Introduction

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Abstract

In this Introduction, the editors of the volume present its structure and address the theoretical background to the book. After defining the role of mobility in contemporary societies, this Introduction outlines the relationship between transport poverty and social exclusion. The authors demand a better definition and terminology of the subject, claiming that “mobility” poverty addresses the concepts better and in a sounder way. Finally, the Introduction calls for a closer cooperation between the different actors, with a stronger focus on the users of transport.

Recent crises

Recent crises – whether they are at global, regional or local level – demonstrate that *immobilities* are at the core of many conflicts. The ongoing global refugee crisis is a constant exercising of the right and ability to move and a demonstration of power to prevent and interrupt such movement. Conflicts over the ability to move can also inflame tensions about larger social, economic and political divides within societies. Questions of mobility seem to steer new and often surprising collaborations among those who consider themselves marginalised and excluded from dominant development discourses, such as the *gilets jaunes* protests in France or the contentious ban on diesel cars in inner cities of Germany. Such struggles do not always employ clearly “progressive” or “reactionary” narratives to make sense of this exclusion, or to envision ways out. Rather, they can be interpreted as a collective or individual reaction to an increasingly hypermobile world where seamless movement seems to be possible for everyone – except for oneself (or one’s peers). Such exclusions can be traced back to divisions of class, gender, race, (dis)ability, age and geographical location. However, recent insurgencies are hardly only along these lines. An individual or collective ability to move – or more precisely the potential to individually or collectively decide whether, when and how to move or to stay put – is the result of a combination of different privileges and forms of capital that are put into action in various ways in such decision-making. Conversely, many

different forms and processes of discrimination, marginalisation, exclusion and invisibility result in the inability to decide over one's movement or in forced or compelled im/mobility.

Despite pointing out above the contentious nature of mobilities on all scales, this volume has a much more modest scope. It does not analyse the flows and frictions of goods and people on a global scale, nor does it deal with access and control to certain spaces as the "right to the city" entails. This volume is largely about the everyday mobility of people, a field that is usually investigated in transport studies. In everyday mobility, underlying structural disadvantages and privileges are often less obvious and visible in comparison to the immediate deficiencies of transport systems. Such underlying structural disadvantages often appear in very subtle and qualitative ways: locally and temporarily, they take effect in different forms that may obfuscate common roots. Hence, in this volume we will investigate forms of structural disadvantage identified in mobility studies and adapt them more thoroughly to analyse the challenges of everyday mobilities. Therefore, we put forward the concept of *mobility poverty*. This investigation will not be – and can never be – detached from an analysis of systemic privilege, both in a historical and contemporary perspective. The recent COVID-19 crisis shows that the relationship between privilege and bodily movement is currently being recalibrated. Those who are usually highly mobile were among the first to stay at home and work remotely. At the same time, they are delegating the work that requires physical movement to the less fortunate workers of the service industry, either those who are self-employed or on short-term contracts. This means that a degree of physical mobility does not alone exhibit privilege and status (any more). In the light of the COVID-19 experience, perhaps whether network capital – as John Urry coined it – still requires co-presence may also be questioned again. It is the decision about whether, when and how to move and not to move that constitutes privilege today. These are the questions that have been investigated under the mobilities paradigm and under the umbrella of the "politics of mobility" (see e.g. Cresswell 2010).

In the last ten years, debates around equity and justice in transport provision and accessibility have become more dynamic in academic as well as policy circles (see e.g. Currie 2010; Delbosc and Currie 2011; Martens 2012; Martens, Di Ciommo, and Papanikolaou 2014; Martens 2017; Pereira, Schwanen, and Banister 2017). Highlighting the need for a broader conceptualisation under the mobilities paradigm, the concept of mobility justice has gained attention recently (Cook and Butz 2018; Sheller 2018; see also Chapter 1 of this volume). Therefore, there is an urgent need to focus on the spatial and social conditions of mobility inequity and injustice. With a fine-grained analysis of the social and spatial conditions, first, we aim to better conceptualise *mobility poverty* beyond *transport poverty*. Second, we aim to bridge the gap between the concept and its real-world application, by highlighting experiences of mobility poverty through case studies from

different European regions. Third, we thereby aim to enhance the expertise of decision-makers and practitioners by offering lessons learnt and recommendations.

