

Migration and Marital Status The Case of Switzerland

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1. INTRODUCTION

The macro-data compiled in official statistics confirm, in Switzerland's case also, the trend described in the literature as the 'second demographic transition'¹. In the process of modernization over the past 20 to 30 years, there have been sometimes considerable changes in forms of family formation, partnership and marital status. These developments are expressed in social science concepts such as differentiation and pluralization of marriage and family forms, heterogenization and individualization of society². In view of the growing importance of migratory movements the question arises to what extent these changes do have an influence on migratory behaviour.

The present study describes only a part of the interrelation of living arrangements and migration: The connection between marital status and spatial mobility. Moreover, the significance of the reasons for family migration will be assessed. Chapter 2 covers the relationship between family or household structure and change of residence and refers to the findings of other studies. The third chapter presents the empirical findings which are to be seen against the background of changing household and family patterns in Switzerland over the last 20 to 30 years. With the aid of aggregated data from censuses and population registration offices, the differences in migratory behaviour by socio-demographic characteristics are first shown: by age, sex, marital status and nationality. In addition, a distinction is made between intercommune, intercantonal and international migration. The initial findings of the descriptive analysis are followed by multivariate statistics produced with the aid of microdata from the Swiss Labour Force Survey³. They are designed to shed more light on the explanatory force and influence of certain variables. To a modest extent, retrospective data are also included in the analysis in order

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1. VAN DE KAA, DIRK J., 'Europe's second Demographic Transition', *Population Bulletin*, Vol. 42 (1987), 1, pp. 3-57.
2. HOFFMANN-NOWOTNY, H.-J., 'Ehe und Familie in der modernen Gesellschaft', *Das Parlament*, B13/1988 (1988), KAUFMANN, F.-X., 'Familie und Modernität', in LÜSCHER et al. (eds.), 'Die postmoderne Familie' (1988), BECK, U., 'Risikogesellschaft' (1986).
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to obtain more insight into the interplay of individual factors. The last part summarizes the conclusions which can be drawn from the findings.

2. LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN RESEARCH

To what extent do family events have an independent explanatory value for geographical mobility? The strong relationship between geographical mobility and age is clearly proved by statistics. Age-specific migration rates show a typical sequence, which hardly changes in its essential characteristics in time and from country to country. A sign of age-specific migration is the high mobility of young adults. A slight increase in spatial mobility is not seen again until 65-year-olds and over 75-year-olds. The age-specific selectivity of migration is a consequence of different events in the life course and/or the position in the life cycle. Our aim is – insofar as this is possible with the available data – to show migration in relation to marital status and to assess the effect which this has on the correlation between age and migration. For reasons of the reliability of the results, we take into consideration different variables which we suppose to be relevant in the context of family events and migration.

Many events in the family cycle are closely linked to age and determine spatial mobility. With increasing age, there is a greater likelihood that a person is no longer unmarried but is either married or divorced. As group decisions – particularly in families with growing children – are probably reached under more difficult circumstances, it is quite plausible to assume that the relationship between age and migration is partly explained by marital status: younger and unmarried people appear to be more mobile than older and married people. Events in the family life cycle, e.g. marriage, birth of one or more children, divorce, death of a spouse, grown children leaving home, arrival of relatives in old age, can be the cause of a change in place of residence. Increases or decreases in households and changes in marital status cause an adjustment to dwelling requirements and demands for space. Accordingly, the explanatory force of age, taking into account marital status or the size of the household, must decrease. Further variables which can explain the relationship between age and migration concern the field of employment. As part of the family biography, the labour force status of the spouses, tenant status, etc. also change.

The extent to which family events restrict or promote geographical mobility will be analyzed first on the basis of the findings so far. Most of the studies to which we refer use census data and indicate migratory behaviour at a specific time. A few representative studies are able, with continuous time data⁴, to distinguish between short-term and

4. MULDER, C. and WAGNER, M., «Migration and Marriage in the Life Course: A Method for Studying Synchronized Events», *European Journal of Population*, Volume 9 (1993), No. 1, pp. 55-76, SANDEFUR, G.D.; SCOTT, W.J., «A Dynamic Analysis of Migration: An Assessment of the Effects of Age, Family and Career Variables», *Demography*, Volume 18 (1981), 3, pp. 355-368.

long-term effects. They can also establish whether certain family events and changes in residence are synchronous.

All the findings of migration research confirm the clear differences in mobility between age groups. A large proportion of family events vary with age, e.g. marital status and size of family. If these variables are included in the analysis, the influence of age can be expected to fall accordingly. For instance, marriage in most cases results in a short-term change of residence, since the person either leaves the parental home or gives up his/her own apartment in order to found a household together with the spouse. Various studies⁵ indicate that it is not until the family grows again that the residence situation is adapted to the changed structure of the household. A comparison of the migratory behaviour of married and never married and/or divorced persons, as well as of families with and without children, indicates that it is not the marital status as such but the size of the household – as an intervening variable – that effects migration. In the opposite case, i.e. when the household becomes smaller because of children leaving the parental home or the death of the spouse, the migration rate increases slightly again.

Findings of this kind are, of course, based on longitudinal data, which, with the aid of the chronological sequence of events, can reconstruct the co-ordination between family biography and migration biography. In conclusion, it should be pointed out again that, in all the more comprehensive studies, the effects of age are relativized, and those of marital status in some cases considerably reduced, through the inclusion of co-variables such as the size of household. For instance, it is more difficult for larger households to reconcile all the interests of the persons involved in relation to a change in the place of residence. This probably applies above all to spouses both of whom are economically active or to families with children, since their educational opportunities also have to be taken into account. In the life course, not only the marital status can change but also the tenant status together with the socio-economic status. If a person owns an apartment or a house, the probability of a change of place of residence is reduced⁶.

