ESPACE, POPULATIONS, SOCIETES, 1993-3 pp. 465-476

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Is elderly migration absent in the Netherlands ?

INTRODUCTION

International comparative research into migration should go beyond an analysis of the age-specificity of the participation in, and geographical distribution of this phenomenon. The traditional interpretation of the age-specific intensities in model migration schedules: child-dependence, labour, retirement and assistance migration, obscures the variability that arises from differences in culture, socio-economic covariates, institutional contexts (Rogers 1988) and in the geographical distribution of housing and labour opportunities over time and in particular between countries. In a life course perspective the explicit attention paid to the intersection of age-time and calendar-time (the historical context), may enable researchers to interpret temporal variability in migration behaviour. The same holds for the variability between countries. By paying attention to the diversity in the national context, the results from international comparative research can be seen in the proper perspective.
In this contribution we will describe and analyse a seemingly absent phenomenon; elderly migration in the Netherlands. In contrast to other countries in Western and Northern Europe no a distinctive pattern can be observed in the migration of the elderly in the Netherlands, neither in terms of age specificity, nor in terms of specificity of origins and destinations of the ones that do migrate. The central question to be answered is, whether this means that the explanations of elderly migration which are put forward in the literature are invalid at least for the Netherlands, or that the mechanisms also hold in this country, but are obscured by the specific national context.

The argument will be developed as follows. In the next paragraph the findings from the literature will be summarized, clarifying the conceptual model we will use in the remainder of the research. Then a number of aspects of the context will be stated that might explain the deviations from the experience in other countries. Next a number of hypotheses will be generated with respect to the participation in and the distribution of elderly migration in the Netherlands. These hypotheses will be tested in multi-variate analyses. The contribution will end with an answer to the research question stated above.

INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Life cycle explanations predominate in conceptual models of elderly migration. At the individual level, the life cycle refers to the changes in needs and capacities that accompany the ageing process. At the macro level, life cycle refers to the age-stratification of society. Age-related classifications have become very common in the twentieth century (Macnicol & Blaikie 1989), making age an important aspect of the social position, but have proved to be highly dynamic over time. Not only do formal ages change (e.g. statutory ages for school enrollment and retirement), but also the informal content of age-related norms have changed considerably. Early retirement has changed from a privilege into a nearly compulsory act to secure jobs for younger people.

The wider socio-economic context clearly influences age-related opportunity structures. The ageing experience both at the level of the individual and at the level of society will therefore be different for successive cohorts, making ageing itself dynamic over time. Life cycle explanations should therefore be supplemented with life course explanations, including the effects of the specific biography on behaviour later in life. A central idea that can be derived analogous to explanations stressing cohort flow, is that cohorts do not only differ temporally but also geographically depending on the national or regional context of the cohort experience.

Applied to the spatial aspects of ageing, it is apparent that both the developmental (ageing) and life course (experience) perspective are central to most explanations of migration by the elderly. The developmental perspective is most apparent in the explanation of age-specific migration rates. The retirement peak in the model migration schedules is traditionally explained by the desire to obtain residential and recreational amenities, once the locational constraint of having to live near one place of employment is being lifted. The rising rates at older age are attributed to the need for obtaining medical or living assistance (Wiseman 1978). The same perspective has also been used to explain variation in the distance of the move. Rogers (1988) has shown for the United States that the retirement peak is clear in the interstate migration and the rise in rates after age 75 in particular occurs in the intra-county migration.

Litwak and Longino (1987) distinguish two categories within the assistance migration. The move to a primary caretaker when moderate disability sets in and the move into an institution once this primary caretaker can no longer assume the burden of this care. They also supply a developmental interpretation of the geographical distribution of migration at older age. The moves from the North to the Sunbelt are predominant retirement moves, the counter-flows are characterized by assistance moves. This pattern is also reported to occur among the elderly English migrants in Spain and Portugal, migrating back to their country of birth when in need of medical assistance.

The life course perspective has always been predominant in the explanation of the unbalance in the migration flows among the elderly. This perspective is most prominent in the concept of return migration. People returning in the third phase to their region or locality of origin. Two basic conditions will have to be met for substantial flows of return migration. The first condition is geographical. It presupposes a high degree of concentration of employment opportunities for the (educated) young in a limited number of urban conurbations (like the Paris Region or the English South-East). Evidence exist with respect to age specific migration flows that in some countries these patterns occur (e.g. the role of the London area as an "escalator region" in the life course of the British, Fielding 1990). The second condition is of a cultural nature, implying a biographic continuity in the positive evaluation of rural life, which stems from rural ancestry and which is retained over the life course. Return migration has been found in France (Cribier 1982) and in the United States (Rogers 1990), but less so in England (Law and Warnes 1982) and the Netherlands (Vergoosen 1983).