Understanding the significance of uneven mobilities

Studying mobilities is not about movements and flows alone. Mimi Sheller summarises the relationship between mobility and immobility very poignantly:

In contrast to [...] illusions of clean, quick, ethereal mobility, actual mobilities are full of friction, viscosity, stoppages, and power relations. We need to understand not only what is constituted as mobile, or potentially mobile, and what is not, but also where, when, and how there are resistances to that power, or counter-movements against it. Mobilities are always contingent, contested, and performative. Mobilities are never free but are in various ways always channeled, tracked, controlled, governed, under surveillance and unequal—striated by gender, race, ethnicity, class, caste, color, nationality, age, sexuality, disability, etc., *which are all in fact experienced as effects of uneven mobilities.*

(Sheller 2018, 10, emphasis in original)

Ever since the foundational text of the *new mobilities paradigm* (Hannam, Sheller and Urry 2006), uneven mobilities have been a key topic in mobility studies. Such studies have been heavily influenced by geographers and anthropologists who put forward that the production and creation of spaces, places and communities are processes of establishing links and connections in the form of the movement of bodies, commodities and information. An early influential example is the theory of the social production of space, where Henri Lefebvre points out the significance of networks, flows, connections and linkages in the spatial production process. Space is constituted by networks and it is modified and transformed by networks (Lefebvre 1991, 345–347). When he describes his understanding of spatial practice, he highlights that the relationship between *separation* – e.g. places of residence, work and leisure that are set apart – and *linkages* – e.g. transport infrastructure – is characteristic of the production of space and everyday life, a relationship that is infused with power and hence of a political nature:

[Spatial practice] embodies a close association [...] between daily reality (daily routine) – and urban reality (the routes and networks which link up the places set aside for work, ‘private life’ and leisure). This association is paradoxical, because it induces the most extreme separation between the places it links together. ‘Modern’ spatial practice might thus be defined by the daily life of a tenant in a government-subsidized

high-rise housing project. Which could not to be taken to mean that motorways or the politics of air transport can be left out of the picture. (Lefebvre 1991, 38)

Also drawing on a relational understanding of space and place, Doreen Massey highlighted that differentiated mobility is a source of power and control:

Mobility, and control over mobility, both reflects and reinforces power. It is not simply a question of unequal distribution, that some people move more than others, and that some have more control than others. It is that the mobility and control of some groups can actively weaken other people. Differential mobility can weaken the leverage of the already weak. The time-space compression of some groups can undermine the power of others.

(Massey 1994, 150)

Especially in the phase of global economic restructuring after 1990, the analysis of networks, flows and linkages – and their disruptions, exclusions and disconnections respectively – became central to understanding the differentiated and unequal outcomes of globalisation. Manuel Castells famously identified two different logics: the *space of flows* – means that the “material arrangements allow simultaneity of social practices without territorial contiguity” – and the *space of place* – understood as a “locale whose form, function, and meaning are self-contained within the boundaries of territorial contiguity” (Castells 1999, 295–296). He argued that:

[...] [T]he constitution of the space of flows [is] in itself a form of domination, since the space of flows, even in its diversity, is interrelated and can escape the control of any locale, while the space of places is fragmented, localized, and thus increasingly powerless vis a vis the versatility of the space of flows. The only chance of resistance for localities is to refuse landing rights for overwhelming flows – only to see that they land in the locale nearby, therefore inducing the bypassing and marginalization of rebellious communities.

(Castells 1999, 297)

Anthropology and geography fertilised each other by highlighting the importance of im/mobilities for a relational understanding of place and community. Considering spatial hierarchies and spatial (dis)connections in social and cultural analysis opened up rich pathways for a better understanding of cultures and societies, an understanding that is sensitive to the questions of power and hegemony. Gupta and Ferguson pointed out: “If one begins with the premise that spaces have always been hierarchically interconnected, instead of naturally disconnected, then cultural

and social change becomes not a matter of cultural contact and articulation but one of rethinking difference through connection” (Gupta and Ferguson 1992, 8).