With reference to the varying distances which are covered in migration, no unified picture emerges from the studies. Basically, however, it can be asserted that never married persons are more willing to cover long distances while married persons prefer the closer vicinity. In local migration, there is also above-average representation of divorcees. As was seen in the case of married people, it can be concluded that there are local ties among divorced persons, which – together with marital status and age – are influenced by additional characteristics.

5. BIRG, H. and FLÖTHMANN, J., 'Biographische Determinanten der räumlichen Mobilität', in Akademie für Raumforschung und Landesplanung (eds.), 'Longitudinale Analyse der räumlichen Mobilität im Lebenslauf' (1991, mimeo.), COURGEAU, D., 'Interaction between spatial mobility, family and career life-cycle: A French survey', *European Sociological Review* 1 (1985), No. 2, pp. 139-162, WAGNER, M., 'Räumliche Mobilität im Lebensverlauf: eine empirische Untersuchung sozialer Bedingungen der Migration' (1989).
6. COURGEAU, D. 1985, p. 159, loc. cit. in footnote 5.

3. DESCRIPTIVE RESULTS

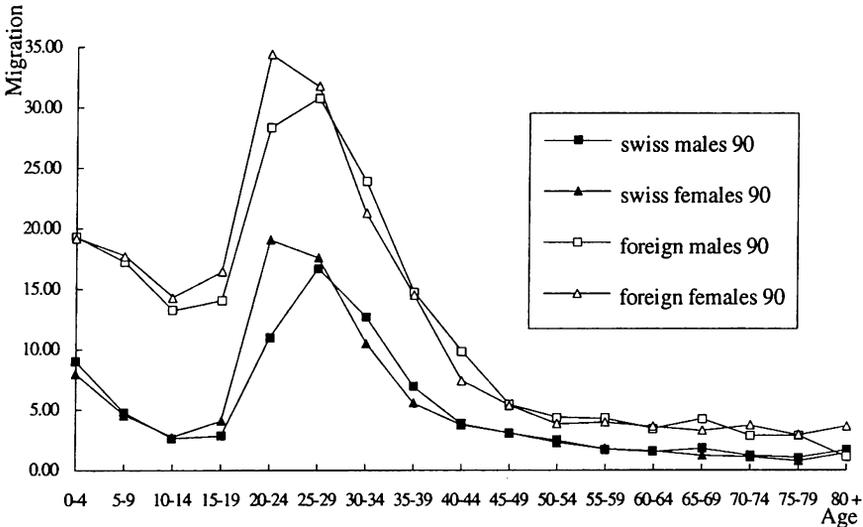
The aim of this part of the study is to describe the distribution of migration rates on the basis of certain demographic criteria. For this purpose, we have based ourselves on a sample from the population registers of the communes and the national aliens' register. The evaluations are made only on the basis of arrivals, i.e. of people, who are registered by the relevant commune at their arrival. The reference figures for the migration rates are taken from the 1980 census and the annual estimation of population figures. First of all, we shall demonstrate the relationship between age and spatial mobility and outline the differences between women and men and between Swiss and foreigners. Then we shall study to what extent marital status has an influence on the process of age-dependent change of residence. Gender and nationality will still be taken into account in the latter case as well. In conclusion, we shall deal with the distances which the migrants cover. In the following exposition, international and intercantonal distances are referred to as long-distance migration and intercommune distances as local migration. It has of course to be realized that local migration within a commune is not recorded in the data we use. The number of changes of residence in commune areas may be underestimated⁷.

3.1 *Age and migration*

Figure 1 shows the sequences of age-specific migration rates by gender and nationality, which are very similar in their characteristics. The probability of a change of place of residence is highest between the ages of 20 and 34. After that the rates fall rapidly and then rise again slightly between 55 and 65 and again after 75. The increases and decreases are basically similar to those of other countries⁸.

7. COURGEAU, D., «Méthodes de mesure de la mobilité spatiale. Migrations internes, mobilité temporaire, navettes» (1988), Manuel de l'INED.
8. LONG, L., «Changing Residence: Comparative Perspectives on its Relationship to Age, Sex, and Marital Status», *Population Studies*, Volume 46 (1992), Number 1, pp. 141-158, ROGERS, A., «Age Patterns of Elderly Migration: An International Comparison», *Demography*, Volume 25 (1988), Number 3, pp. 355-370.

Figure 1
Migration rate by age, sex and nationality: 1990



The high geographical mobility of younger age groups is due to several factors: leaving the parental home, education, starting and leaving jobs, founding a household and marriage⁹. Regarding to the founding of households, the increase in one-person households is partly the result of the increasing proportion of never married and divorced young men, who are strongly represented in this household category. The educational opportunities of the younger age groups and the resultant lengthening of the period of education are concomitants of leaving the parental home and founding their own household. In 1980, single persons accounted for 50% of all one-person households, followed by widowed persons (32%) and divorced persons (13%).

The slight increase in the 65-year-old category is related to the legal retirement age. The end of their working life is a reason for many people to change their place of residence because of the amenities (shopping and transport) and standard of accommodation. The over-75-year-olds are more likely to move for reasons of health and incapacity due to age (old people's or nursing home, medical treatment) or because of the death of their spouse. The resident alien population shows a similar age-specific migration pattern. However, the level of mobility is over twice as high as among the Swiss.

9. DE CONINK, F., «Passage à l'âge adulte et mobilité spatiale», *European Journal of Population*, Volume 6 (1990), Number 4, pp. 377-397.

3.2 *Gender and migration*

From the age of 14, women are more mobile than men (figure 1). Their migration rate does not start to drop until the age of 30 when it intersects the men's curve. The propensity to change place of residence rises again briefly and barely perceptibly for women of about 60 and is somewhat higher than for men of the same age. Although the slight difference should not be overestimated, the lower legal retirement age for women is certainly one of the causes. The increase in change of residence of aged women observed in other international studies is not discernable from our figures and tables. From the age of 80, the figures rise for both women and men despite the higher life expectancy of women. The similarity of the curve may stem from the small number of cases in the upper age group or from late official registration of the change of place of residence – particularly if the move is into an old people's or nursing home or a hospital. The delay can be longer than the remaining life expectancy of the over 80s¹⁰. Among the resident alien population, however, the difference is marked and is in line with observations in other countries.

