspectives for high mobilities?

The evidence presented above shows how high mobility has social, economic, spatial and environmental consequences. Such findings, reinterpreted here with regard to potentials, reversibility and the life course perspective, raise the question of political action.

To begin, high mobility should be seen as neither good nor bad. The various forms of high mobility and the personal experiences that link people to their practices and representations require careful interpretation. The use and social context of high mobilities (work and family conditions especially) strongly differ between people. The different forms of potential we have examined explain the variety of conditions of possibility and individual viewpoints. Working to develop people's skills, broaden spatial perspectives, and raise awareness of existing transport services all impact individual potentials, without necessarily activating them.

The diversity of factors that lead people to start or stop being highly mobile calls for coordination between transport, housing, family and economic policies. High mobility requires more integrated policies in order to be better understood and addressed. It seems also necessary

for policy makers to better coordinate the various spatial scales, as all levels – local, regional, national, and international – are affected by high mobility. A political interpretation of long-distance commuting in Switzerland could, for instance, point to a reliable and efficient transport offer coupled with a tight housing market and social/family policies organised at the local level. In particular, action should not be limited to transport, when contemporary societies are facing major environmental and social issues. Promoting geographical proximity and the development of sustainable mobility should certainly be at the top of the political agenda.

From an economic standpoint, high mobility is a powerful facilitator in the fragile balance between employment supply and demand. In a policy response to unemployment, we cannot underestimate the possible benefits of high mobility for employees, especially current or future jobseekers. In this case, it is *people* who move, not jobs. However, promoting greater use of high mobility contributes to reinforcing a mobility requirement whose social consequences are still unclear. It would certainly be necessary to find ways of mitigating the negative consequences of mobility requirement, from which a segment of the population will automatically be excluded. In particular, mobility policies should aim to facilitate the mobile lives of vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals, such as lone mothers, low-income people with insecure jobs and people in car-dependent regions. Public actors (for example, city and regional planning, family support services) and private actors (companies) both have a key role to play.

Finally, high mobility as it is discussed in this book draws an outline of what mobility policy could or should look like in the future, and suggests possible ingredients for its composition. Let us first note that although all the findings presented show that transport and telecommunications are important components of mobility policies, other elements not directly related to transport also play a crucial role. At the individual and interpersonal levels, the desire to be mobile and mobility plans, the stage in the life course and socialisation to mobility are all decisive factors in becoming highly mobile. At the collective level, the mobility requirement in regions that have been weakened economically by the economic crisis is also a result of mobility policies in place, like childcare infrastructures, family policies or the housing market.

Secondly, transport's role in high mobility is largely qualitative. The links between accessibility and high mobility practices are neither obvious nor mechanical. Our research even showed that only daily long-distance commuting is associated with quality of access. This finding

is important because it shows that speed is not necessarily decisive in adopting high mobility practices. Our findings showed that comfort is essential for making high mobility a viable mid- or long-term option. In order for people to feel comfortable commuting, they need not only personal mobility skills but also favourable mobility spaces. These *affordances* – to use Gibson's expression – are essential for using this time constructively and take very different forms, from a comfortable seat on a train with Wi-Fi to a *pied-à-terre*. Valuing – also economically – the travel time of highly mobile workers is an interesting avenue for political action.

Defending the right to spatial mobility is a way of favouring access to jobs. However, it is also necessary to find ways of mitigating the negative consequences of a mobility imperative largely driven by neo-liberal policies, especially for disadvantaged and vulnerable people. Mobility policies create circumstances that favour the adoption of certain forms of mobility over others. The time has come to take stock of them and identify levers to regulate them.

Appendix 1

The 2011 JobMob Questionnaire

The major themes of the 2011 questionnaire are presented in the Table A.1. The questionnaire reused most of the questions asked in the 2007 survey to capture the changes between the two survey waves.