The life course perspective is not restricted to return migration. In terms of destination choice, the awareness space shaped by previous experience in particular with respect

to holiday making, proved to direct elderly migration (Law & Warnes 1982). Also the location of second homes, acquired long before the moment of retirement, offered part of the explanation of destination choice in France (Cribier 1989).

Apart from age and life history, also socio-economic and geographic differentials enter the explanation of retirement migration. The evidence from English-speaking countries including Canada, the US, the UK and Australia shows that retirement migrants belong to the more advantaged strata of society. Retirement migration is associated with the wealthy and the healthy. The basic mechanism behind this explanation is the availability of resources to move later in life. In particular the freeholders of owner-occupied property in urbanized regions may profit from extensive capitals gains if they move to an area in which house prices are lower. In many countries capital gains from the selling of the dwelling are exempted from taxes. In the Netherlands this even holds if one moves into rental accommodation. In some countries this mechanism is also true for renters. They evidence from Latin countries does not support the socio-economic differentials, but confirms the effect of house price gradients. As Cribier (1982) showed, a renter of an apartment in Paris might buy a detached house outside the Paris region and reduce housing expenditure. Sharp house price gradients therefore may provide an important aspect of the explanation of long distance migration upon retirement.

A more general explanation of the unbalanced migration of the elderly, away from the urban centers and into more rural areas is provided by a classical push-pull explanation of elderly migration by Cribier (1982). She lists a number of aspects of city life (complexity, unhealthy, crime-ridden, social degradation, flat-life) which people might have taken for granted during their working live, but which they reject once the necessity to endure the burden of city life has vanished. They choose for the quiet- and peacefulness of suburban or rural life once they have the option to do so. More generally the living environment (milieu de vie) does not correspond to the lifestyle (mode de vie) at higher ages.

Despite the differences in participation in and the spatial structure of elderly migration, some general patterns emerge from the evidence in various countries. The moment of retirement seems to have a world-wide effect as a trigger of the migration propensity among the (resourceful) young elderly. The retirement peak in age-specific rates is due to the sharp localization of retirement in the life course of the individuals. This localization may be different between countries and dynamic over time. The search for assistance at higher ages seems a common phenomenon in most countries, although it is not yet clear whether the upward slope in age-specific rates is caused by moves to institutions or by a more general process of moving. With respect to the spatial structure it seems decisive that large regional economic disparities exist, both to generate interregional labour migration at younger age and interregional retirement migration at higher ages. Also the geographical distributions of amenities seem to be decisive. In countries with a sharp urban-rural dichotomy long distance migration is more likely to occur. However even in those countries most of the moves made by the elderly involve only short distances. Since the geographical and societal context influences migration behaviour, the national context will have to be specified, before interpreting the structure of age-related migration of the elderly.

COHORT EXPERIENCE AND GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT IN THE NETHERLANDS

Two aspects of the national context are supposed to have effects on the patterns of elderly migration. The first is cohort experience with respect to the moment in life at which people reach the empty nest stage in the life cycle and retire from active employment and with respect to resources that facilitate a move later in life. The second is the geographical context, in particular the spatial distribution of labour, housing and recreational opportunities. It will be shown that the situation in the Netherlands is rather specific in both respects.

Cohort experience: labour, family and housing

As in most other countries in Europe, labour force participation at higher ages has been reduced considerably in the Netherlands. Rising real incomes have been used up to 1960 to enable the ones aged 65 or over to retreat from the labour force. After that year the participation of the ones aged 50-64 has fallen, and with increasing speed in the seventies and the early eighties. Cohort experience during the last decade is depicted in table 1.

Of the ones being approximately 55 in 1982 70% was either in employment or looking for employment. Four years later, at age 59, the percentage has dropped with 14 points and another four years later with 30 points. The next cohort even experienced a drop of 22 points between age 55 and 59. Part of this reduction can be attributed to early retirement. Early retirements schemes were a joint effort by labour unions and employers and have been paid through a reduction in wage demands. Another part has to be attributed to a "dumping" of older employees into disability benefit programs funded by the national government.

As a result of this, the very strict localization of retirement at age 65 (which was still present in the sixties) has shifted to a gradual process of retirement between age 55 and 65 in the past two decades.