We shall only touch briefly on the comparison between 1981, 1984 and 1990 (Appendix, Table 3a and 3b). It confirms the results so far for a period of almost ten years. What is striking is the displacement of the highest migration rates into the following age group along with a reduction in mobility. 30 to 40-year-old men and 25 to 34-year-old women change their place of residence more often than in former times. However, the younger age groups are less mobile than in 1981.

Official statistics show a clear change in behaviour with regard to the arrangement of the different stages of life. Marriages are taking place later and the time elapsing between ending school and entering marriage is now approx. 10 years for women and 12-13 years for men. This trend is confirmed by the observation that the proportion of never married persons in the 20 to 35-year-old age groups is increasing as time goes on. However, the higher spatial mobility of younger women as shown in figure 1 is still a consequence of the lower age at first marriage. On average they marry men who are 2,5 years older than themselves. Limited education and inferior position on the labour market in general may also help explain the lower age of marriage and the higher rate of spatial mobility.

3.3 *Marital status and migration*

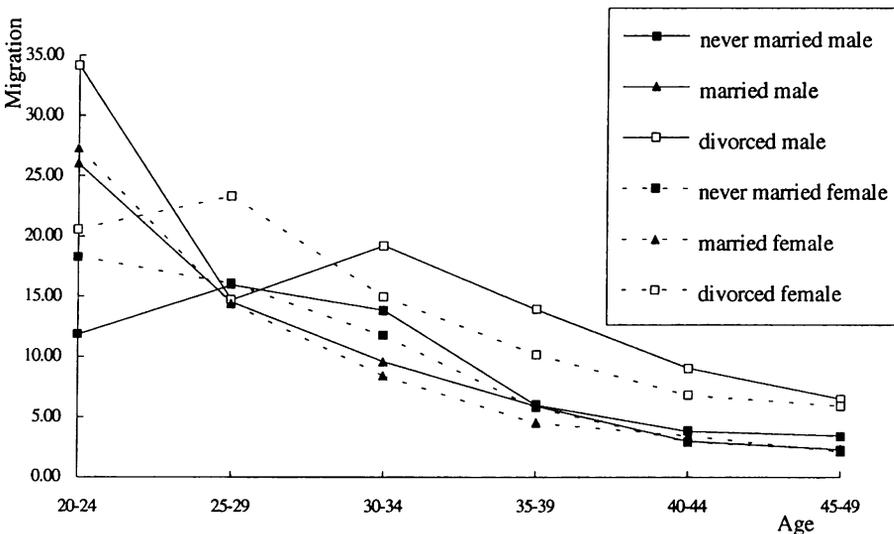
Figure 2 covers only 20 to 49-year-olds, since in our sample the inclusion of the marital status involves few cases in the lower and upper age categories. Compared with figure 1, there is a more varied picture among the 20 to 34-year-old population groups. As we already know, the probability of a change of residence is highest among them.

10. ROGERS, A. (1988), p. 360, loc. cit. in footnote 8.

In general, the greatest propensity to change residence is observed among divorced people. The sharp variation between the youngest and next-youngest age groups is due to the low number of cases of 20 to 24-year-old divorced men.

The composition of the population as a whole by marital status and age (Appendix, Table 1) shows a larger proportion of divorcees among women of all ages than among men. Compared to women, however, there is a higher percentage of never married among men up to the age of 44 years. It is not until the age of 40 that more men are married than women. Divorced women change their residence mainly between the ages of 25 and 29, that is, at a time when, as a proportion of all women of their age group, there are three times as many of them as there are men of the corresponding age group. Among divorced persons over 30 the picture changes: men are now more mobile than women. That the two curves intersect is again an effect of the difference in age between husband and wife. In addition, it may also be assumed that divorced women under 30 are mostly not yet tied down by children and can therefore react more flexibly to the housing and labour market. At a later age, they are the ones who keep the household, possibly with a child, while the husband leaves the apartment. Men over the age of 40 seem more likely to remarry. At least, this is one of the conclusions from figure 3 and table 1 in the appendix. In 1990, remarriage rates were 50% for men and 40% for women. Clearer answers to the relationships are, however, only possible if the timing of the events is taken into account.

Figure 2
Migration rate of the swiss population by age, sex and marital status: 1990



The curves show lower migration rates for married people at almost every age. Only very young married people are more mobile than the never married and some divorced people. The high level of migration of these age groups indicates that marriage is highly likely to lead, in the short term, to a change of residence. Against this, the state of being married coincides in the long term with lack of mobility. Married men in almost all age groups have a higher migration rate than married women. Married women are more likely to change residence between the ages of 20 and 24 than married men. Here again, the different age at marriage plays a role. Table 1, appendix, shows that some 15% of 20 to 24-year-old women are married while only 8% of men in that age group are. In general, a frequent change of place of residence can be seen in groups which account for only a small percentage of the total population.

Compared with married and divorced people, young never married persons are very immobile. From the age of 25 their tendency to migrate increases at least in comparison with married people but by the age of 35 the difference to married people has already become insignificant.

The socio-demographic changes in Switzerland over the past 20 to 30 years form the background to migratory behaviour. The changes in the composition of family and household structures seem to affect residential and migration patterns: The increase in the number of consensual partners, i.e. couples who cohabit without a legal marriage certificate, the rise in the mean age at first marriage and the sharp decline in fertility to below replacement level. Assuming that marriage is the first step towards the formation of a family, an increase in the average age at the time of the first birth can be expected. The age distribution of mothers does, in fact, confirm a connection between late marriage and starting a family at a later age. On average, women marrying in 1991 for the first time were 27,2 years old and 27,8 at birth of the first child. The comparable ages for 1970 were 24,2 and 25,1 respectively. A look at family households also shows a downward trend in the average number of children.