Table A.1   Structure and content of the 2011 questionnaire

A. Work-related mobility 1
 1. Identification of work-related high mobilities

Employment status, long-distance commuters, overnighters, people in long-distance relationships and partner's work-related mobility

B. Background and living places
 2. Life history
 3. Living places

C. Family life
 4. Partnership
 5. Partner's employment status
 6. Partnership history
 7. Children, childcare, grandchildren, household and parents
 8. Quality of partnership, division of labour and housework

D. Work 1
 9. Job and high mobility history
10. Current employment situation (a): employed
11. Current employment situation (b): unemployed

E. Work-related mobility 2 (only for highly mobile respondents)
12. Phenomenology of high mobility practices
Daily long-distance commuters, overnighters (weekly long-distance commuters, frequent trips), people in long-distance relationships
13. Circumstances of work-related mobility
14. Consequences of work-related mobility

F. Work 2
15. Willingness to be mobile

G. Individual characteristics
16. Attitudes toward work, work-related mobilities and family
17. Health, stress and satisfaction
18. Socio-demographics

The two questionnaires (2007 and 2011) differ in some respects. Questions on civic participation and health were added to Section B of the 2011 survey. The complete biographical information on jobs, work-related mobility and partnership (of at least one year's duration) were also included in the 2011 questionnaire. Some questions in the 2007 questionnaire were not asked in 2011. These were questions about access to transport infrastructures (for Germany and Spain) and language skills, as we assumed that these elements remained relatively stable over time. Despite the loss of information, it was necessary to shorten the length of the CATI questionnaire for practical reasons.

Appendix 2

Population of the Panel Sample

Table A.2 displays the composition and (unweighted) size of the panel sample used throughout this book.

Table A.2 Description of the panel sample

Country	Germany 504	France 254	Spain 537	Switzerland 440
Gender	**Women** 1011	**Men** 724		
Age in 2007	**25–34** 367	**35–44** 669	**45–54** 699	
Education level	**Compulsory** 413	**Secondary** 614	**Higher Education** 708	
2007 Household structure	**Lives alone** (or others) 370	**Lives with partner without children** 309	**Lives with child, without partner** 116	**Lives with partner and child** 940
2011 Household structure	**Lives alone** (or others) 334	**Lives with partner without children** 354	**Lives with child, without partner** 129	**Lives with partner and child** 918
2007 Income level (in purchasing power parity)	**Low** 522	**Middle** 542	**High** 671	
2011 Income level (in purchasing power parity)	**Low** 534	**Middle** 559	**High** 642	
2007 Employment status	**Employed** 1469	**Non-employed** 266		
2011 Employment status	**Employed** 1436	**Non-employed** 299		

2007 High mobility	Daily long-distance commuters 275	Overnighters 131	In long-distance relationships 29	Non-mobile 1321
2011 High mobility	Daily long-distance commuters 137	Overnighters 85	In long-distance relationships 33	Non-mobile 1492

Source: JobMob II, n = 1735, unweighted.

The difference in the number of highly mobile respondents between 2007 and 2011 can be attributed to: (1) the aging of the population surveyed between the two periods, people are more settled in their living areas and less prone to being highly mobile (stronger among the older age group); (2) increasing unemployment in respondents' living areas (stronger in Spain and France), unemployed people are, by definition, not mobile for their jobs; (3) a greater attrition of mobile respondents between 2007 and 2011. The latter point is offset by weighting factors (calculations shown in Appendix 3). The effects of age and the relation between high mobility and unemployment are discussed in Chapters 5–7.

Appendix 3

Weighting Procedure

Data weighting aims to mitigate possible representativeness biases, as some social groups are under- or over-represented due to, for example, the sampling procedure or unequal participation rate. Applying a corrective weight can reduce such deviation. Our longitudinal study called for a special effort to correct for biased data and attrition, that is, the loss of individuals between the two surveys.

During the 2007 survey, weighting corrected for three specific biases:

- The first (design) bias was the over-representation of highly mobile people. Two samples were collected: (1) a representative sample of the resident population (aged 25–54) in the four countries; (2) a representative sample of the highly mobile population (aged 25–54) in the four countries, to ensure a sufficient number of highly mobile respondents for specific analyses on this population. The weights for highly mobile respondents (Sample 2) were then set according to the distribution of high mobility forms in the total population (Sample 1). The proportion of highly mobile respondents in the whole weighted sample (1+2) was the same as in Sample 1.
- The second (design) bias concerned the sampling procedure based on landline phones and households. The methods used (either national telephone directories or random digit dialling, followed by the last birthday procedure) give an equal chance for every household with at least one person aged 25–54 (target population) and a landline phone to be contacted. However, the chances of being interviewed were not the same if the household had one member in the target population, or several. The greater the number of household members in this age group, the lesser the chances of being selected. A second weighting factor was used to correct for this design bias.
- The third bias concerned the under- or over-representation of specific social groups due to unequal participation rates. Some people with specific social characteristics and abilities (for example, language proficiency) are more likely to refuse to participate in a survey than others. The distributions of age, sex, education level and household composition within the sample were therefore compared to the