The second aspect of change in the life course are the dynamics in household composition. In table 2 the changing pattern over the eighties is visualised. The table clearly shows the decreasing age at which household enter the empty nest stage in the life cycle. Among those aged fifty in 1982 nearly 75% still had children living in. Eight years later, at age 58 only 35% still had one or more child living at home. In 1982 nearly 50% of the 58-year-old still lived with their children. The sharp decline in fertility in the sixties, starting with a reduction of the progression ratios of higher parity, is largely responsible for this effect. In combination with the decreased labour force participation, this means that very little locational constraints remain after age 55, and that a relatively long period with few family and occupational obligations, can be enjoyed in relatively good health by today's younger senior citizens in the Netherlands.

Table 1. Changes in labour force participation of males in the eighties.

age	49-52	53-56	57-60	61-64	65-68	69-72	73-76	77-80	81-84	85+
1982	79	70	60	36	7	4	3	2	0	0
1986	76	74	56	29	8	4	2	2	1	0
1990	82	73	52	24	6	4	2	1	1	0

Source : WBO

Table 2. Transitions into the empty nest stage during the eighties.

age	49-52	53-56	57-60	61-64	65-68	69-72	73-76	77-80	81-84	85+
1982	74	62	47	30	20	14	12	10	8	-
1986	66	57	42	26	17	10	7	5	5	9
1990	58	51	35	22	15	9	8	5	4	7

Source: WBO

Table 3. Change in percentage of home owners in the eighties.

age	49-52	53-56	57-60	61-64	65-68	69-72	73-76	77-80	81-84	85+
1982	47	44	42	39	34	31	29	27	-	-
1986	51	48	45	41	36	33	29	25	29	-
1990	54	52	48	42	37	34	33	29	26	23

Source: WBO

The third aspect of cohort experience refers to the asset accumulation with respect to housing. At age 65, 70% of the owner-occupiers in the Netherlands pay less on mortgage interest than the imputed rent of their property. Many of these are outright owners. Their numbers are however limited, in particular in comparison to other countries. In 1990 only 400.000 of the 2.5 million owner-occupiers were older than 64. However, the percentage of home owners is increasing among the elderly as table 4 shows. The table provides a good example of "aging in tenure" . Between ages 49 and 60 the percentage of home-owners is remarkably stable. Not only is this a period in life of very few transactions on the housing market, but the moves that are made occur within the same tenure category. After age 60 an ageing effect sets in, which leads to a net reduction of the percentage. Future cohorts can therefore be expected to belong to the class of home-owners far more than today's elderly. The Netherlands is slowly catching up with other countries in this respect.

On the whole the cohort experience of the elderly in the eighties can be summarized as a lifting of locational constraints from family and occupational duties at an earlier moment in life and a slight increase in resources, due to the growing percentage of home owners. Cohort experience will affect migration at higher age in a number of ways. A sharp retirement peak is not to be expected any more, as retirement occurs less and less frequently at the statutory pension age of 65. As a consequence the age at which retirement moves are made will become more diffuse, taking 55 rather than 60 as a starting point to define the population at risk. The (slight) increase in wealth accumulation may stimulate longer distance moves. We expect a larger number of people to leave the municipality of residence during the later stages of life. The spatial structure of elderly migration will be less affected by cohort experience described in this paragraph. This structure is more dependent on the geographical context.

Table 4 Distribution of the elderly over the "milieus de vie" of the Randstad (number *1000)

Environment	1982		1990	
	number	percent	number	percent
Large cities	357	41,4	340	35,3
Medium Cities	98	11,3	107	11,1
Growth centers	42	4,8	75	7,8
Suburban	365	42,4	442	45,8
	862	100,0	964	100,0