On the basis of these changes, it is to be assumed that the propensity to change residence over the last few decades tends to depend more on the needs of adults than of children¹¹. Fresh conflicts may, meanwhile, arise from the fact that both spouses/partners are in employment. In 1990, as many as 44% of couples were <two-wage families>. We presume in this case that the fact that both partners have professional obligations will tend to act as a brake on the willingness to change residence and this will be increasingly apparent in the younger age groups.

As statistics on migration rates are available only up to the age of 49, no evidence can be adduced about the migratory behaviour of retired persons. National comparisons in other studies show among older age groups a considerably more selective effect of marital status than is the case among the younger groups. Married people have support and assistance from their spouses. Never married, widowed and divorced persons mostly

11. FREY, W.H. and KOBRIN, F.E., <Changing Families and Changing Mobility: Their Impact on the Central City>, *Demography*, Volume 19 (1982), 3, pp. 261-276.

live alone and are dependent on the help of others in their old age. They are therefore more prepared to change their place of residence. However, the point in time when they were widowed or divorced should not be ignored. The less recent it is, the less likely it is to affect spatial mobility.

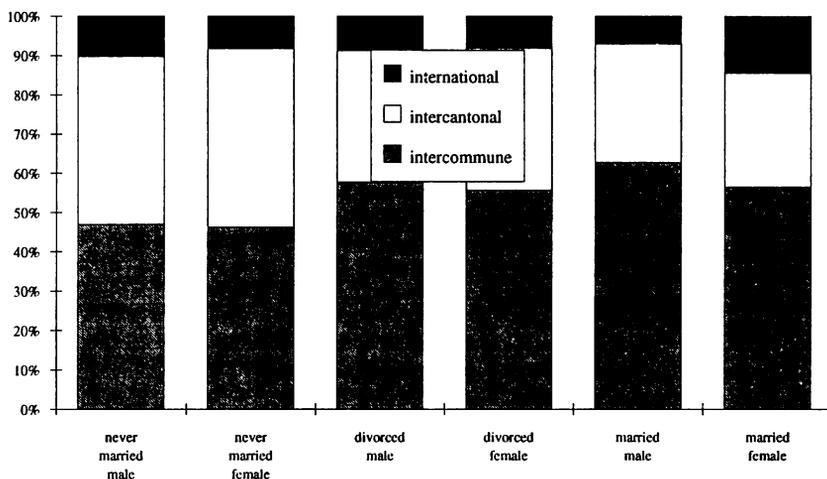
3.5 *Local and non-local moves*

Long-distance migration frequently occurs during retirement: 56% of 65 to 69-year-old men and 60 to 64-year-old women have immigrated from another canton or another country. In all the other age groups, the proportion of long-distance migration is well below 50%. Later, local migration increases in importance again for both women and men. Women of 80 and over are significantly different from men of the same age: among them, intercantonal migration occurs frequently. When people move at the age of 60 or 65, this is to find better amenities or to be near relatives. The oldest people are mainly widows who move into an old people's home or for medical care to a nursing home. In such cases, longer distances are covered.

Figure 3 sets out the moves in terms of marital status illustrating varying migration patterns. Intercantonal moves are found more often among never married people and intercommune moves among divorced and married people. The high migration rates of divorced people is due in over 50% of cases to a move to an adjacent commune. The hypothesis that there is a negative correlation between local migration and socio-economic status¹² can be neither confirmed nor refuted on the basis of the figure. On the one hand, local migration may coincide with a personal crisis, which would account for the high proportion among divorced persons. On the other hand, local and social commitments, similar to those among married people, may be the reason for the short distances. If the personal crises include problems of incapacity and health, this theory is more likely to apply to older migrants. From the age of 70, they prefer local moves.

12. BIGGAR, J.C., «Who moved among the elderly, 1965 to 1970», *Research on Aging* (1980), 2, pp. 73-92.

Figure 3
Distance of movings by sex and marital status: Average distribution of swiss movers in the 1980s



Young divorced and married women are prepared to travel longer distances in changing their place of residence than men. The previously mentioned assumption that women on marriage move to their husband's or at least near to his former residence is substantiated (Appendix Table 4a). Compared to men, young divorced women are not only the most mobile population group, they are in addition more likely to leave the canton or the country. The large number of married women who have immigrated from abroad is due to the naturalization law which was valid until the end of the 1980s. Under that law, women marrying a Swiss automatically acquired Swiss nationality.

Foreign immigrants are mainly characterized by long-distance migration (Appendix Table 4b). The most mobile group among them, the never married ones, come straight from abroad. Once they are in Switzerland, legislation and labour market constraints restrict – especially to seasonal workers – their choice of place of work and place of residence. Seasonal workers are not allowed to bring their families with them and have to leave the country after nine months. A further entry to Switzerland is possible. The decree of 1986 on the 'Limiting the Number of Resident Aliens'¹³ which allows people with one-year residence permits to stay with their family led to an increased influx of families: the rate of international immigration rose both for married women between 25 and 34 and for small children. The high level of migration amongst foreigners, which

13. 'Verordnung zur Begrenzung der Zahl der Ausländer', legal basis for establishing quotas limiting the number of the foreign labour force.

has remained the same over the years, is a consequence of the initial international immigration. Subsequently, geographical constraint is due to legislation and the labour market. In this case, too, definitive explanation can be found only with longitudinal data.