Im/mobilities and disconnections have also been the focus of attention of those who recognised the differentiated effects of infrastructures. Acknowledging the channelling effects of infrastructures, it becomes clear that elements that are physically close are not necessarily connected to each other, while, conversely, elements that are physically distant can indeed be connected. To illustrate this point, Bruno Latour states: “an Alaskan reindeer might be ten meters away from another one and they might be nevertheless cut off by a pipeline of 800 miles that make their mating for ever impossible” (Latour 1996, 372). Also Susan Leigh Star argues that the notion of universally accessible infrastructure is blurred “when one begins to investigate large-scale technical systems in the making, or to examine the situations of those who are not served by a particular infrastructure. [...] One person’s infrastructure is another’s topic, or difficulty” (Star 1999, 380).

This brief (and incomplete) overview illustrates that investigating the role of im/mobilities and movements and their unequal social consequences has been a topic of many research disciplines for quite a while even before the turn of mobilities. However, before John Urry’s *Sociology Beyond Societies* and Zygmunt Bauman’s *Liquid Modernity*, mobilities themselves were rarely considered a key epistemological concept in themselves, or as Mimi Sheller puts it, the achievement of the new mobilities paradigm is

their radical emphasis on *complex mobilities* of all kinds as the ontological basis for all forms of relational space, and partly their deeper cultural analysis of how these political economic relational spaces were produced in and through social and cultural practices.

(Sheller 2018, 11–12, emphasis in original)

Transport poverty and social exclusion

Partially in parallel with, but also in contrast to, advances in social sciences around the new mobilities paradigm, academics in transportation research investigate disadvantages regarding access to transport options and problems in accessibility to locations and opportunities (Figure 0.1). This body of work is often subsumed under the term “transport poverty”. Such works have made a substantial contribution by highlighting the reinforcing circle of transport disadvantage, social disadvantage and social exclusion.

Unlike the case of mobilities, the debate around transport poverty was not initially sparked by conceptual and theoretical considerations. Rather, it was fuelled by the necessity for policy-makers and practitioners to deal with the processes of social exclusion, in the light of widening social inequalities in European societies.

Transport Poverty					
Availability No suitable transport option available	Accessibility Transport options do not reach destinations and opportunities	Affordability High cost burden	Time budget Excessive amount of time in travel	Adequacy Travel conditions are dangerous, unsafe or unhealthy for the individual	Exposure to Transport Externalities Unequal distribution of the risks, benefits, and possible harms of transportation (e.g. pollution, noise)

Figure 0.1 Transport poverty.
Source: Authors, based on Lucas et al. 2016.

Transport disadvantage first received closer attention when the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) was implemented in the United Kingdom in 1997 as part of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, providing strategic advice and policy analysis to the UK government. One explicit focus of the SEU was the role of transport and mobility in processes of social exclusion. In its 2003 report, the SEU pointed out that access to transport options – both individual modes of transport and public transport – may be the result of social exclusion and that inadequate transport availability and accessibility of basic services can reinforce social exclusion (Social Exclusion Unit 2003, 1). It highlighted that social disadvantage and unequal access to transport options can result in a downward spiral that traps individuals, households and social groups in a state of immobility (irrespective of living in urban, peri-urban and rural areas). The report highlighted the inter-linkages between social, spatial and transport-related disadvantage as one of the main factors of social exclusion. Another achievement of the study was that it successfully directed attention to the needs of individuals from vulnerable social groups as well as urban and rural spaces characterised by deprivation and neglect (Church, Frost, and Sullivan 2000; Lucas, Grosvenor, and Simpson 2001; Kenyon, Lyons, and Rafferty 2002). The 2003 report was thus a turning point in the awareness of transport-related disadvantage, generating a growing policy and academic interest in transport-related social exclusion. Today, it is acknowledged that approaches to understanding transport disadvantage and social exclusion must depart from an observation of general poverty towards a contextual understanding of an individual’s position within society (Lucas 2012, 106).