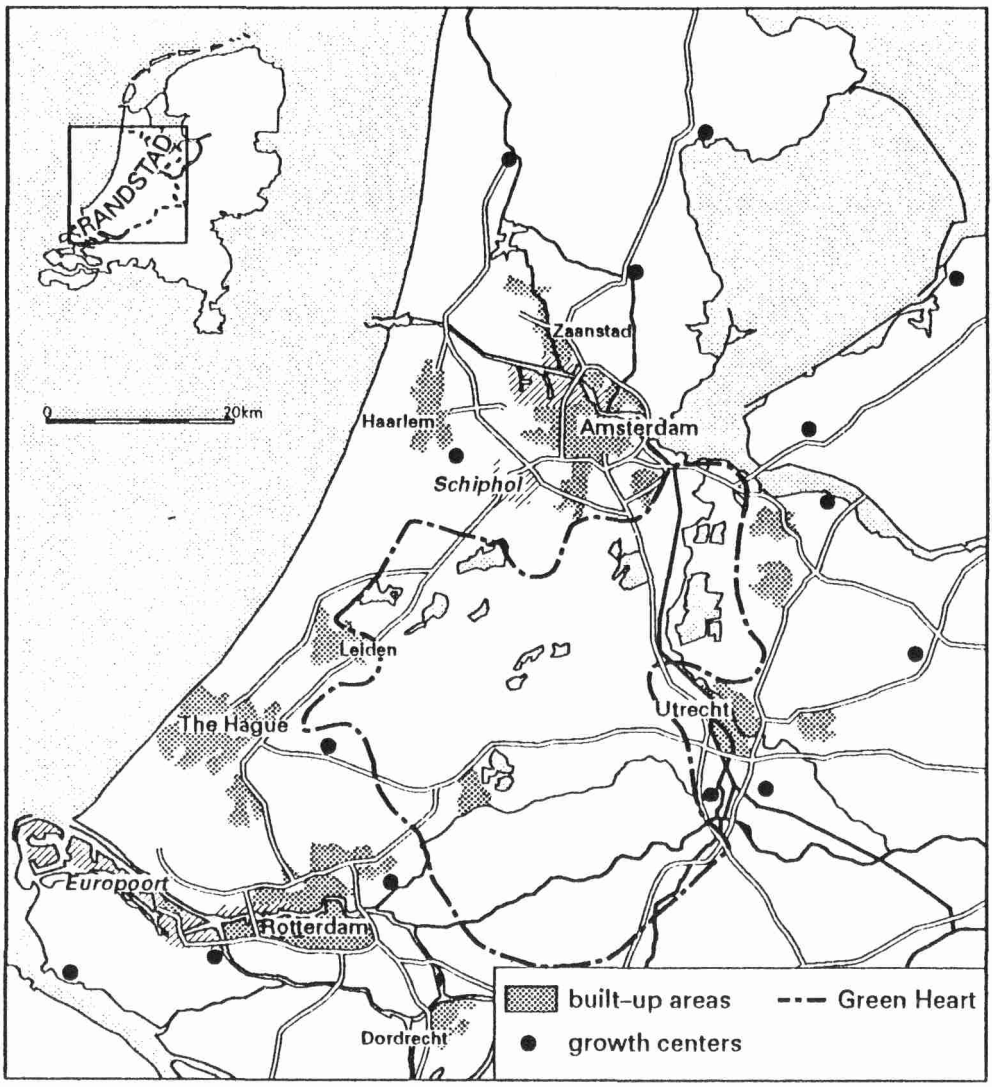
The geographical context

Apart from the changing societal context, which is to some extent common to more countries, the geographical context might contribute to the unique character of migration at higher ages in particular countries. Not unlike the situation in France and Great-Britain, the Netherlands has a national conurbation surrounded by less urbanized regions. The geographical structure of the Randstad however, is very different to Paris and London as map 1 shows. Instead of a very centralized built- up area, surrounded by a Green Belt, the Randstad consist of a Green Hart surrounded by a rim of cities.

The four larger cities: Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht share a number of features with other metropolitan area's, like social degradation, an old housing stock, a high percentage of dwellings in the rental sector etc. The other medium sized cities (indicated on the map) are more like provincial towns. All the towns are surrounded by suburban municipalities (not shown on the map) many of which have retained a lot of their rural character, due to a zoning policy redirecting suburbanisation towards a (limited) number of growth centers (indicated as dots on the map).

The share of the elderly population in the Randstad has remained nearly constant over the eighties. Of the total number of 1.8 million households with a head aged 55 or over in 1982 exactly 48 percent lived in the Randstad. In 1990 this percentage has gone down slightly to 47.2 (out of a total of 2 million households). This provides an indication of a slight redistribution from the urbanized to the less urbanized parts of the Netherlands.

Within de Randstad the distribution of the elderly over the various living environments, has changed more dramatically. This is



Map. 1 The Randstad Holland

shown in table 4. In 1982 more than 40% of the elderly lived in the four larger cities. Most elderly however, were located in the suburban communities of the Randstad (42,4%). In 1990 the share of the elderly living in the larger cities had dropped to about 35%, while the share in suburban locations increased to nearly 46%.

A number of processes cause this change. The first is a matter of selectivity. As the larger cities had a extensive share of the (very) old, mortality led to a decrease of the absolute numbers. The second process is migration at ages below 55 which happened well before the eighties. This fits in with the cohort experience described above with respect to increased home-ownership. Due to the "choice" in living environments well within commuting distance of the major concentrations of employment, many households in the Randstad did not have to wait until retirement to relocate to more pleasant surroundings. The third process obviously is migration at higher ages, which we will return to in the next paragraph.