4. REGRESSION MODELS

With the help of regression analysis we can discover more about the kind of relationship between two or more characteristics. If we discover a correlation between two variables, we try to find out whether and how this correlation can be explained more closely. That is why further variables are introduced into the analysis in the hope that they will shed light on the original relationship. Regression analysis makes it possible to predict the values of one variable on the basis of the values of the other variable. For carrying out the analysis we use the data of the Swiss Labour Force Survey¹⁴.

The following section deals with the results of eight regressions which can be allocated to two groups. In the first group, we check what effect certain characteristics have on a possible change of residence in the preceding five years. This division corresponds to the question in the Swiss census: Persons are asked whether they are living in the same housing unit as five years earlier. By doing that, results can be compared to findings of other studies which mainly refer to census data.

In the second group, the change of residence is replaced by the duration of residence. The effect of the following characteristics on the two related variables is tested one after the other: marital status, duration of marital status, age, size of household, sex, nationality, tenant status and labour force status of the interviewee.

4.1 *The effects of age and marital status on change of place of residence*

First of all we want to find out what effect the marital status variables alone have on the propensity to change the place of residence. For this purpose we dichotomize the dependent variable into values of 0 and 1 (logistic estimates), where 0 indicates a change within the last five years (Appendix Table 2).

The small proportion of explained variation in the total variation ($R^2 = 0.03$) indicates the limited explanatory value of the marital status variables (Appendix, Table 5)¹⁵. The coefficients for married and widowed people are positive, and this at least supports our earlier observation of the lower spatial mobility of this group of people compared with never married persons. No significant difference can be established between never

14. BUHMANN, B., «Die Schweizerische Arbeitskräfteerhebung. Einblick in die Arbeitswelt», Die Volkswirtschaft (1992), Heft 10, pp. 42-48.

15. Pseudo R-square is introduced by R. MCKELVEY and W. ZAVOINA, «A Statistical Model for the Analysis of Ordinal Level Dependent Variables», Journal of Mathematical Sociology (1975), 4, pp. 103-120.

married people and divorced people as regards a propensity towards migration. Since the low value of the marital status scarcely allows a prediction about a possible change of place of residence, we return to the original confirmable strong correlation between age and geographical mobility.

Table 1 contains the results of a model which works with dichotomized age groups. The values refer to a comparative group to which all persons over 64 belong. The age groups, in fact, account for 19% of the variation in the five-year interval. Of the independent variables, the three age groups from 20 to 34 are the ones which have the strongest correlation with the change of place of residence. Coefficients and curves of figure 1 therefore show a consistent picture. Only people between 55 and 64 show no significant differences to those over 64.

Table 1:

Change of residence in the preceding five years (0 = Yes 1 = No)	
	s.e.
Age 15-19	-.08*
Age 20-24	-.24*
Age 25-29	-.39*
Age 30-34	-.30*
Age 35-39	-.17*
Age 40-44	-.08*
Age 45-49	-.05*
Age 50-54	-.03**
Age 55-59	-.01
Age 60-64	-.02
R ²	.19

Level of significance: * -1 percent ** -5 percent *** -10 percent

How does the inclusion of the control-variable marital status alter the pattern of the relationship of age and spatial mobility? If the four dummies are included among the independent variables, the explanatory strength of the model increases only insignificantly – from 19 to 20% (Appendix, Table 6). The pattern of the relationship remains. All age groups except the top two are still highly significant and can even slightly increase their strong effect on residence behaviour, while the coefficients for marital status are virtually insignificant. One interesting aspect are the reversed signs which occur on controlling the age of married, divorced and widowed people. The plausible assumption of their lack of mobility compared with never married people is not confirmed this time: people do not change apartments more frequently because they are unmarried but because most of them belong to the younger age groups.

The size and importance of the coefficients are determined by the kind and number of independent variables. The introduction of new independent variables could lead to

different results at any time. If additional relevant characteristics are included in the equation, the following picture emerges:

The importance of the lower age groups once again increases strongly in some cases, while the variables of the marital status remain at their minimal negative values. The explanatory force of the entire model increases to 22%. Nationality, sex, labour force status and ownership of property are values which can be ignored in this model and are otherwise insignificant. Only the size of the household has a not insignificant influence: the bigger the household, the less willing people are to change residence (Appendix, Table 7).

To sum up: Age is the main determining factor in geographical mobility. Kept under control of marital status and other important characteristics, it increases its importance. The hypothesis that marital status explains the correlation of age and migration as an intervening variable can no longer be upheld. The data indicate that age determines both marital status and migration, while the effect of marital status is negligible. If the effect of age is controlled, never married people are found to have even a slightly lower tendency to change residence. The probability of a change of residence can be predicted much more accurately from age than from information on whether a person is married, never married, widowed or divorced.

4.2 The effects of age and marital status on duration of residence

Cross-sectional data as available from censuses make it difficult to assess events and their effects correctly. We know that someone is married but not since when. Changes of place of residence on marriage cannot be distinguished from those of married people. The lack of effect of marital status may be due to this weakness. We want to know whether a change in marital status affects a decision on the place of residence, not only in the long term but also in the short term. A dynamic perspective also is therefore included in the following analyses. This consideration – in contrast to results so far – may lead to a re-evaluation of marital status in relation to age as the main determining factor in migration. The date of the change in marital status and duration of residence is documented on the basis of the Swiss Labour Force data.

How do the values of the independent variables change when they are related to the duration of residence? Unlike the marital status categories, the duration of the present marital status in table 2 gains in explanatory force. The values indicate that a change in the place of residence is due to a not insubstantial extent to the change in marital status: the longer a person has the same marital status, the less mobile he/she is. The high correlation underlines the strong relationship between the two variables. Before we add further characteristics to our model, it would be interesting to know what the correlation between age and duration of residence is. While the individual age groups in table 1 explained 19% of the migration behaviour, the value for duration of residence is twice

as much, at 38%. However, this does not alter the ranking of the independent variables: young and middle-aged people clearly demonstrate greater geographical mobility.

