Background Research on Population Mobility

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Background Research on Population Mobility

- Research brief
- Issues of definition and measurement
- What previous research suggests
- Main sources for measuring residential mobility
- What these indicate about migration turnover
- Other evidence
- A personal view on defining churn for policy
- Where next?

Research brief

- Carry out background research on the main data sources to identify different definitions of mobility and key questions that are being asked (section 2.2, first bullet)

- Address a set of questions identified by URBACT's initial review of existing research and by the Steering Committee's discussion of the anecdotal evidence (section 2.1)

- Advise on the viability and contents of a questionnaire designed to test definitions and research frameworks (section 2.2, second bullet)

Main emphasis in this paper is on the first two

Issues of definition and measurement

1) How should mobility, and especially 'churn', be defined? Should it be in terms of the number of moves made in a specific period of time? Should all moves be counted, including within-area and long-distance?

2) Should 'churn' be identified in terms of the overall rate of turnover for an area, or in terms of a specific population subgroup? If the former, should one allow for the social make-up of an area?

3) Is the central issue the scale of turnover or the nature of the people involved?

What previous research suggests - 1 Circulation in a post-industrial society

- Shift from 'migration' towards 'circulation', as society goes through the 'mobility transition' (paralleling the 'demographic transition')
- 'Post-industrial' society is seen as very mobile:
  - 'daily' movement for work, shop, recreation etc
  - 'frequent movers', 'chronic migrants', 'vagrants'
  - temporary/seasonal movement: 'visitors'?
  - dual-location household/ secondary home
- Concept of 'usual residence' is becoming more problematic (who treats Westminster as home?)

What previous research suggests - 2 'Laws of migration behaviour' including

- Most moves take place over short distances and are motivated by housing and household change
- Medium-distance moves are usually motivated by environment, long-distance moves by work
- Most moves take place between areas that are similar, but net migration is from 'bad' to 'good'
- Gross out-migration is higher from dynamic growth areas, lower from declining areas
- People have a higher chance of migrating if they have moved once already

What previous research suggests - 3 From '(family) life cycle' to 'life course'

- Key to migration behaviour is life stage, but more complex than 'family life cycle' because:

    - young adults leaving home before marriage

    - later marriage and more divorce

    - more cohabitation and separation

    - people living longer and not with children

- Life-course approach also recognises that different people live through different conditions:

    - geographical environments, e.g. urban, rural

    - temporal circumstances, e.g. boom, recession

What previous research suggests - 4
Life-course transitions linked to migration

Transition	Age	Distance	Frequency?
Leaving parent's home	16-22	All	1+ in year
Sexual union	20-25	Short	0.3 per year
Career position	23-30	Many long	0.2 per year
First child	23-30	Short/med	0.5 in year
Mid-career promotion or inheritance	30-55	Many long	0.1 per year
Divorce	27-50	Short	0.1 per year
Cohabitation / second marriage	27-50	All	0.1 per year
Retirement	55-68	Many long	0.3 in year
Bereavement or income collapse	70+	Short/return	0.5 in year
Frailty or chronic illness	75+	Short	0.8 in year

What previous research suggests - 5 Geographical patterns within life course

- Leaving parent's home: to low-cost, short tenancy in inner urban area (often in different region if for higher education or career job)

- Sexual union/cohabitation: to low-medium cost, medium-length tenancy or purchased home, also in inner area or older suburb

- First child to continuing couple: to family-size house, often in newer suburban area

- Divorce/separation: split household, staying in locality, lone-parent family into social housing

- Retirement and beyond: to retirement area, then defensive move (back) to more accessible area

What previous research suggests - 6 A circular pattern of regional migration

- 'Escalator region' (ER) effect of younger adults moving into an area with good promotion prospects (including international immigrants as well as domestic migration)

- 'Counterurbanization cascade' (CC) of family-age and older people moving towards and into more 'rural' types of locality: city to large town to small town to countryside

- Within UK, London is by far the most important pivot around which these flows occur, with its more central areas gaining from the ER effect and with CC of people moving out from there and progressively further afield

What previous research suggests - 7 Expectations for a typical London Borough

- Each LB is only a small component of a much larger city (indeed the 'real London' extends well beyond the GLA boundary), so low migration self-containment is expected.

