

**Eric Widmer,
Gil Viry, and
Vincent Kaufmann**

Introduction

State-of-the-Art of Mobility Research, Chapter 1

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Eric Widmer, Gil Viry, and Vincent Kaufmann

I. Introduction

This report is presenting the state-of-the-art of scientific research on occupational spatial mobility in eight countries. It is part of the background analyses in the research project *Job mobilities and Family Lives in Europe* that is studying this issue. The six national teams, participating in the research project, each have contributed a literature review on the scientific debate in their country: for Belgium, Germany, France, Poland, Spain, and for Switzerland. Additionally, external experts have been invited to add reviews on the United States, and the Netherlands. These countries were considered to have a relatively rich research tradition on occupational spatial mobility. So the scientific debates in these countries were considered worthwhile (if not necessary) being taken into account, even though these countries will not be studied within *Job mobilities and Family Lives in Europe*. So, in total literature reviews for eight countries are presented in this paper. They correspond to the chapters Three to Ten.

A chapter of its own (chapter 2) is the summary of the *theoretical* debate on occupational spatial mobility. Unlike the discussion of empirical findings, that turns out to take place mainly on a *national* level, the theoretical discussion is a rather one *international* debate. Theoretical views on spatial mobility, published by Swiss, Germans, or French, are read and discussed throughout the global scientific community. As such, the state-of-the-art in terms of theoretical approaches is reported in one chapter for all countries.

As a final chapter, the conclusion follows. Here, the main findings regarding the state-of-the-art in Europe and the USA are summarised. Complementary, the main gaps concerning the state-of-the-art are described as well. And a number of new insights and confirmations of assumptions is reported that seem especially relevant for the further research agenda in *Job mobilities and Family Lives in Europe*.

Each country specific review is following a shared structure of aspects that were considered relevant: Reported literature either investigates on occupational spatial mobility as such. Or it investigates motility, as a concept of the ability to become mobile, including the infrastructure for mobility in a given country. Or it links mobility to one of four fields that were assumed to strongly interact with mobility: family, job market, social integration and social capital, or quality of life.