Table 2:

	Duration of residence s.e.
Duration of marital status	.41*
R ²	.17
Age	-.26*
Age ²	.87*
R ²	.38

Level of significance: * -1 percent ** -5 percent *** -10 percent

Similarly to the above procedure, we again include both variables, together with the three categories of marital status, in our model. Once again – as before in table 6, appendix – there is only a slight increase in the explained variation in relation to duration of residence. Age remains the most important factor in explaining geographical mobility and retains its dominance compared with duration of marital status (Table 3). The result once again illustrates the relative insignificance of marital status. At very most, it can be deduced from the slightly positive values that married and widowed people have a longer duration of residence than never married people but that the behaviour of divorced people cannot be distinguished.

Table 3:

	Duration of residence s.e.
Age	-.30*
Age ²	.76*
Duration of marital status	.20*
Married	.07**
Widowed	.10*
Divorced	.00
R ²	.40

Level of significance: * -1 percent ** -5 percent *** -10 percent

It is not the fact of being unmarried, married or divorced that is important for the probability of a change of residence but the time elapsing since the last change of marital status. Greater age and retention of marital status are linked with increasing duration of residence.

To sum up: The control-variable <age> is the strongest of all the listed determinants. Its inclusion lowers the effect of the duration of marital status by half. On the other hand, the duration of marital status contributes virtually nothing to improving the prediction calculated on the basis of the age. Unlike marital status, however, duration in a specific marital status can retain a not insignificant importance with regard to age. If the age, the duration of marital status and the size of the household are known, the most reliable predictions about duration of residence can be determined, whereby age has by far the greatest significance. Admittedly, a change in marital status or a change in the size of the household are probably connected with a change of residence, but the events themselves are largely dependent on age.

Calculating an overall model by adding the statistical characteristics of nationality, sex, ownership status, labour force status and size of household does not lead to any significant changes in the individual weightings (Appendix Table 8). On the whole, the previous results are confirmed. The strong positive partial correlation between age and duration of residence remains followed by duration of marital status and size of household. The predicted value of the overall model increases only slightly and reaches almost twice the value as is shown for the dichotomous change of residence variable: 42% of the duration of residence can be explained by taking into account all available relevant variables. However, it should be noted that, apart from duration of residence and duration of marital status, only cross-sectional data are involved. At this point, no evidence can be adduced about the short-term effects of changes in sizes of household, of ownership status or of labour force status employment.

5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Marital status is closely related to age. However, despite the high correlation, marital status makes only an insignificant contribution to the explanation of geographical mobility, while age is clearly the determining variable. If the age is known, predictions can be made both about marital status and mobility: the probability of a change of marital status increases with increasing age while migration rates decrease. The selective effect of age on marital status and spatial mobility is already clear from the figures but only the regression analyses reveal its predominant influence. Most of the differences which are shown by comparing migration rates on the basis of marital status are matched by age. Briefly, the following effects of age can be seen:

- High migration rates amongst young married people together with a generally low propensity to change residence

- High migration rates amongst young divorced women with otherwise stagnating values as they grow older
- Mobility curves intersecting with age as a result of the difference in age between men and women in all categories of marital status
- When kept under control by age, married and widowed people are hardly less mobile than never married people. In the regression model, in fact, there is no significant difference between never married and divorced people in their migratory behaviour.

The displacement of marriage to a later stage in life observed in the past few decades has affected age-specific migration rates. The increase in the level of mobility of married and divorced persons in the last 10 years is concentrated in the 30-to-39-year-old age group for men and the 25-to-34-year-old age group for women. At the same time, the increasing immobility of never married people stems from a considerable reduction in the migratory volume of the youngest age group. Partly because of the increasing propensity to commute by private car or public transport and partly because of the change in the economy and increasing rent, migratory intensity in Switzerland has generally tended to diminish slightly since 1981. Especially young never married people are increasingly staying in the parental residence and commuting to their places of work or education.

In the life course, there are moments which coincide with certain age-specific events and actions and are therefore partly responsible for the change of place of residence. For instance, on the basis of the figures and regression charts, it is clearly shown that, on a change of marital status, the probability of a change of residence increases in the short term. There is a correlation between the change in marital status – with marital status likewise – and age so that, in the long run, there is hardly any improvement in the explained variation of our prediction model: age structures the chronological sequence of the events. From the data available, it is not possible to explain the extent to which the number of changes of place of residence is affected by marital status as only the length of residence since the last move is measured.

Regression models show that the relative lack of spatial mobility of married people is reduced by introducing additional features. Labour force status, size of household and ownership of residence have to be taken into account in the analysis of migrations. The use of longitudinal data, which give the events for each point in time, probably lead to a slight weakening of the close correlation between age and migratory volume. The effect of marital status will probably not become much more significant, while the change in the size of the household will continue to increase its share of predictions of change of residence¹⁶.

16. BIRG, H., «Zum Zusammenhang zwischen Typen von Wanderungsbiographien und Typen von Erwerbs- und Familienbiographien», in Akademie für Raumforschung und Landesplanung (eds.), «Longitudinale Analyse der räumlichen Mobilität im Lebenslauf» (1991, mimeo.).

The observed relationship between geographical mobility and age may be attributed to other events of the life-cycle which are not included in the analysis. Actually, it is not the variable age as such explaining migratory behaviour for the most part, but a lot of events closely correlated with the process of individual ageing. Analyzing the age profiles of migration we have to know more about links with other family or career events by means of retrospective data. A theory or a model of time-dependent migration processes has to take into account a number of interactions: For example, the change in the labour force status, combined with a different place of work, will be followed by marriage and afterwards by a change of residence.