- London (more so for Inner LBs but increasingly for Outer) is a 'migration hinge', each part receiving large numbers of in-migrants from rest of UK and overseas and channelling them to other places.

- It contains many transients and people with usual addresses not in London, including high-paid professionals; but also large numbers of low-paid (including BMEs) with low long-distance mobility but often quite high local turnover.

Main data sources for measuring residential mobility - 1

- Survey of migration data sources (Bulusu, 1992) concluded that only Census and NHS Central Register provided adequate basis for estimating turnover and internal migration flows
- Census question on 'usual residence one year ago' – captures only one move in year, now includes moves of students (didn't before 2001), problems of data quality
- NHSCR for moves between FHSAs, and now Patient Register for moves between LAs – fuller coverage of longer-distance moves than Census but will be at its weakest for short-distance and frequent movers

Main data sources for measuring residential mobility - 2

- Several official surveys ask about mobility: Labour Force Survey, General Household Survey, Survey of English Housing – based on address one year ago (like Census)

- Longitudinal cohort & panel studies (e.g. NCDS, BHPS) record housing histories, e.g. retrospective questions on change of usual address and length of residence at current and previous address.

- BUT these sample surveys are too small to provide reliable data on turnover for local areas, and suffer bias owing to differential response

- Some administrative sources record turnover, but only for sections of the population, e.g. CORE for Housing Association lettings (but not exits)

What the 2001 Census indicates about migration turnover - 1

Districts with highest and lowest % of migrant residents, 2001
(GB=12.1%)

Rank	Highest	%	Rank	Lowest	%
1	Oxford	25.6	408	East Dunbartonshire	7.3
2	Cambridge	24.9	407	Havering	7.7
3	City of London	23.0	406	East Renfrewshire	7.9
4	Westminster	22.9	405	Knowsley	8.0
5	Wandsworth	21.0	404	Rochford	8.0
6	Camden	20.6	403	North East Derbyshire	8.0
7	Hammersmith and Fulham	20.1	402	Dudley	8.0
8	Richmondshire	19.7	401	South Staffordshire	8.1
9	Kensington and Chelsea	19.4	400	Castle Point	8.1
10	Manchester	19.3	399	Ellesmere Port and Neston	8.1

What the 2001 Census indicates about migration turnover - 2

Districts with highest and lowest % of within-district migrants, 2000-01 (GB=6.5%)

Rank	Highest	%	Rank	Lowest	%
1	Oxford	11.5	408	City of London	2.2
2	Southampton UA	10.8	407	South Bucks	2.4
3	Lancaster	10.5	406	Three Rivers	2.9
4	Edinburgh, City of	10.1	405	Oadby and Wigston	3.1
5	Ceredigion	10.1	404	South Staffordshire	3.2
6	Cambridge	10.0	403	Rochford	3.4
7	Exeter	10.0	402	Epsom and Ewell	3.4
8	Manchester	9.9	401	East Renfrewshire	3.4
9	Nottingham UA	9.8	400	Blaby	3.4
10	Dundee City	9.5	399	Chiltern	3.5

What the 2001 Census indicates about migration turnover – 3

Migration rate, 2000-2001, by age group, %

Age group	England	London
All ages	*12.2*	*14.2*
0-15	11.8	10.4
16-19	17.2	14.8
20-24	36.1	38.6
25-29	27.9	34.0
30-44	13.4	14.8
45-59	5.7	5.6
60-74	3.9	3.3
75+	5.0	4.0

What the 2001 Census indicates about migration turnover – 4

Migration rate, by personal characteristic, %

Selected personal characteristics	England & Wales	London
all persons	*12.2*	*14.2*
non-pensionable not in a family	27.9	29.1
dependent child in lone parent family	15.2	11.4
living in communal establishment	46.0	50.8
unemployed	19.8	18.4
economically inactive student	30.2	26.7
other inactive (**not** retired, sick, looking after home)	17.9	18.3

