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Locational decisions of educated family members in Finland

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ERSA 2002 congress

Locational decisions of educated family members in Finland

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Abstract

The process of concentration of human capital is clearly reinforced by inter-regional migration in Finland. The spatial mismatch between positions and skilled labour force is increasing and the concentration of human capital can easily be seen in the distribution of dual career families home locations that favors few growing city areas. At the individual level job access is the result of the location of the residence in relation to locations of employment opportunities and the commuting tolerance of individuals. Personal unemployment and commuting experiences of men and women effect differently to the propensity of family migration. According to the answers I have analysed wives seem to have power equally with men in the decision making processes of families but still the career of men seems to be prioritised.

This paper examines the relocation process, in relation between residential relocation and commuting distance, in families where both partners are classified as the holders of specialist careers. Job and residential search behaviour are analysed at the local labour market area level based to the query data. The purpose is to determine the locational factors that play the most important part while combining the family and working lives. The family location is analysed in relation to the native places of women and men and cumulative work opportunities.

1. Introduction, background and challenges

The demographic trends, with declining fertility rates and longer life expectancies, have important implications for the changing numbers and composition of households as well as to the labour force structure. Especially the fertility rates decline is particularly relevant with respect to dual career households. The restructuring of the labour market and of households has culminated in an increase of no-earner and multi-earner households. Most families consist of two working spouses who both need a specialised job. The changes in household structures and in educational level have implications for the forms of tension and compromise inherent in household migration decisions.

There are important economic reasons why it is particularly appropriate for researchers, policy makers and employers to derive a greater understanding of the compromises inherent in the location and mobility decisions of dual career families. In so far, any research with this scope hasn't been done in Finland and Scandinavian countries. Those countries differ in many respects from the Anglo-Saxon countries where the research has been done since 1969, the year when Rapoport & Rapoport defined the term dual career couple.

In comparison with other European countries women's participation in wage employment is traditionally very high in Finland, which is a sequel of the political decisions. In many central European countries families will survive fine with only one wage earner. In Finland and in other Nordic countries there are required two wage earners to obtain a satisfactory living standard. In Nordic countries political interventions have enabled two earner families by organising for example day care system which release both parents for the needs of labour markets.

Finnish women have a rather stable position on the labour market: they have long careers, averaging about the same length as those of male workers (Heiskanen et al. 1990:5). In Finland the labour force participation rate (of people aged between 15 and 74 years) is 63,6 % for women and 69,7 % for men. Women cover 50 % of wage earners and 45 % of the upper officials. Employed women are a bit more educated than employed men. In 1999 of employed persons 76 per cent of women and 74 per cent of men had some degree after the primary education and 37 per cent of women and 29 per

cent of men had tertiary education (SVT 2001). According to this we can conclude that the Finnish families are taking into account seriously in their decision-making processes both the work of man and of woman in addition to the needs of family life.

Part-time employment is comparatively rare in Finland, but still more general among women. In EU countries there is classified 17 % as part-time employment. According to Eurostat 32 % of women in EU-countries are working as part-timers of which two thirds are part-timers as sequel of their own choice. In Finland only 11 % was part-timers of which 63 % was covered by women (Piiro 1999). One out of two part-timer women described it as constraining position and would have rather worked full time. As women's participation in paid work continues to be very high in Finland, and more women are employed in managerial, professional and associated occupations while they are going to be more educated, the number and significance of dual career households is set to increase.

In Finland women have entered the labour market to an increasing extent, but the labour market remains still segregated. Nursing, service-sector jobs, clerical, and sales work are typical female-dominated sectors while men are in the majority in building and construction, technical jobs, transport and administration. Because the labour markets also are spatially differentiated, the difficulties for couples to find the jobs for both spouses that corresponds their professional abilities increase in the small labour market areas. The economic importance of retaining and using women's human capital is widely recognized (Bennett & McCoshan 1993; Finegold 1993), but many evidence suggests that women are coming against a glass ceiling in terms of career progression (Naumanen 2002).

I will study the relocation process of Finnish dual career families in micro-level including individual and family level effects of combining a career in working life with family life, and in the macro-level studying the regional development possibilities. The theoretical framework will thus be combined from multidisciplinary sources.

In the next section I discuss briefly the theoretical framework of the family relocation decisions of dual career households. In section 3 the data and the methods will be presented. In section 4 the statistics and results will be analysed and section 5 contains conclusions.

2. Definitions and theoretical framework

2.1. Definitions

Rapoport and Rapoport (1969: 3-4) have developed the definition of dual-career couple that is used most frequently in the literature. To be defined as a dual-career couple, both couple's work must meet three basic criteria to be considered as a career. First, the employment is personally salient to its occupant. Secondly, it has a developmental sequence over time, and thirdly, it requires a high degree of commitment from the occupant. A high degree of commitment to an egalitarian relationship is a crucial element in this lifestyle that involves the coordination, balance and integration of two careers and one family.