Improved analysis of migrations must therefore include the biographical level. The interconnection of social relationships is more complicated in its development than cross-sectional analyses can show. Only dynamic studies, i.e. continuous-time design with event-history data, of interactions between several levels – e.g. employment, health situation, education, financial and income situation, family – reveal constellations which can clearly explain behaviour in relation to change of residence and duration of residence. To conclude, we would like to put stress on the role of the state and its institutions as a major force in shaping events in the individual life-course. The institutional and administrative framing – e.g. with regard to housing and labour market situation, public transport system, measures of family policy, social security regulations of employers – may be introduced into the analysis of life situations and individual decisions.

Appendix Table 1. Marital status by age and sex, for Switzerland: SAKE* data 1991

	Percentage never married	Percentage married	Percentage divorced	Percentage widowed
Males				
15 -19 years	99.4	0.6	0.0	0.0
20-24 years	91.9	8.0	0.1	0.0
25-29 years	63.1	35.0	1.0	0.0
30-34 years	29.4	65.5	4.5	0.0
35-39 years	19.0	73.0	7.4	0.3
40-44 years	11.7	79.5	8.1	0.7
45-49 years	8.0	81.6	9.2	0.7
50-54 years	6.5	84.3	7.7	1.4
55-59 years	5.3	85.3	6.2	2.3
60-64 years	7.1	82.9	4.9	4.9
65-69 years	4.2	85.6	3.9	6.2
70-74 years	5.1	82.1	2.9	9.2
75 years and over	6.6	65.9	1.9	25.3
Females				
15 -19 years	98.3	1.4	0.0	0.0
20-24 years	84.6	14.9	0.3	0.1
25-29 years	45.7	51.7	2.1	0.3
30-34 years	22.0	72.7	4.9	0.4
35-39 years	14.0	74.7	9.1	1.8
40-44 years	10.1	75.2	12.7	1.8
45-49 years	8.1	75.6	12.1	3.7
50-54 years	6.7	73.5	10.0	9.3
55-59 years	8.3	71.5	7.3	12.9
60-64 years	7.5	65.2	6.2	20.3
65-69 years	8.4	58.1	5.5	27.8
70-74 years	8.8	47.5	3.3	39.1
75 years and over	12.4	27.1	4.0	55.9

* Swiss Labour Force Survey (Schweizerische Arbeitskräfteerhebung)

Appendix Table 2. Measures of Variables

Variables:	Values:
Change of residence	0 in the preceding 5 years 1 not in the preceding 5 years
Duration of residence	number of days lived in the current residence
Age group (15-19, 20-24, 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, 40-44, 45-49, 50-54, 55-59, 60-64, 65 and over)	0 not in this age group 1 in this age group
Married	0 not married 1 married
Divorced	0 not divorced 1 divorced
Widowed	0 not widowed 1 widowed
Duration of marital status	number of days lived in the current marital status
Labour force status	0 not employed 1 employed
Nationality	0 foreigner 1 swiss
Homeowner	0 owner 1 no owner
Household size	number of persons
Sex	0 males 1 females

Appendix Table 3a. Migration rates by age for swiss females: 1981, 84, 90

Age	swiss females 81	swiss females 84	swiss females 90
0-4	8.77	8.92	7.96
5-9	4.79	5.21	4.59
10-14	2.88	2.67	2.74
15-19	8.53	7.38	4.07
20-24	24.73	24.51	19.05
25-29	16.25	17.35	17.58
30-34	8.94	10.18	10.54
35-39	5.32	5.43	5.53
40-44	3.75	3.63	3.75
45-49	2.68	2.86	3.09
50-54	2.08	2.18	2.30
55-59	2.09	2.11	1.75
60-64	1.59	1.80	1.58
65-69	0.99	1.38	1.20
70-74	1.26	0.87	1.11
75-79	1.33	0.94	0.77
80 +	2.02	2.09	1.43
Total	6.39	6.54	5.89

Appendix Table 3b. Migration rates by age for swiss males: 1981, 84, 90

Age	swiss males 81	swiss males 84	swiss males 90
0-4	8.37	9.52	8.99
5-9	4.55	4.66	4.78
10-14	2.77	3.12	2.64
15-19	4.56	3.50	2.81
20-24	15.77	14.85	11.01
25-29	16.78	18.11	16.71
30-34	10.32	11.61	12.68
35-39	6.24	6.28	6.91
40-44	4.27	4.23	3.83
45-49	2.67	2.77	3.05
50-54	2.31	2.07	2.46
55-59	1.52	1.83	1.73
60-64	1.70	1.60	1.52
65-69	1.70	1.84	1.79
70-74	1.08	1.11	1.21
75-79	1.21	0.89	1.05
80 +	1.95	1.80	1.65
Total	5.97	6.16	5.87

Appendix Table 4a. Migration rates of the swiss population by age, sex, distance and marital status: 1980s

Males	Age	intercommune	international	intercantonal	intercommune	international	intercantonal	intercommune	international	intercantonal	
		never married	never married	never married	divorced	divorced	divorced	married	married	married	
	20-24	6.28	1.15	6.40	12.73	0.00	4.77	14.66	0.65	5.76	
	25-29	7.90	1.89	6.37	12.56	1.27	5.22	8.61	0.73	4.30	
	30-34	5.53	1.55	4.91	9.60	1.22	5.56	5.10	0.67	2.61	
	35-39	3.70	0.76	3.14	7.11	1.30	4.38	3.43	0.48	1.65	
	40-44	2.32	0.62	2.18	6.25	0.94	3.92	2.26	0.27	1.04	
	45-49	1.40	0.31	1.20	4.59	0.86	2.73	1.46	0.21	0.72	
	Total	6.03	1.32	5.51	6.96	1.06	4.05	3.93	0.44	1.90	
Females	20-24	9.39	1.53	10.08	13.89	0.71	9.26	13.75	3.24	6.78	
	25-29	8.35	1.63	7.09	10.91	1.66	6.49	7.65	2.04	4.16	
	30-34	5.09	1.01	4.85	7.42	1.10	4.28	4.28	1.17	2.32	
	35-39	2.95	0.80	2.70	4.96	0.82	3.44	2.68	0.74	1.34	
	40-44	1.86	0.40	1.48	3.66	0.46	2.66	1.85	0.37	0.86	
	45-49	1.06	0.16	0.96	2.61	0.41	1.78	1.29	0.26	0.62	
		Total	7.20	1.29	7.12	5.12	0.75	3.33	3.93	1.00	2.03