The term transport poverty first appeared when it was emphasised in social exclusion literature (Lucas 2004, 1) and became further prominent when it was utilised as a campaigning instrument to shed light on the affordability of car ownership, public transport costs and lack of access to transport (Sus-trans 2012). The term has subsequently been used to conceptually clarify the inter-linkages between transport-related disadvantage, social disadvantage,

(in)accessibility and social exclusion (Lucas 2012, 107; Titheridge et al. 2014, 19–22).

As described above, transport poverty was initially investigated – to a larger extent – in the context of the debate on social exclusion, equality of access to opportunities and transport justice. In 2012, Karen Lucas made an influential attempt to locate transport poverty at the intersection of transport disadvantage and social disadvantage, the consequences leading to inaccessibility and social exclusion:

Transport disadvantage and social disadvantage interact directly and indirectly to cause transport poverty. This in turn leads to inaccessibility to essential goods and services, as well as ‘lock-out’ from planning and decision-making processes, which can result in social exclusion outcomes and further social and transport inequalities will then ensue.
(Lucas 2012, 106)

This statement explains the circular dynamic of production and reinforcement of the experience of disadvantage and social exclusion. This also makes clear that social/transport-related disadvantage and social exclusion are not in a simple causal relationship nor are they synonymous. As Currie and Delbosc point out, when transport disadvantage is explored across high-mobile and low-mobile groups, disadvantage is subjectively estimated very differently (Currie and Delbosc 2010).

The term transport poverty has been continuously employed in more recent years (Velaga et al. 2012, 110; Martens 2013, 24) and is often used interchangeably with other terms, such as ‘accessibility poverty’ or ‘poverty of access’ (Farrington and Farrington 2005, 3; Martens and Bastiaanssen 2014, 6–7), ‘transport disadvantage’ (e.g. Currie et al. 2009, 97–98), ‘transport-related’ or ‘transport-based social exclusion’ (e.g. Preston and Rajé 2007, 152–154; Schwanen et al. 2015, 123–125), ‘social equity’, ‘fairness’ and ‘justice in transport’ (e.g. Martens 2009, 4–6; Jones and Lucas 2012, 9; Sheller 2015, 86) and ‘transport wealth’ (Stokes and Lucas 2011, 4–7). Although these terminologies and the related concepts are defined differently, they also have substantial overlaps and are sometimes based on similar approaches and assumptions. In other words, transport poverty can be approached from different, however, interrelated perspectives (Lucas et al. 2016, 2–4).

In terms of perspectives, transport poverty can be approached from the perspective of *transport affordability*. The term refers to the “financial burden households bear in purchasing transportation services, particularly those required to access basic goods and activities such as healthcare, shopping, school, work and social activities” (Litman 2016, 5). This discourse is largely relevant for industrialised countries, as it centres on ownership of a car as a basic household need. Focusing on affordability to define transport poverty, Gleeson and Randolph (2002, 102) state that “transport poverty occurs when a household is forced to consume more travel costs than

it can reasonably afford, especially costs relating to motor car ownership and usage". Several authors have pointed out that forced car ownership¹ is a form of transport poverty that has been identified in the United Kingdom, United States and Australia (e.g. Currie and Senbergs 2007, 2–3).

Another strand of research on transport poverty focuses on accessibility and *accessibility poverty*. Accessibility considers whether people can reach "key services at reasonable cost, in reasonable time and with reasonable ease" (Social Exclusion Unit 2003, 1) – key services primarily being employment, education, health care and daily supply. Accordingly, Martens and Bastiaanssen (2014, 5) define accessibility poverty in the following way: "Accessibility poverty refers to a situation of low accessibility that severely restricts a person's ability to participate in the activities deemed normal in a particular society".

The concept of transport poverty has been criticised from various angles. Firstly, academic debate still lacks an accurate description of the phenomenon of transport poverty and discussion often focuses on how transport poverty differs from poverty itself and who is affected. Due to many open questions, instruments to measure transport poverty are not sufficiently developed, let alone efficient and effective measures to tackle transport poverty. So far, transport poverty has not been taken up by policy-makers as a stand-alone issue that needs to be addressed. Overall, "transport poverty is an extremely under-explored and poorly articulated problem even within developed countries" (Lucas et al. 2016, 10).