De Randstad offers many of the amenities, that people abroad search for in more rural or coastal area's upon retirement. The suburban communities in the Randstad offer a very attractive living environment. Many of

the popular seaside resorts are located within the Randstad itself. House price gradients between the Randstad and the rest of the Netherlands only exist in the owner-occupied sector and are certainly less steep than in other countries. The unique spatial distribution of recreational and housing amenities affect retirement migration in two ways. First migration propensity at the moment of retirement will be lower than in other countries, because many households will have relocated into a "milieu the vie" which is compatible with the "mode de vie" at higher ages, before the moment of retirement. Second the retirement migration that does appear, will be less interregional and more intra-regional in character, due to the intervening opportunities close to the former residential location.

MIGRATION OF THE ELDERLY IN THE NETHERLANDS

The evidence from the previous paragraph sheds some doubt on the existence of the traditional patterns of elderly migration in the Netherlands. A sharp peak at age 65 is not to be expected due to the very gradual process of retreat from the labour force. The geographical context makes a move away from the Randstad less likely due to the intervening opportunities that can be found within the urbanized area and which can be seized at a moment before retirement. Existing research in the Netherlands shows no retirement peaks and no upward slope at higher ages. The stylized age pattern in migration rates, that have been shown for the US (Rogers 1988), is clearly absent in the Netherlands. Also the redistributive effects at the regional level seem very limited. As retirement migration is conceptualized as interregional migration we specifically looked at this type of migration, by analyzing the flows of migration of the population aged 50 and over between the twelve administrative regions of the Netherlands in the period 1986-1990.

At a population of more than 5 million the gross redistributive effect (calculated as the addition of both migration surplusses and deficits of each region) is less than 10,000 persons. This number is obviously hardly worth while. At first glance it therefore seems that research into migration of the elderly in the Netherlands is futile. It is hard to imagine however that the mechanisms that seem to be common to all western countries should not hold for the Netherlands. Obviously it is very hard to control for specific national geographical contexts. The alternative is to specify hypotheses about the underlying mechanisms and to test whether these are also valid in the Netherlands.

In order to do so we used information on residential moves from the Housing Demand Surveys (WBO). The survey is a repeated cross-section (every four years) and contains a wealth of information on household char-

Table 5. Reason for moving by households aged 55 or over in 1986-1990

	Count	Age 55-70			Age 70+	
	Col Pct	Single	Couple	Family	Single	Couple
Health	1	67	171	51	114	211
		24.3	*23.5*	*19.4*	*38.9*	*51.2*
Environment	2	58	149	54	42	54
		21.0	*20.5*	*20.5*	*14.3*	*13.1*
Dwelling	3	54	65	41	58	65
		19.6	*22.7*	*15.6*	*19.8*	*15.8*
Cheaper	4	9	22	15	-	-
		3.3	*3.0*	*5.7*	-	-
Relatives	5	26	49	14	39	30
		9.4	*6.7*	*5.3*	*13.3*	*7.3*
Other	6	62	171	88	39	48
		22.5	*23.5*	*33.5*	*13.3*	*11.7*
Column		276	727	263	293	412
Total		*100%*	*100%*	*100%*	*100%*	*100%*

acteristics and in particular on housing market behaviour of some 60.000 individuals aged eighteen and over. With respect to spatial mobility the data file contains retrospective information covering the four years preceding the interview. Research questions are consistent since the survey of 1982, covering a period of recorded moves from 1978 onwards. The retrospective nature does pose some problems in specifying rates of migration. As the sample is drawn from the population register, recent movers might not have been recorded fully due to selective nonresponse. In particular with respect to elderly migrants a particular problem of censoring exists due to high mortality rates among the very old. As a result total migration will be underestimated to some extent. Another limitation of the data is that it pertains to people in private households. Moves into institutions are therefore not recorded.

Amenity and assistance migration in the Netherlands

Two types of analyses were performed on this data. First we will look into the propensity to migrate, second we will go into the geographical distribution of migrations flows. The first step in the analysis is to see whether the general hypotheses with respect to age differentials in elderly migration also holds for the Netherlands. From the 1990 data file the reasons for moving of the households that changed residence in the period 1986-1990 were recorded. The result are shown in table 5.

The table confirms the general idea that those in the age-group 55-70 move to change their residential environment. About 20% states the living environment as the main reason for moving. Another 20% state the dwelling as an important aspect, most of whom expressed the desire to move to a smaller dwelling, or at least to a dwelling having less rooms. Moves made for assistance reasons however, also occur among this age-group. Nearly a quarter state health as a reason for moving. This does not necessarily mean that the health condition is bad. Many move in anticipation of a deteriorating condition in the future. Moves to live closer to relatives are also an indication of assistance migration. In particular those living single state this motive. Among the household aged 70 or over health is clearly the dominant motive. For the next steps in the analyses it was decided to run separate models for these age groups.