Stoltz-Loike's (1992: 110) definition is congruent with the Rapoport and Rapoport definition and further adds to it by specifying that a person does not need to be in what is traditionally labeled as a professional position to consider their employment to be a career. He described dual-career couples as couples who view their work as important, significant, and progressive and as an essential element of their self-definition, irrespective of the kind of work they perform.

Urbanization of the society and structural change of business have made the concept of countryside more multiform. Mechanisation and rationalisation of agriculture and international integration have brought new functions to the life of countryside (Katajamäki and Kaikkonen 1991). Nowadays the countryside is an area interacting with the cities and linked to both national and international development paths. It has indeed been proposed that the functional division between city and countryside should be abandoned. Instead of cities and their influential areas it would be a question of a network structure of the community system; the essential part would be the reciprocal network of relations between organisations directing their actions from different nuclear areas. From the individual view point a functional area with concrete importance restricts oneself to the central and its influence area with some nuclear with their influence areas. The areal limitation criterion used for a functional city region in my study is the direction of commuting that defines the local labour market regions. The labour market area is formed by the municipalities that have centre-oriented commuting which exceeds a limit of 10 per cent of the labour force of the municipality of departure.

2.2. Theoretical considerations

The traditional migration theories have based on the idea that the location of job affects and determines the place of residence. Migration is undertaken to improve one's situation, either through better salary or better working conditions. Expectations have a large impact on the final decision, and this type of analysis is generally expressed in terms of push and pull factors. The labour force is assumed to migrate, as a result of rational decision, away from areas where there is high unemployment, only few well-paid jobs and excessive representation of reducing fields of industry. The explanations have come expressly from the expenses of circulation. Changes on the location of job have had influence on the total costs of home economics and offers residential mobility as a decisive solution. A number of studies have shown that better educated migrants respond more to the pull factors such as better career potential, more resources and higher incomes, while low educated migrants tend to respond more to push factors such as actual or potential unemployment (Johansson 1993, 2, 4).

The key message emerging from Fielding and Hanford's (1993) analysis is that there are gender-divergent geographies of opportunities, which would be expected to have implications for the location and mobility decisions of dual career households, and which also have impacts on local cultures of employed women. It has been indicated that city locations are of particular importance for women in terms of the range of job opportunities available. Within major metropolitan areas there is some evidence that dual career households often favour gentrified inner city areas (Green et al. 1999: 80). While the rural idyll remains very popular, it would be expected that more accessible rural areas would be preferred locations rather than remoter rural areas which tend to offer much more restricted opportunities. There are spatial objective variations in many components of the opportunity structure for example labour market situation, housing market, transport system, educational system, social infrastructure, and so on. Spatial subjective variations appear in the values, aspirations and preferences of different individuals and households and in perceived opportunities.

A significant characteristic of regional labour markets is segregation development. As labour market competency grows the migration is directed increasingly to locations of higher education and abroad. Like capital also human capital seeks its way into areas and duties where productivity is high and withdraws from areas where productivity is

regarded to be lower. There are significant differences between the regions. The recruitment problem is reinforced by the fact that the local educational system is not adapted to the competence needs of the regional business- and industrial community. A wide spread application of ICTs is thought to be beneficial for regional economies in peripherally located areas, due to what might be called "the death of distance".

It might be good to start analysing the new migration models and contemporary migration dynamics on the bases of the theory of Zelinsky. Especially the circulation, that Zelinsky mentioned in 1971 and estimated to be more common in the future, is of current interest and continually increasing phenomenon. The long distance commuting and increasing mobility have already created some social pressure. Zelinsky examines migration as one aspect of mobility transition and associates it with the stages of the vital transition. The model considers the changes of demographic process in time function. The main idea is steadily increasing motion and transportation. The registered migration is only a part of the total floating character of the population but the causes and consequences have changed with the social and economical development of society. Migration processes have been essential factors in the development and modernising of the society. The quantity, circumstances and target of the migration have varied in the course of time.

A strong dependence of inter-regional migration on age and family status can be interpreted with the help of a migration theory based on the idea of production of human capital. According to the theory migration is in essence an investment meant to increase the production of human capital (Isserman et al. 1986; Jones 1990). The persons' life span income depends largely on the educational and occupational choices made in the beginning of the career. Knowledge and skills become more focused on occupation specific along with increasing age. This leads to a situation where older workers have less choice, and the variation of pay options is smaller for older workers than for those in the beginning of their labour market career (Jouhki 1998: 83-4). In addition the psychological costs of migration in the sense of social capital are seen to be smaller for the young when compared to the elderly.