Secondly, transport poverty is often discussed in the context of the endeavour to build inclusive societies. However, how exactly and to what degree transport and mobility-related disadvantages contribute to social exclusion, reduced opportunities and well-being are still insufficiently explored. Such insufficient knowledge can be partially traced back to the weaknesses of the social inclusion/exclusion concept. The concept often lacks clarity with the result that "social inclusion is conceived in many alternative ways, depending upon ideology" (Silver 2015, 3–4). Due to the wide use of the term often without a substantial analytical framework, Kasper et al. (2017, 7) conclude that social inclusion has become one of the many aspirational terms that "tend to lose any precision to their meaning, and come to be good by definition rather than by implication." It is also pointed out that the aim of social inclusion itself can be contested. Schwanen et al. (2015) in an important contribution remind us that social capital (in Pierre Bourdieu's understanding of social capital) has both inclusionary and exclusionary effects. Hence, they argue that "fully appreciating the Janus-faced character [...] helps us understand the dynamics in the interactions between mobility and social exclusion because it both is a medium for social change and can reinforce existing inequalities." Hilary Silver goes a step further when she highlights that the idea of social inclusion is infused with power: "Paradoxically, recognizing and assisting an excluded group in the name of inclusion may simultaneously stigmatize, label, or

include them in ways they did not choose [...]. Inclusion sounds good – but on whose terms?” (Silver 2015, 22).

These criticisms should be taken seriously when transport disadvantages are investigated in order to create inclusive societies. In this sense, it is important to keep in mind that social exclusion is a multi-layered problem that has many causes other than transport-related disadvantages (Currie and Delbosc 2010, 964). Furthermore, as others have also argued, transport disadvantage and transport-related social exclusion are not synonymous with each other: it is possible to be socially excluded but still have good access to transport or to be transport disadvantaged but highly socially included (Currie and Delbosc 2010; Lucas 2012).

Towards mobility poverty

The new mobilities paradigm emphasises mobilities over transportation and clarifies the differences between the two. However, the terms “mobility poverty” and “transport poverty” are sometimes used interchangeably. Unlike the international literature on the topic, the German academic debate more often explicitly differentiates between mobility poverty (*Mobilitätsarmut*) und transport poverty (*Vekehrsarmut*) (Dangschat 2011; Daubitz 2016; Stark 2017; Schwedes et al. 2018). Schwedes et al. (2018, 79) stress the point that it is not only the spatial delimitations that influence mobility behaviour, but also the “mental horizon” and the capacity to plan and shape one’s own life. Mobility is therefore also mental flexibility and agility and the created personal sphere is one’s “space of opportunity”. These arguments, very much related to Vincent Kaufmann’s concept of motility (Kaufmann, Bergman, and Joye 2004), call for an analysis of “mobility poverty” and not “transport poverty”. According to Schwedes et al. (2018), transport poverty focuses too much on the availability of transport options and that, even in the most sophisticated and well-grounded works, the topic is mainly accessed from the perspective of transport provision.

Furthermore, it can be observed that in transport poverty literature, different phenomena of social disadvantage have been explored with unequal attention; while there is substantial empirical evidence on the link between material poverty and transport disadvantage, there is less knowledge about the role of other socio-demographic features that are experienced as disadvantage. This includes gender, disability, old age and young age. There is far less attention on the discrimination that ethnic minorities, migrants and refugees face while being mobile and accessing transport (see e.g. Rajé 2017).

Finally, despite significant progress, the relationship between spatial and temporal organisation in daily life and experienced disadvantage is still insufficiently explored under the umbrella of transport poverty. The challenge of assessing this topic is related to the *relational nature of high mobility and low mobility*: increasing overall mobility levels – and instances of high mobility in certain sections of society – may have the consequence of reduced

mobility and accessibility of those already less mobile in societies. Consequently, “what is necessary for full ‘social’ inclusion varies as the means and modes of mobility change and as the potential for ‘access’ develops” (Cass, Shove, and Urry 2005, 542). The highly contextual and relational nature of mobility disadvantage needs further exploration.