Multi-variate analyses of total residential mobility

For the multi-variate analyses the three samples were pooled. This way we could analyse data on nearly 70.000 households in the correct age groups and were able to see whether the spatial mobility of the elderly proved dynamic over the period 1978-1990. The first analysis is a logistic regression having the total residential mobility rate as a dependent variable. The event is a change in residence in the discrete time period of four year preceding the interview.

The following variables entered the analysis. As could be seen from table 6, assistance migration also occurred among the younger household. Therefore we entered age into the analyses for both age groups, expecting a positive sign indicating increased needs to move for health reasons with age. On the basis of the findings from the literature we expected a positive sign for income (yearly net household income measured in 10.000 guilders) for the younger age-group indicating resources to engage in retirement migration and a negative sign for the older age-group (higher income groups may be able to buy care rather than to rely on family).

The effect of household composition is hypothesized to differentiate between families and households without children. For the younger age groups the presence of children is an extra locational constraint and a reason not to decrease housing consumption yet. For the older age group the presence of children might provide the necessary care. It was also expected that people living alone would move more than couples for reasons of assistance.

The labour force position can only be stated for the younger age-groups, as people over aged 70 are all pensioners. The differentiation chosen was between pensioners, people receiving disability benefit payments and workers, expecting a decreasing propensity to change residence with each group.

The housing market position has been restricted to tenure indicating resources to par-

Table 6. Logistic Regression of Total Residential Mobility

	55-70		70 plus	
Variable	**B**	**Exp(B)**	**B**	**Exp(B)**
Age	-,0008	,9992	-,0239*	,9763
Income	,0522*	1,0535	-,0504*	,9508
Household				
Single	,2261*	1,2538	,2043*	1,2267
Couple	,0510*	1,0523	,2900*	1,3365
Family	-,2771*	,7580	-,4943*	,6096
Labour				
Pension	,0519	1,0533	-	-
Disabled	,1636*	1,1777	-	-
Working	-,2155*	,8061	-	-
Tenure				
Owner	-,1711*	,8428	-,0676*	,9346
Renter	,1711*	1,1866	1,0699*	,9347
Environment				
Large Cities	,1071*	1,1131	,1303*	1,1392
Medium Cities	-,0378	,9629	-,1106	,8953
Growth Centers	,2339*	1,2636	,1205	1,1281
Suburb	-,1610*	,8513	-,0680	,9343
Periph. Towns	,0196	1,0198	,0539	1,0554
Rural Areas	-,1618*	,8453	-,1273	,8805
Time				
1982	-,0952*	,9092	-,1318*	,8765
1986	,0531	1,0545	,0384	1,0392
1990	,0421	,9588	,0934	,9108
Constant	-2,0731*	-	-2,6190*	-

* significant at at least 0,05

Table 7 Inter- Municipal versus Intra-Municipal Mobility

	55-70		70 plus	
Variable	**B**	**Exp(B)**	**B**	**Exp(B)**
Age	-,0409*	,9599	-,0169	,9833
Income	,1902*	1,2095	,3354*	1,3985
Household				
Single	,0915	1,0958	,3606*	1,4342
Couple	,1758*	1,1922	,2259	1,2534
Family	-,2673*	-	-,5865*	-
Labour				
Pension	,2032*	1,2253	-	-
Disabled	-,0552	,9463	-	-
Working	-,1480*	-	-	-
Tenure				
Owner	,3212*	1,3788	,2179*	1,2434
Renter	-,3212*	-	-,2179*	-
Environment				
Large Cities	,5568*	1,7450	,5686*	1,7658
Medium Cities	-,1541	,8572	-1,0256*	,3586
Growth Cities	,0489	1,0501	,6525*	1,9203
Suburb	,1710	1,1865	,0997	1,1049
Peripheral Towns	-,5187*	,5953	-,1562	,8554
Rural Areas	-,1039	-	-,1390	-
Time				
1982	-,0252	,9751	,0036	1,0037
1986	,0721	1,0747	,0506	1,0519
1990	-,0469	-	-,0542	-
Constant	,9977	-	-1,1080	-

* significant al. 0,05

ticipate in retirement migration (positive effect) and the need to release the burden of having to care for the upkeep of the property at higher ages (positive effect). This is in accordance with the decreasing number of home owners after age 60 which we found in table 3.

Living environment refers to the type of municipality. Six types were distinguished. The larger cities were hypothesized to be a less favourable environment for the elderly providing an impetus to move. For the growth centers and the suburbs in the Randstad a negative sign was expected as was the case for the rural municipalities outside the Randstad.

With respect to the period of observation we were curious whether the overall decrease in mobility rates in the late seventies and early eighties also occurred among the elderly, expecting a negative sign for the first period (1978-1982) and positive sign for the following periods.