The discussion of post modernism and post occupationalism does not make sense while thinking about the human capital of professional career constructors. Traditionally the occupation has meant the skills in institutionalised package that has been one of the

main factors to create the subjective identity. According to Julkunen (2002) the post occupationalism in post-industrial world means that the occupations would not affect anymore either to the self-identities or to the solidarity. Occupations are going to crumble. If the educational stage of life takes years and we are talking about life long learning how can we think that it would not have effects on the identity? In the post-industrial world we have also heard about crumbling of family structure and family values. What will remain after the work and family life would be taken off from one's life? If people were not thinking the career to be important they wouldn't look so anxiously new career opportunities from their own field. If the family does not matter it would be easier for individuals to move out from native places and home districts.

The inclination to migration lowers with advancing stages of life and is at its highest before the children are born and around the time of their birth. The inclination to migration of the families with children is considerably lower when compared to others of working age. Single people and working-age children living with their parents migrate at a most rapid rate (Laakso 1998: 29). Approximately two thirds of migrants are young people between 15-34 years. The people of 20-29 years have migrated most actively (Majava 1992). Also small children migrate quite actively, because parents are usually young adults and thus active migrants. In contrast the migrations of school children are more rare (Laakso 1998: 25).

The life-cycle theory of Levinson (1979) supports the result of remarkable migration activity of young families. According to him people are vulnerable to big permutations and even are looking after dramatic changes for their everyday life in certain ages because in the psychological sense the human needs and hopes differs naturally according to the age. At the age of 28-33 there is a transitional phase while the life is becoming more serious and man is ready to modify it powerfully. After 33 years one wants to settle down and seeks to invest oneself in the major components of the structure that are most central (work, family, friendship, leisure, community, etc.) and to realize his youthful aspirations and goals. The mid-life transition lasts roughly from 40 to 45 years when people are evaluating the targets and hopes versus the achieved life situation (Levinson 1978: 58-59).

Survey evidence of Green et al. (1999: 79) suggests that the ability of working trailing partner to find suitable alternative employment in the destination area is an important

influence on the overall success of the relocation. Approximately two-thirds of those whose partners had found alternative employment relatively easily rated the move a success. On the other hand, amongst those whose partners had experienced difficulties in obtaining suitable employment only 38 per cent felt the relocation had been successful. It is very probable that among Finnish households these suitable jobs for accompanying partner will have even more importance because of the working culture and also the taxation system.

The commuting model of Bruno Jansson provides the theoretical basis for the research also because it is one of the rare relocation theories that takes into account the important meaning of family to the decision making process. Jansson (1995) has studied the long distance commuting as a life history and sees that long term commuting creates social and personal problems of such magnitude that divorce might become unavoidable.

The theories of Hazard and Koslow (1992) and of van Ommeren (2000) have pointed out some connections between the work and family life changes and the moving pressure. Their theories have encouraged me to modify the idea further. According to these theories the changes in one dimension, like work location or tasks, cause effects on the other dimensions like family life or the work demands of spouse (see figure 1). Also the angle of the two work locations from home has been seen as an indicator of search activator.

I see the family system as part of time and space in a network society (figure1). The functioning family system is composed of human and social capital that reflects the needs and expectations of the society by its action. The social capital that family members have in their living environment effects to the satisfaction rate they feel towards the space. Social capital is one important aspect of capital that can give the advantage as well to the individual (Burt 1992), group of people (Coleman 1988) or to the society (Putnam 1993). Social capital means here the confidence and social relations people have on other people, to the community and to the social structure. Social capital grows during the life span and social networks have the contact to the space in areas where one has been in action in physical sense like native place, study region, work region or home district or in more abstract sense via virtual contacts for example on the phone or internet. The social capital is the only capital that cannot be devoted nor

administrated completely by anyone. It is the quality that makes the difference on the possibilities of success and of satisfaction.