Hence, we turn towards examining *mobility poverty*. Mobility poverty focuses on barriers to people’s ability and potential to move. Unlike the accessibility perspective that aims foremost at examining basic needs, mobility poverty takes into perspective the effects of hypermobility and the development of highly mobile societies. In such a context, due to the power relations involved, especially vulnerable groups experience reduced mobility options and accessibility levels (Massey 1994, 150; Kenyon, Lyons and Rafferty 2002, 210; Cass, Shove and Urry 2005, 542; Hannam, Sheller and Urry 2006, 3). Mobility perspectives take factors at micro-, meso- and macro-level into account, such as status, wealth, prestige and power, and highlight that mobility is fundamentally linked to social, cultural, economic and political processes. Key to the approach is the identification of the *systemic* lack of transportation and mobility options and the *relational* nature of transport problems. This mobility framing is not only sensitive to questions of access, but also to the skills and capabilities of individuals as well as to personal ambitions and differentiated needs. By understanding mobility needs as socially constructed, it explores the gap between unrealised mobility needs and actual travel patterns. The key concept to such an in-depth appraisal of differentiated mobilities is the *motility* approach by Vincent Kaufmann that will be presented in Chapter 1 (Kaufmann, Bergman, and Joye 2004; Flamm and Kaufmann 2006).

Similarly, John Urry directed our attention to the dynamic, ever-changing and complex prerequisites for a meaningful social life. Turning away from the “formal” aspects that are addressed in the accessibility perspective – employment, education, health – to the social relationships of everyday life, he points out that it is actually the link between social relationships and mobility that creates new inequalities. These inequalities imply additional rewards (also in material terms) for some, and new burdens for others. He therefore developed the concept of network capital,

the capacity to engender and sustain social relations with those people [who] are not necessarily proximate and which generates emotional, financial and practical benefit [...]. Network capital [...] produce[s] a distinct stratification order that now sits alongside social class, social status and party.

(Urry 2007, 197)

Such elaborated analyses of mobility disadvantage pose a considerable challenge for investigating the phenomena both on a representative and comparable scale, posing a problem for national and local policy-makers as to how to adequately address the issue.

As one of the first, Lucas et al. (2016) have explicitly outlined *mobility poverty* as one form of how transport poverty can be experienced. Understanding mobility poverty as a sub-phenomenon of transport poverty is reasonable, since the term transport poverty effectively separates the topic of everyday and regular corporeal movement in space from other forms of movement such as migration, which are not the direct focus of transportation researchers.

Similar to Karen Lucas' area of research, this publication also focuses mostly on everyday travel. *However, we propose that transport poverty should rather be understood as one of many forms of how mobility poverty can be experienced.* This shift in analysing mobility-related disadvantages puts mobilities in the context of many other processes and dynamics. Although the international transport debate has made considerable progress in integrating aspects of mobility poverty into the debate of transport poverty, transport academics often hesitate to make explicit the systemic unevenness of mobilities and spaces. This unevenness is however central to a holistic understanding of all kinds of mobilities, as Sheller (2018) highlights. We believe that the consideration of unevenness of mobilities should also inform a more profound analysis of everyday and regular corporeal movement, which is the objective of this volume. Following this understanding, in this volume we consciously make the shift from *transport poverty* to *mobility poverty*.

Mobility poverty is a phenomenon that can appear anywhere and at any point in time. Indeed, mobility poverty – as will be shown – is highly relational and contextual. It is by no means synonymous with material poverty. Although mobility poverty is often linked to material poverty – and other forms of mobility disadvantages may be reinforced by material poverty – mobility poverty can appear in personal conditions of wealth or in economically dynamic regions. Forms of mobility can be most disruptive and, at the same time, the least visible under exactly such circumstances. The following chapters, and especially the experiences from the field (Part IV), will further illuminate this proposition.