The results of the analysis are listed in table 6. Apart from the parameters of the logistic model also the exponential values are given. These can be interpreted as the percentage of change in the odds of moving versus staying compared to the average level indicated by the constant in the model.

Age proved to be not significant for the younger age group and contrary to the expectation proved negative for the older age group for which in particular an age effect was expected. The absence of moves to institutions in the data might account for this. The effect of income is as expected, as is the effect of the household composition. Families move far less than average, and singles move more, although surprisingly the couples in the higher age group have higher odds than the ones living single.

The effect of the labour-market position was to some extent a surprise. Workers clearly have a lower propensity to change residence, but it turns out that the ones receiving disability payments have higher rates than pensioners. This might be an indication of

health related moves by this group.
Tenure did not have the expected sign. What is true for the young also seems to hold for the elderly. Renters are more mobile than home owners
With the exception of the growth centers the expected push factors of the living environment are confirmed by the analysis. Suburban and rural municipalities clearly generate less moves than average, while the number of movers is higher than average in the larger cities. The high mobility level of the elderly in the growth centers could point to two things. Either this environment is not very well suited to the preferences and needs of the elderly, inducing people to leave, or numerous housing adjustment moves occur within these municipalities, as most people moved there when they had children and are now reducing their housing consumption.

Inter- versus intra-municipal moves

The latter conclusion with respect to the growth centers point to a confounding effect in the analyses so far. By analysing total mobility rates local housing adjustment cannot be distinguished from amenity seeking behaviour of the wealthy younger senior citizens. To uncover the mechanism behind retirement migration we therefore did another analyses taking the total group of movers as a population and analysing whether they remained in the former place of residence or moved somewhere else. The central hypotheses is that assistance migration and housing adjustment moves will be short distance and that amenity-seeking behaviour will involve a change in living environment en will therefore involve longer distances in accordance with the findings of Rogers for the US. Due to the difference in geographical scale and context, distance has been measured as crossing municipal boundaries rather than crossing regional boundaries. Defining retirement migration as interregional or long distance is irrelevant for the Netherlands. Interregional moves hardly occur, as was indicated before.
The results support the hypotheses stated. A very clear overall difference between the two age-groups is apparent from the constant in the model. It is highly positive for the younger age-group, indicating a high level of out-migration and strongly negative for the older age group indicating a preponderance of local moves. The age-effect within the younger age-group is negative, as expected.
Income has a very strong positive effect now, raising the odds with 20% per 10,000 guilders among the young and with 40% among the old. Also the effect of household composition is more clear. Among the young, the couples are most inclined to leave, while among the old the persons living single clearly have the largest odds of moving to another municipality. This is in accordance with earlier findings abroad that the amenity seeking elderly are overrepresented among the young *couples* and that the assistance seeking migrants are overrepresented among the elderly *singles.*
In contrast to the earlier analysis the effect of retiring can now clearly be isolated. Those receiving a pension have the highest odds of leaving the municipality, while the ones receiving disability benefits engage more in housing adjustment locally.
Wealth accumulation through home-ownership now also seems to fit in. Particularly among the younger elderly former home owners relocate at a larger distance more often. The same holds for the living environment. The conclusion of Cribier and Golant that city live does not correspond with the lifestyle of the elderly is most prominent from the analyses. However this is only true for the larger cities. The medium sized towns seem to provide an attractive milieu for the elderly, particular for the one aged 70 or over. This in contrast to the growth centers which generate a lot of migrants among this age-group. The lack of suitable housing for the very old is probably the dominant cause for this phenomenon. Contrary to the expectations the suburbs do not have a negative sign, the effect is not significant.
The expected patterns in elderly migration which seemed absent in the Netherlands do show up in a multi-variate analyses. Even though the data did not allow for a test of the event dependence of elderly migration on retirement, it could be shown from the state dependence for the age-group 55-70 that the basic mechanism in which retirement lifts the locational constraints is more universally valid than is assumed from diverging age-profiles. The entry into the empty-nest stage has a similar but very