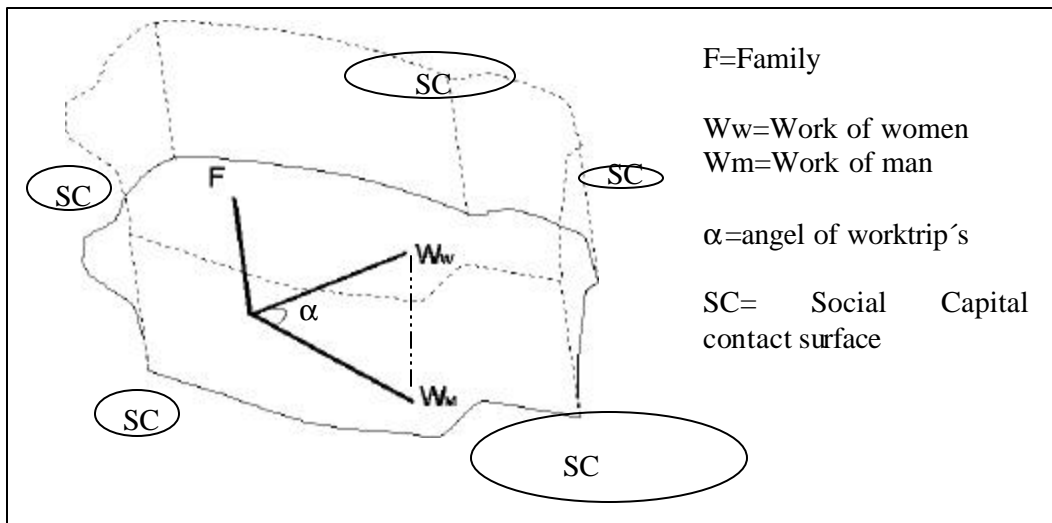


Figure 1. The workplace and residential location dynamics of dual earner families.

The living environment has spread to the vast area in our postindustrial society. The networks between different locations and their influence districts play crucial role in the family well being. Especially the dual career families need services for example for children while the work demands extra energy and long working hours. The social capital and specially the locations where the social capital of family members is directed have importance to the relocation decision making process and after the concrete relocation the social capital plays a crucial role either family become acclimatized to the new area or not. Social capital is a collective property of family and it functions as the tool for attaching to the surrounding community.

3. Data and methods

This study is based to the query data that is collected during the autumn 2001 in Finland excluding the self-governmented Ahvenanmaa. The sample was 3000 dual-career couples of age 28-45. The response rate was 30 %. In this research the career is defined through the concept of occupation because the occupations are the same regardless of the occupational status while the work tasks requires the same skills. Both partners of

the married couples were on the professions of directors, senior officials, managers, professionals, special advisers or commissioned officers.

According to the data of Statistics Finland in 1995 there were in total 1 382 970 families (including also the singles, single parents etc.) of which 6,6 % were dualcareer families (classification based to the educational level, i.e. both partners had attained at least first stage of tertiary education). The proportion of dual career families sounds first to be low but while regarding the amount of dual careers in position vis-à-vis the families of two adults living together with or without children, will the share show up the reality. Dual career families cover 22 % of two parent families.

The data will be analysed with different quantitative and qualitative methods. For example to understand how residential search effort is related to the commuting the data will be analysed by cross tabulation and analysis of variance. The graphics will be used for the synthesis of material as well as for possible comparison, maps will be used for the presentation of main points of research.

4. Statistics and analyses

4.1. Family relations and decision-making process

The decision-making process is complicated situation while the family relations will be weighed out. Different strategies for intra-household co-operation are often summarised by using the following three categories (Kiernan 1992). Traditional home-maker/breadwinner in which only the husband works and wife runs home. Middle type where the wife's work is regarded less absorbing than the husband's, and in which she takes on more of the household tasks and looking after children. This type can be nowadays also with reversed roles, with the women having the dominant career. Egalitarian type is a household in which both male and female partners have equally absorbing work, and in which household tasks and looking after children are shared equally.

Because in this research the focus is on the families with two careers will the first homemaker category drop out in strict sense. In dual career families there is still few parents that will break the career for few years during when they will raise their children at home. This solution is regarded to be rewarding but at the same time there is

mentioned in the subordinate clause that it is only a temporary situation. Sometimes dual career families will be driven to traditional homemaker type also because of relocation to abroad while one parent will drop the own career for certain period for proffering the possibility for the spouse to obtain important goals on his/ her life.

For clarifying the groups of middle type and egalitarian type the respondents was asked to choose whose career would be prioritised in a strict situation. The respondents were also asked to explain what reasons they had behind that answer. According to the answers wives seem to have power equally with men in the decision making processes of families but still the career of men seems to be prioritised. From the respondents 70 % choose to prioritise the career of man. The reasons behind are the better salary, stronger career orientation and that it would be more natural for mother to stay home with children if they couldn't continue the career as before. This didn't mean that the career of women wouldn't have been important, but instead as the temporary solution it would have been nice and good for both women and the children to have more time together and collect the energy for further purposes. In 18 % of families were the career of women regarded as the first and most important one. In these families the career of women were well developed and it was jointly decided for example in the former situation while the wives had needed to make compromises for advantage of the career of man. Strictly egalitarian type families there were 12 %. They didn't want to speculate any situation because they will always see the whole situation before any decision. In future I will continue this analyse by separating the middle types where the more difficult job access has been reason to prioritise one of the two careers.