Even after making this shift to mobility poverty, the joint objective must be the development of effective and applicable solutions, despite differentiated mobility needs in a complex world. In an ever more complex and growing field, there are many barriers that prevent policy-makers and practitioners from taking positive action because it is difficult to identify the right level and scale of intervention. The actual points of intervention that allow the multidimensional, interrelated and always context-specific challenges to be tackled in efficient and effective ways have not yet been precisely identified. This volume aims to fill this gap.

Selection of the fieldwork study regions and targeted vulnerable groups

The selection of study regions was result of an in-depth analysis of geographical, socio-economic and other negative factors (i.e. deprived, dispersed or

rural peripheral), transport and accessibility problems and running experiences and initiatives. Thereby, it was not only the aim to identify the most deprived or marginalised regions in Europe, or those with lowest accessibility, but rather to **identify a set of case study regions that present a variety of different spatial, social and mobility characteristics that occur in Europe** (Figure 0.2; Table 0.1).

Furthermore, the selection process considered that mobility disadvantage is a multifaceted phenomenon appearing in both beneficial and disadvantaged socio-economic environments. It was taken into account that it is possible that on the very micro-level individuals subjectively experience a form of mobility disadvantage and subsequent social exclusion even with high socio-economic status. Also, it was assumed that perception of disadvantage and marginalisation can even be stronger in dynamic and prosperous regions characterised by high mobility levels. Hence, the selection process followed the understanding that socio-economic disadvantage (most importantly absolute/relative poverty) is only one of the indicators for mobility poverty. Consequently, mobility poverty on the micro-level was also analysed in comparatively better-off regions.

Through such a variety, it is possible to relate – cautiously – to similar cases and situations in other parts of Europe, and by theoretical inference draw general conclusions while being sensitive to the local context. Thus, while the case studies do not claim representativeness for the respective countries, the particular European region or the European Union as a whole, the study methodology nevertheless allows developing a better picture of mobility poverty in Europe.

Figure 0.2 Fieldwork study regions.

Source: HiReach Project.

Table 0.1 Fieldwork study regions with spatial layers and vulnerable groups addressed

COUNTRY	AREA	GEO LAYER	SOCIAL LAYER						
			CHILDREN	ELDERLY PEOPLE	PEOPLE WITH REDUCED MOBILITY	WOMEN	MIGRANTS AND ETHNIC MINORITIES	LOW INCOME AND UNEMPLOYED	POPULATION LIVING IN REMOTE RURAL AND DEPRIVED AREAS
Germany	Counties of Esslingen and Goppingen	Peri-urban with mixed rural and urban		●		●	●		
Greece	Naxos and Small Cyclades	Remote rural	●		●				●
Italy	Inner Area Southern Salento	Remote peri-urban		●	●	●			●
Luxemb.	North and south-east Luxembourg	Peri-urban and rural				●	●		●
Portugal	Guarda	Urban and remote rural		●				●	●
Romania	Buzau	Urban/Sub-urban	●	●	●			●	●

Main target

Secondary target

Source: HiReach Project.

Study regions have been assessed according to the following criteria:

- 1 **Targeted vulnerable social groups:** presence and opportunities to involve and mix mobility needs of different user groups, namely:
 - Low income and unemployed people
 - Elderly people
 - People with reduced mobility
 - Women
 - Migrants and ethnic minorities
 - Children and young people
 - People living in remote, rural or deprived urban areas.
- 2 **Assessment of socio-demographic negative factors:** e.g. poverty indicators (absolute/relative), GDP per capita, purchasing power, unemployment rate, ageing ration, education levels, access to health services, access to goods and services, housing, gender imbalances.
- 3 **Targeted geographical characteristics:** rural, peri-urban, urban.
- 4 **Assessment of geographical negative factors:** remote areas, dispersed and/or scattered settlement structure, topography.
- 5 **Characteristics of the transport and mobility system:** modal split, motorisation, road network, public transport coverage, service levels of public transport, accessibility and barrier-free design of public transport.

- 6 **Ongoing initiatives:** volunteer services, sharing/peer-to-peer models, integrated mobility platforms, public/private DRT services.
- 7 **Key stakeholders:** groups, associations, NGOs, local experts or public/private transport operators.
- 8 **Other aspects:** information on beneficial or unfavourable aspects, for example, start-ups being active in the field, social innovation initiatives.