What the 2001 Census indicates about migration turnover - 5

Migration rate, by household characteristic, %

Selected household characteristics	England & Wales	London
all households	*13.8*	*17.1*
privately renting	41.9	44.7
renting from council	12.2	11.1
shared ownership	12.6	18.2
lone parent with dependent child	17.3	13.8
one person non-pensioner	18.6	17.0
other HH (not one person, couple, lone parent)	39.6	44.7
all student HH	88.5	79.7

Other evidence - 1

- 2001 Census, 'No usual address one year ago': 456,672 migrants in Great Britain in 2001 census = 0.8% 2001 population, 6.6% 2000-01 migrants (not asked about no-usual-address on census night)

- 2003 SEH, 41% of people in private-rented sector were living at a different address one year ago

- 1999 MORI survey of 12 low-demand areas: 18% at this address for less than 12 months (cf 11% for England) – private renters 58%, RSL renters 23%; also, 3+ moves in last 2 years: PR 20%, LA 18%, RSL 9%

Other evidence - 2

- MORI survey of deprived urban areas 2002, up to 61% wanted to leave their present address (though fewer expected to do so within next 2 years). For all surveyed areas, 45% wanted or intended to move in next 2 years

- 'Frequent moving: looking for love?' by Keith Richardson & Peter Corbishley (JRF, 1999)

- 'Keeping track: mapping and tracking vulnerable young people' (Anne Green, Malcolm Maguire & Angela Canny, 2001)

A personal view on defining churn - 1

- What to make of all this evidence?
- First, official migration data sources make clear that some areas, and particular sections of the population, are affected by substantial churn.
- But it is not clear to what extent this is an undercount of real churn. The 'address one year ago question', even if answered correctly by all, cannot pick up all moves.
- At the same time, where to draw the line between changes of 'usual address' and 'vagrant' (or someone 'with no fixed abode')?
- And what is relevant in terms of LA activities?

A personal view on defining churn - 2

- Taking a view from basic statistics on migration …
- Most data is based on the % of residents that are new to their address since 12 months ago. On this basis, an area of churn would have to be defined on the basis of a threshold % - some multiple of the norm of 10-12% (depending on year), e.g. x2 = 20-24%, x3 = 30-36%?
- Some data is also available on length of residence, i.e. in addition to '12 months', e.g. % living at present address for 5+ years – SEH 1996/97 put this at 64% of households (NB.- not the same as individual persons).

A personal view on defining churn - 3

- But how relevant for LA purposes is it to define churn in terms of 'overall turnover' for an area? Surely the impact on LA activities varies according to type of people churning and spatial patterning?
- Students, for instance, are probably the most easily recognisable group of high churners (88% student households contain 1-yr migrants, says Census). But how far is the student population a concern for LA activities?
- Which are the really key population sub-groups whose turnover should be monitored – and targeted with the aim of reducing it?

A personal view on defining churn - 4

- Then there is the question of type and distance of move. What is really important?
- For LA purposes, presumably a key criterion is whether a move crosses the LA boundary or not.
- For the Council Tax Office, any change of address (including within the same street or apartment block) is significant; and for a Housing Department, any move involving the Council's housing.
- But many movers will not change particular 'service areas' e.g. school districts. And how 'local' is a move that does not threaten community cohesion?

A personal view on defining churn - 5

- And finally the question of what sort of 'stability' is to be aimed for?

- In general, HIGH turnover equates with instability. But this is true mainly in relation to lack of community-level ties and the extra work of keeping up with the changing set of individuals

- LOW turnover can also be a source of instability for LA service provision, at least in the long term. Consider the New Towns of the 1950s: these once had huge demand for school places, but now the need is for elderly persons' services.

- As a corollary, some Inner City areas have been performing the same 'staging post' role for decades

Where next?

- At this stage, more questions than answers! Next step is to discover more about what churn means for LAs in short- and longer-term, and which types of churn matter for which activities.

- Then the existing data sources can be further interrogated, including 2001 Census Special Migration Statistics (showing origin and destination areas of all changes of address)

- Meanwhile, search for more concrete evidence on the extent of 'chronic migration' – through sources that track individuals?