4.2. Spatial structure

In the 1960's higher education was decentralised to different parts of the country by regional policy so that young people could study in their own provinces. The decentralisation has, however, not been successful to the desired extent. The active migration of the turn of the millennium has reinforced further the educational differences between provinces. Population, economy and education are concentrated to the coast to an even higher degree than before. Because of the selective migration the real growth centres are only the metropolitan area, Tampere, Turku, Oulu and Jyväskylä with their neighbouring municipalities.

Labour mobility is complicated in dual career families by the need to find specialised jobs for both spouses when moving. This phenomenon tends to favour big cities, where the labour markets frequently are large enough to provide a satisfying situation for most two-income households. In the peripheral and sparsely populated areas the local labour markets are often small and isolated, which presents severe recruitment problems, particularly within specialised fields. For employers to obtain competent employees, the labour market often has to be fairly large to be able to offer a suitable job for the spouse of the new employee. This has seemed to be an even greater incentive than the salary that can be offered. In the long run this phenomenon can limit the level of competence of the enterprises, municipalities, labour markets and of the whole country.

The process of concentration of human capital is clearly reinforced by inter-regional migration (Figure 2). Net migration loss particularly includes industrial cities characterised by a one-sided production structure, but also many of the provincial centres. A new characteristic is expressly the proportional regression of service-oriented middle-sized centres and the weakening of their competitive status compared to the growth centres (Vartiainen 1997). Whereas earlier people escaped from the countryside, now there is also a threat of desolation of the cities. The exchange of population produced by inter-provincial migration weakens the development potential of

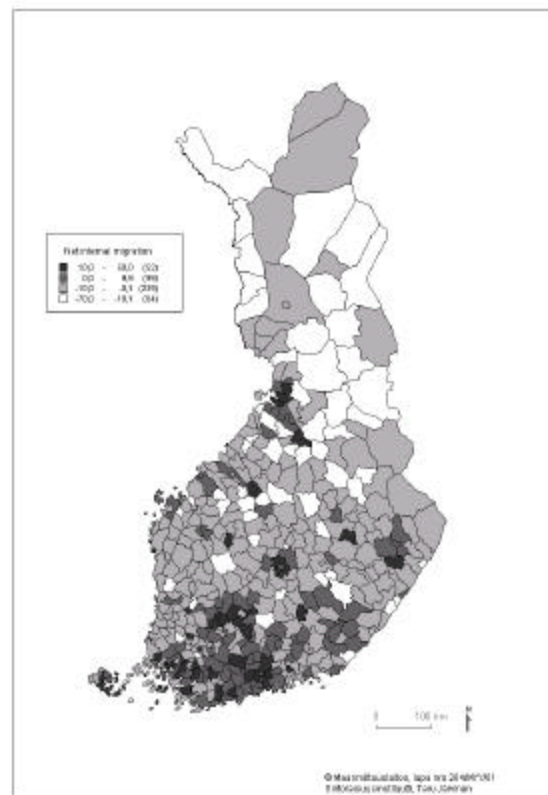


Figure 2. Net migration by municipality in depressed areas both quantitatively 2000 (Data: Statistics Finland). (decrease in population) and qualitatively (decrease in human capital).

The concentration of human capital can easily be seen on the distribution map of dual career families (Figure 3) that looks similar with the category of the most positive net

migration group in the former map. According to the statistics 50 % of families where both men and women had higher education in 1995 concentrated to 8 biggest Finnish cities, while only the local labour market area of Helsinki included already 39 %. Dual career families are living in the best functioning and versatile local labour markets.