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existing distributions of national censuses. An adjustment weight corrected for the deviation from the census distributions.

The three weighting factors (weighting for wave 1) together formed the basis for the weighting of the 2011 survey (wave 2). A fourth factor was added to correct for the attrition between the two waves. This procedure adjusted the socio-demographic structure of the panel sample to that of wave 1 (after weighting).

Table A.3 displays the distribution of socio-demographics and forms of high mobility before and after weighting. Columns A, B and C show figures for the unweighted panel sample, the weighted panel sample and the weighted sample of the 2007 survey, respectively.

Three weighting factors for the panel sample were used. The first factor was used specifically for analyses at the national level. The second factor was used for analyses in the four countries, where countries are represented proportionately to their population size (aged 25–54 in 2007). The third factor was used for analyses in the four countries with the same number of cases by country (430). It is this third weighting factor (named 'countries equally weighted') that we mainly used in this book. This circumvents issues caused by variations in the number of respondents across countries.

Table A.3 Distribution of socio-demographics and forms of high mobility before and after weighting

	Germany			France			Spain			Switzerland		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Sex												
Male	39.1	49.8	50.5	42.9	50.5	49.1	38.9	52.4	50.8	47.5	51.4	50.4
Female	60.9	50.2	49.5	57.1	49.5	50.9	61.1	47.6	49.2	52.5	48.6	49.6
Age												
25–34	21.4	29.0	27.3	15.4	31.6	31.5	22.6	36.9	36.9	22.7	34.9	33.0
35–44	38.9	38.7	38.8	40.6	34.7	34.9	41.3	33.6	34.8	33.9	35.1	36.5
45–54	39.7	32.3	33.9	44.1	33.7	33.6	36.1	29.5	28.3	43.4	29.9	30.5
Level of education												
ISCED 0–2	44.9	67.7	68.4	31.0	42.1	43.9	28.9	33.4	33.9	46.1	62.2	64.3
ISCED 3–4	25.4	15.1	14.8	18.1	20.4	20.2	30.2	44.6	44.1	10.0	6.2	7.9
ISCED 5–6	29.7	17.2	16.8	50.8	37.5	35.9	41.0	22.0	22.1	44.0	31.5	27.8
Marital status												
Unmarried	41.3	47.1	44.6	33.5	46.9	45.1	33.9	37.6	35.8	35.9	31.6	32.7
Married	58.7	52.9	55.4	66.5	53.1	54.9	66.1	62.4	64.2	64.1	68.4	67.3
Household structure												
Without partner, without children	24.0	24.8	24.1	15.0	16.4	15.5	23.6	26.1	22.8	21.4	17.3	20.2
With partner, without children	48.8	50.3	49.1	18.9	21.4	21.2	51.2	53.7	55.1	58.2	59.4	58.8
Without partner, with child(ren)	6.0	5.1	4.7	7.5	7.8	5.7	2.6	2.0	2.7	3.2	2.7	2.5
With partner and child(ren)	21.2	19.8	22.2	58.7	54.4	57.5	22.5	18.2	19.4	17.3	20.7	18.5
Mobility												
Non-mobile	79.2	82.5	83.6	81.5	82.7	85.7	65.5	87.4	88.2	67.5	86.9	88.2
Highly mobile	15.7	12.2	11.1	14.6	9.0	8.5	30.4	10.3	9.6	25.5	9.8	8.4
Migration	4.0	3.5	3.8	3.1	7.0	4.7	2.6	1.9	1.4	5.5	2.8	2.4
Migration and high mobility	1.2	1.8	1.5	0.8	1.2	1.1	1.5	0.5	0.7	1.6	0.5	1.0

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