Appendix Table 4b. Migration rates of the foreign population by age, sex, distance and marital status: 1980s

Males	Age	intercommune	international	intercantonal	intercommune	international	intercantonal	intercommune	international	intercantonal	
		never married	never married	never married	divorced	divorced	divorced	married	married	married	
	20-24	9.63	18.10	5.57	32.81	2.19	2.19	11.88	23.91	3.87	
	25-29	11.45	20.62	5.43	15.32	8.98	3.43	9.98	15.41	3.60	
	30-34	9.87	15.62	4.42	13.04	9.62	5.28	8.19	9.48	3.06	
	35-39	6.90	8.53	2.86	10.98	7.43	4.35	6.39	6.72	2.23	
	40-44	5.56	5.72	2.16	6.55	6.12	3.53	4.94	4.67	1.63	
	45-49	4.51	3.75	1.58	7.45	5.31	3.00	4.52	3.93	1.33	
	Total	9.41	16.13	4.73	9.90	7.08	3.91	6.88	8.31	2.39	
Females	20-24	13.29	30.34	8.34	16.12	16.97	5.09	10.74	25.38	3.76	
	25-29	12.14	28.54	6.86	14.83	15.51	4.49	7.31	18.01	2.71	
	30-34	8.07	16.37	4.68	6.76	12.65	4.13	5.47	11.40	1.81	
	35-39	5.60	9.64	3.17	7.37	9.03	2.39	4.30	8.38	1.39	
	40-44	4.19	5.67	1.84	4.85	5.03	2.80	3.36	5.28	0.97	
	45-49	2.54	3.55	1.27	4.06	4.16	1.62	3.23	4.57	0.72	
		Total	10.03	22.01	5.95	6.89	8.49	2.92	5.32	11.11	1.75

Appendix Table 5

	Change of residence in the preceding 5 years (0 = Yes 1 = No)
	s.e.
widowed	.14*
divorced	.00
married	.13*
R ²	.03

Level of significance: * -1 percent ** -5 percent *** -10 percent

Appendix Table 6

	Change of residence in the preceding 5 years (0 = Yes 1 = No)
	s.e.
widowed	-.04**
divorced	-.09*
married	-.04**
15-19 years	-.11*
20-24 years	-.27*
25-29 years	-.41*
30-34 years	-.31*
35-39 years	-.17*
40-44 years	-.08*
45-49 years	-.05*
50-54 years	-.03**
55-59 years	-.01
60-64 years	-.02***
R ²	.20

Level of significance: * -1 percent ** -5 percent *** -10 percent

Appendix Table 7

	Change of residence in the preceding 5 years (0 = Yes 1 = No)
	s.e.
widowed	-.04**
divorced	-.09*
married	-.04**
household size	.18*
nationality	.05*
homeowner	-.02
labour force status	-.01
sex	-.01
15-19 years	-.11*
20-24 years	-.27*
25-29 years	-.41*
30-34 years	-.31*
35-39 years	-.17*
40-44 years	-.08*
45-49 years	-.05*
50-54 years	-.03**
55-59 years	-.01
60-64 years	-.02***
R ²	.20

Level of significance: * -1 percent ** -5 percent *** -10 percent

Appendix Table 8

	Duration of residence
	s.e.
widowed	.13*
divorced	.02
married	.0
household size	.13*
nationality	.09*
homeowner	-.03*
labour force status	.01
sex	-.06*
duration of marital status	.21*
age	-.20*
age ²	.70*
R ²	.42

Level of significance: * -1 percent ** -5 percent *** -10 percent

ABSTRACT

The present study describes the connection between marital status and spatial mobility. Despite the close relationship between marital status and age, marital status makes only an insignificant contribution to the explanation of mobility, while age is clearly the determining variable. If the age is known, predictions can be made both about marital status and mobility. Regression models show that the relative lack of spatial mobility of married people is reduced by introducing additional features. Labour force status, size of household and ownership of residence have to be taken into account in the analysis of migrations.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die vorliegende Arbeit beschreibt den Zusammenhang zwischen Zivilstand und räumlicher Mobilität. Trotz der hohen Korrelation zwischen Zivilstand und Alter leistet der Zivilstand aber nur einen unwesentlichen Beitrag zur Erklärung von Mobilität, während das Alter die eindeutig bestimmende Variable ist. Mit Kenntnis des Alters sind Voraussagen sowohl über den Zivilstand als auch über die Mobilität möglich. Die relative Immobilität von Verheirateten, dies zeigen die Regressionsmodelle, wird durch die Einbeziehung zusätzlicher Merkmale reduziert. Erwerbstätigkeit, Haushaltsgrösse und Wohneigentum müssen bei der Analyse von Wanderungen berücksichtigt werden.

RESUME

La présente étude décrit le rapport existant entre statut matrimonial et mobilité spatiale. Bien que connexes, le statut matrimonial et l'âge n'exercent pas la même influence sur la mobilité géographique, le premier facteur jouant un rôle négligeable, le second étant à l'évidence une variable déterminante. Connaître l'âge permet de faire des prévisions tant au niveau du statut matrimonial qu'à celui de la mobilité. Des modèles de régression indiquent que l'introduction d'autres caractéristiques permet de relativiser l'absence de mobilité spatiale constatée à première vue chez les personnes mariées. Ainsi, le statut par rapport à l'activité, la taille du ménage et le fait d'être ou non propriétaire de son logement sont des facteurs à considérer dans l'analyse des mouvements migratoires.