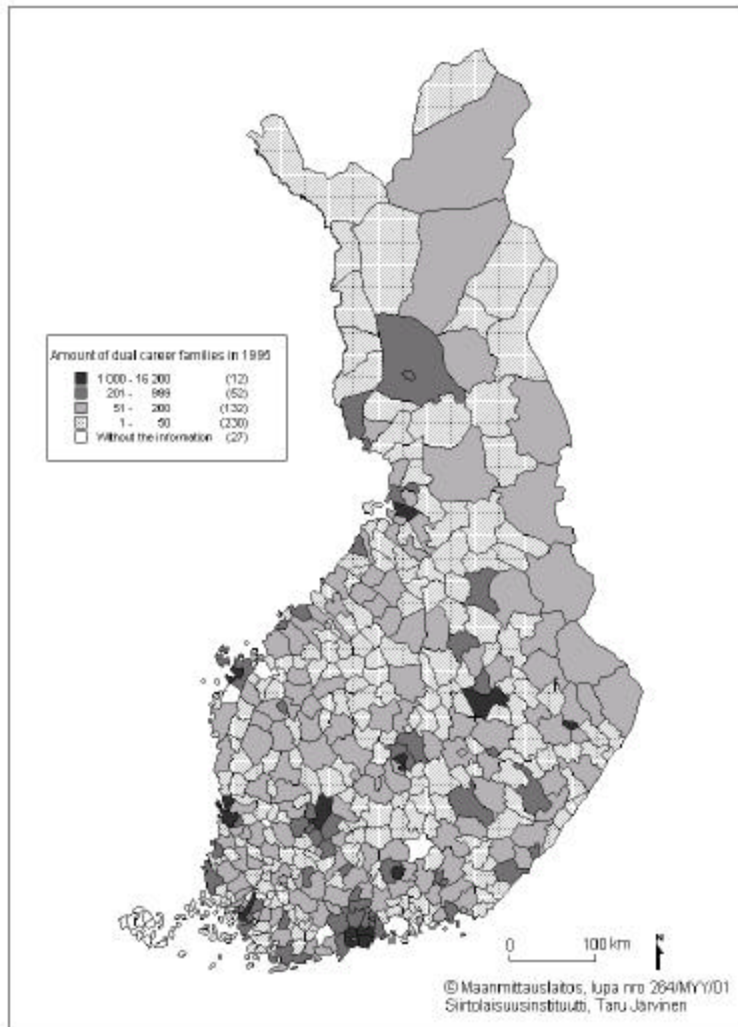


Figure 3. Distribution of families where both men and women have higher education (Data: Statistics Finland).

In theory most of the long-distance migrations are connected to regional differences of the supply and demand of labour force. The labour force is assumed to migrate, as a result of rational decision, away from areas where there is high unemployment, only few well paid jobs and excessive representation of reducing fields of industry. In figure 4 the cumulative accumulation of jobs is examined and its structure is similar with the current targets of migration flows. In the map jobs are put into relation with the

municipality's number of inhabitants, after which they have been arranged in order. The cumulative sum of jobs has been calculated starting from the weakest municipality and going towards the stronger ones. Besides Helsinki, the cities of Turku, Tampere, Oulu, Espoo and Vantaa stand out from the others with their number of inhabitants and jobs (Heikkilä & Korhonen 2000: 29-30).

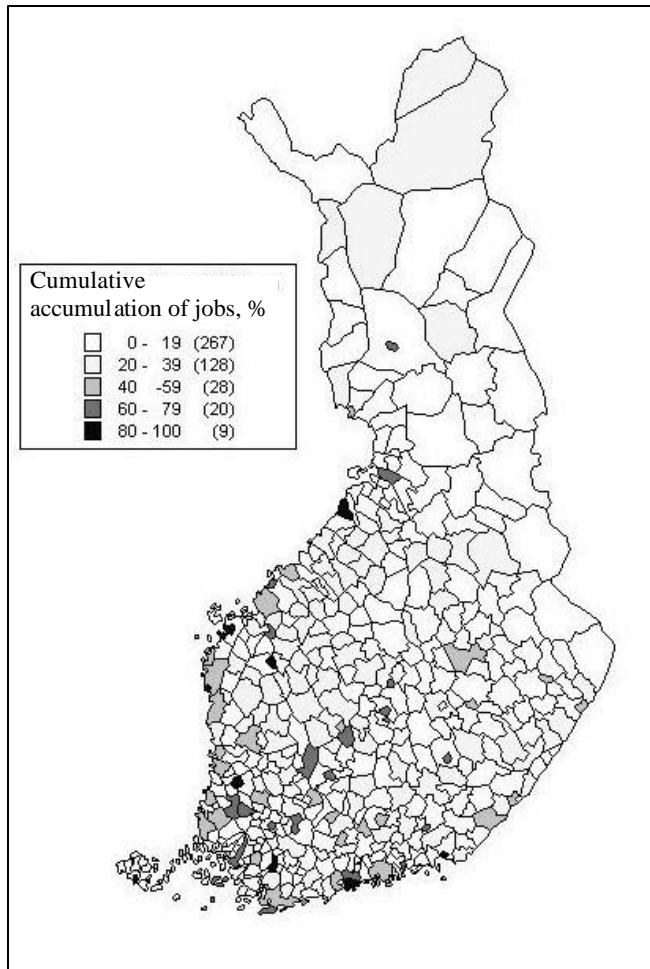


Figure 4. Cumulative accumulation of jobs in Finland in 1997 (Heikkilä & Korhonen 2000: 29).

What is cause and what is the consequence is a really good question. People prefer to live according to the former researches (EVA 2001) and according to my data in the living areas of small and medium sized build-up areas (Table 1). In the hypothetical situation while people could choose the living area without concern of work location, they place small towns and rural villages to the most preferable living areas. Even 39 % of the respondents would not like the idea of living in the conurbation. Instead the

reality doesn't correspond at all with the desires. Families repeat in the answers that they need to think about the location of work opportunities carefully while relocating the residence. The work possibilities are concentrated and will concentrate also in the future to areas where human capital is found, to the growth centres.