Table 8. Flows of migrants between six "milieu de vie" in the Netherlands

Count Row Pct Col Pct		Large Cities 1	Medium Cities 2	Growth Centers 3	Suburb 4	Periphiral Towns 5	Rural Areas 6	Total Row
Environment								
Large Cities	1	1490 *71.9* *89.8*	277 *1.3* *5.5*	2192 *10.6* *38.0*	2013 *9.7* *10.8*	502 *2.4* *2.9*	845 *4.1* *2.8*	20769 *22.3*
Medium Cities	2	141 *2.8* *0.8*	4213 *83.5* *84.1*	35 *0.7* *0.6*	342 *6.8* *1.8*	74 *1.5* *0.4*	239 *4.7* *0.8*	5044 *5.4*
Growth Centers	3	239 *7.1* *1.4*	41 *1.2* *0.8*	2467 *73.3* *42.8*	407 *12.1* *2.2*	89 *2.6* *0.5*	123 *3.6* *0.4*	3366 *3.6*
Suburb	4	822 *4.5* *4.9*	255 *1.4* *5.1*	674 *3.7* *11.7*	14969 *82.2* *80.4*	408 *2.2* *2.3*	1091 *6.0* *3.7*	18219 *19.5*
Periphiral Towns	5	160 *0.9* *1.0*	104 *0.6* *2.1*	172 *1.0* *3.0*	229 *1.3* *1.2*	14741 *85.0* *84.6*	1928 *11.1* *6.5*	17333 *18.6*
Rural Areas	6	338 *1.2* *2.0*	123 *0.4* *2.5*	229 *0.8* *4.0*	647 *2.3* *3.5*	1611 *5.7* *9.2*	25548 *89.7* *85.8*	28496 *30.6*
Column Total		**16640** *17.8*	**5013** *5.4*	**5768** *6.2*	**18608** *20.0*	**17426** *18.7*	**29773** *31.9*	**93227** *100.0*

rarely reported effect (see Hooimeijer et al. 1986 for an exception).

Also the effect of living environment showed up clearly in the analyses. Rather than analysing interregional migration as such, one should look at the spatial distribution of housing and recreational amenities to arrive at an explanation of migration flows of the elderly.

The geographical distribution of migration by the elderly

The strong push effect of living in the larger cities on elderly migration leads to the expectation that if the living environment rather than administrative regions are chosen as the geographical unit of analysis a more clear picture of the redistributive effects of elderly migration can be isolated. To see whether this is true, we took the six types of municipalities used in the logistic regression as a starting point for the analyses of the flows. The general hypotheses is that moves by the elderly to the less urbanized part of the country occur less because of the intervening opportunities available at shorter distance, leading to partial (retaining social contacts, visits to theaters and favourite restaurants, etc.) rather than total displacement. If this is true the flows of elderly from the larger cities would be directed much more to the growth centers and suburban communities within the Randstad, than towards the rural areas in the North, East and South of the Netherlands. This hypothesis is tested in table 8.

The row percentages in this table depict the destination of the migrants. The first conclusion with respect to the migration from the larger cities is that no less than 72% do not leave the city at all, but adjust their housing consumption within the city limits. The growth centers and the suburbs indeed seem to function as a intervening opportunity. Together these environment are five times as popular as the rural areas outside the

Randstad. It is striking that the relatively new growth centers do not cater for the (limited) numbers of elderly that leave the medium sized cities in the Randstad.
From the growth centers the most favoured destinations are the suburban municipalities. But the most striking phenomenon is the high percentages moving to the larger cities. A comparable flow exists from the suburb to the city. Some evidence exists that this is return migration by people having moved out of the city at an earlier stage in life and returning there when they grow older. The basic mechanism is the same as in all return migration, people returning to the place of previous residence. It is the direction which is quite distinct from the usual pattern of return migration in other countries. It has become quite clear from this table that elderly migration does play a role in the redistribution of the elderly over the various living environments within the Randstad as was hypothesized. The effects on the redistribution between the Randstad as a whole and the rest of the country on the other hand are negligible.

CONCLUSION

Despite the often contradictory evidence from various countries a pattern exists in migration of the elderly that is probably "universal" at least for the developed countries. Existing research, in particular from a developmental perspective has overstated the importance of age differentials instead of concentrating on the processes that produce these differentials. These processes can be the same in many countries, but may produce different outcomes in behaviour due to effects of the national contexts. To some extent the same holds for the explanation of the geographical distribution of elderly migration. The prominent examples of retirement migration in the US, Britain and France have led many researchers to believe that elderly migration is interregional by definition, rather than concentrating on the distribution of housing and recreational amenities and medical and care facilities. These distributions are basic to the understanding of the spatial mechanisms that direct the flows.
The life course perspective is the most promising avenue to arrive at a deeper understanding of elderly migration. It encompasses not only the changes in human life that accompany the ageing process at the micro-level, but also the effects of previous experiences and the effects of states and events in parallel careers with respect to labour, household change etc. that show up as important socio-economic en demographic covariates directing migration propensity and migration destination. Concentrating on life course and cohort experience both temporally and spatially can not only contribute to a better understanding of the behaviour of today's elderly, but may also give rise to plausible hypotheses with respect to the behaviour of tomorrow's old.

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