Table 1. How does the dual career family members feel about living in the different types of place of residence, %.

	Wouldn't like to live in	Might live in	Prefers to live in
Rural area	28	20	12
Rural village	13	22	26
Small town	3	21	36
Big city over (100 00 inh.)	17	25	17
Helsinki conurbation	39	12	9
	100%	100%	100%

While comparing the municipality types with each other the proportion of highly educated people increases when the municipality comes more urbanized and local labour market area becomes more effective and versatile (Data: SVT 2000 & Statistics Finland 1995 & query data). The decision making process of family relocation is complicated while there is need to optimise the best solution and combine the needs of three careers and, the working careers of both spouses and the shared family career.

There is a dominant consensus in the international labour migration literature that the employment characteristics and quality of life of female partners often suffer as a result of long-distance family migration (Mincer 1978). According to the answers I have analysed the women's post-migration employment is at a lower level than men's and returns take longer to accrue for women. It is more common for women to stay home with children after family relocation than for men. Women seem to take up attitude that unemployment for a short period with children at home is an acceptable situation as far as it is seen as temporary solution. The mean of unemployment rate in different types of municipalities is highest in sparsely populated areas and centres of city areas.

The dual career families give most importance to the employment possibilities while thinking about the residential relocation. The job access for both women and men is prioritized while the economical situation has only a few importance. In addition to the fruitful work 85% of respondents give importance to the family and friend relations at

the nearby living area. For 86 % it is important to reach easily the basic services at the living area.

4.3. Distance travelled to work, job access

The labour markets have concentrated to the growth centres while the employees have spread to the vast surrounding areas. On the average every third Finnish wage earner commutes nowadays outside of their own municipality. The change has been rapid because in 1960 every tenth were commuting and in 1970 the amount was every fifth. From 1980 to 1995 the average work trip length of those under 100 km distance grow up from 5 km to 8 km in Sweden with which the Finnish situation is around the similar (see Krantz 1999). According to the mean work trip length in general already the distance of 20 km is long but most often the 50 km has been used as the limit of long work trip. The mean work distance for the members of dual career families is 22,3 km (the mean work distance of women is 20,7 km and of men is 24,3 km) and 8,6 % of dual career family members have the work trip over 50 km. The dual career family members are active commuters, 27 % of dual career family members are working outside of their own local labour market area.

The local labour market area of Helsinki includes 19 municipalities and covers 39 % of dual career families. The employment self-sufficient rate (the proportion of work places in relation to the amount of the employed living in municipality) of Helsinki is 132.8 % that is the fifth highest rate in Finland (Siukonen 2002).

In the centres of city areas the proportion of inter-municipality commuters as per cent of employed persons is smallest and in the rural areas near to the cities the largest (Data: SVT 2000a). From the nuclear areas and sparsely populated areas the inter-municipality commuting lose some of the importance. The dependency ratio increases towards the group of municipalities of sparsely populated areas.

The job search behaviour is good to analyse through the model of van Ommeren (2000) that takes into account the interaction between the wage earners of the same household. The mean angle α between the work trip of spouses is 58 degrees and in about 77 % of the cases α is smaller than 90 degrees (Figure 5, see figure 1). The distance between the workplaces were in 50 % of households 10 km or smaller and only in 5 % of

households it was bigger than 100 km (Figure 6). The Finnish job search has much in common with that in Netherlands irrespective of the fact that in Finland the jobs are heavily concentrated to few local labour market areas in sparsely populated country. While studying with the non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis test the possible inter-

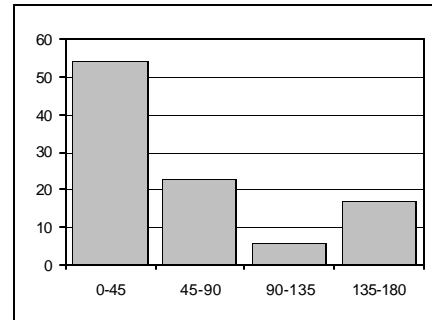


Figure 5. The distribution of the angle α between the work trips of spouses, %.

dependencies of α and the distance of spouse's workplaces on the different municipality types there wasn't any statistically significant differences between groups. Between the commuting distance and sex is neither significant difference. The α does not have statistically significant impact to the propensity of migration while migration propensity is defined here by the future plans that families have told. The commuting distance does not have impact to the migration propensity neither.

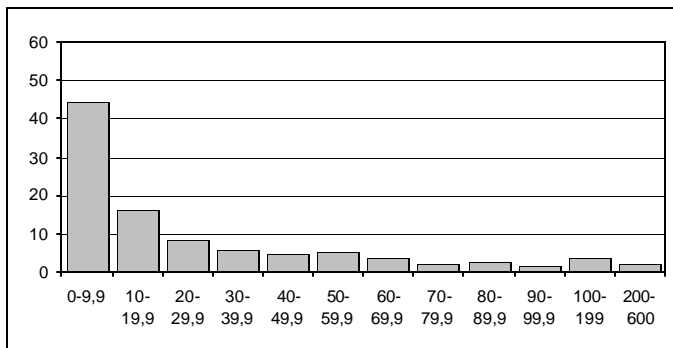


Figure 6. The distribution of distance between the workplaces of husband and wife, %.

The spatial mismatch between positions and skilled labour force has increased during the 1990s (figure 7). In 1993 the share of vacancies that faced recruitment problems was 12 % and in 2000 it was already grown up to 29 %. At the same time period the labour shortage increased from 3 % to 9 %. In Finland the concentration process is in progress while the population migrates to few growing cities. Even middle size cities have lost population. The decision of the government of the law passed of the regional development goal program, as well as several speeches of the Ministers, tell that there is a willingness to equalise areal development possibilities (Leppänen 2001). However,

centralisation is partly seen as a factor improving competitive ability and restoring economical

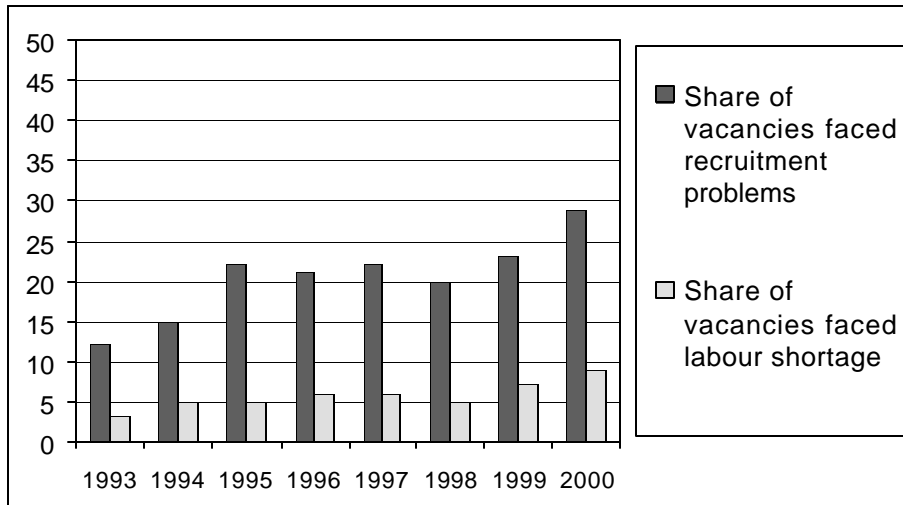


Figure 7. Spatial mismatch in 1993-2000 in Finland (Räisänen & Tuomala 2001).

structures in a country with a small and sparse population. A discussion of values is in process considering the need and costs of actions towards maintaining the working and living possibilities also in smaller cities and rural areas. The selectivity of migration is strongly related through the educational level to the job access and to the regional job opportunities.

5. Conclusions

In Finland most families consist of two working spouses who both need a specialised job. The changes in household structures and in educational level have implications for the forms of tension and compromise inherent in household migration decisions. The high female participation and higher education among females explains partly the changes of labour market. For the members of dual career families, the employment opportunities both for them self and for their spouses are important factors while considering the relocation.

It is expected that the number of dual-career couples will continue to increase due to the economic necessity and the growing number of highly educated. How to create possibilities for surviving in the smaller labour market areas is a major question to

determine. According to surveys Finnish people would like to live in the small towns if they could find there quality jobs for them selves and for their spouse.

The dismantling of the welfare state has meant growing difficulties in many administrative centres of rural areas, which have traditionally expanded largely on the strength of the welfare services. The prognosis for small town regions in urban development is not promising because the accumulation of work opportunities that requires special skills are assumed to favour large cities. For small and medium sized regions there seems to be good possibilities to attract new inhabitants as far as they have possibilities to offer interesting work possibilities for both spouses. The smaller population centres will continue to develop primarily as satellites of the larger ones and as parts of their growth zones.

The spatial mismatch between positions and skilled labour force has increased during the 1990s. In the future the ascent of the level of education can mean an even larger need for labour force mobility so that the supply and demand of the ever more differentiated labour force would meet. To succeed the regions must be able to attract and maintain a sufficient population, as well as encouraging young people to choose an education that corresponds with the needs of the local labour markets.

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