Fieldwork methodology

During desk research on mobility poverty, knowledge gaps and additional topics were identified that were taken up and explored more deeply during the fieldwork phase. Furthermore, findings from desk research needed to be verified and contextualised in the field. Hence, six study regions were identified at the beginning of the HiReach project, as outlined above. In these study regions, research with experts and members of different social groups was conducted, in order to arrive at an in-depth understanding of mobility and accessibility problems experienced in different countries at urban, peri-urban and rural level. The fieldwork methodology relied on interviews with experts and on focus group discussions with members of different social groups and stakeholders.

In a first step, in each study region, **interviews were conducted with representatives of local authorities, transport operators, non-governmental organisations and interest groups** (e.g. representing persons with disabilities, unemployed persons, children, elderly, migrants, women and other vulnerable to exclusion citizens). These interviews had the objective to identify social as well as mobility-related disadvantages in each local study region.

The second step was the conduction of **focus group sessions with members of social groups**, to further validate and explore their mobility and accessibility challenges. The focus group sessions took place in two rounds, in summer to autumn 2018 and summer 2019. The first round in 2018 focussed on identifying challenges and problems with personal mobility. In 2018, two focus groups sessions per targeted social group in each of the study regions were conducted, which means four focus group sessions per study region. The second round in 2019 aimed at identifying and developing solutions. Two focus group sessions in each study region were conducted in 2019. In many cases, the second round of focus group was conducted in the same municipality, in collaboration with the same local organisation. Also, in some cases, participants from the 2018 sessions joined again in 2019, which was ideal to discuss a possible pathway from identifying challenges to preparing solutions.

In each focus group session, between 6 and 12 persons participated. A gender balance was aimed at in these sessions, however not always achieved. In some cases, it was deemed beneficial to conduct separated sessions for men and women, in order to be able to identify needs of women more thoroughly. This was, for example, the case for the focus group sessions with

refugees in Esslingen/Germany. The focus group sessions allowed us to discuss the previously identified problems from different, sometimes surprising perspectives with the participants. Apart from verifying existing knowledge, new issues were raised or linkages to other aspects of everyday life were drawn that the researchers did not imagine earlier.

The focus groups were conducted in close collaboration with local NGOs, authorities and advocacy groups. Participants were recruited via the channels of these organisations. Participation in the focus group session was incentivised by shopping vouchers, and all expenses for transport were refunded to the participants. Child care was provided for children of participants where necessary.

Research activities with members of different social groups were conducted according to the European and national legislation in force concerning research ethics and vulnerable groups of citizens and the requirements for informed consent. Special attention had to be given to preventing the risk of enhancing vulnerability and stigmatisation of individuals, especially for the most vulnerable groups. In this respect, involvement of children, migrants and refugees had to be treated with utmost caution. An ethics board supervised data collection, focus group methodology and involvement of the target groups.

Structure of the volume

This book is divided into four parts, organised around four thematic areas:

Part I focuses on social skills and individual aptitudes on the one hand and mobility justice on the other. This part devotes three chapters to the social arrangement of mobility, switching between the social and individual levels. Chapter 1 is devoted to “Learning Mobility” while Chapter 2 deals with “Unequal mobilities, network capital and mobility justice”. Chapter 3 ends this section by dealing with “The impact of life events on travel behaviour”.

Part II deals with spatial elements of mobility poverty. Chapter 4 (“The spatial dimension of mobility poverty”) offers initial insights into spatial systems in Europe and their effects on mobility disadvantage, while Chapter 5 addresses “The urban arena” and Chapter 6 “the rural arena”. Together, the three chapters aim to define the characteristics of the urban, peri-urban and rural areas and how spatial contexts shape mobility poverty.

Part III tackles the societal roots and impacts of mobility poverty. The social component of mobility poverty is addressed analysing, for each of the six chapters forming this part, different vulnerable groups, for example: Chapter 7, “Women and gender-related aspects”; Chapter 8, “People on low income and unemployed persons”; Chapter 9, “Impacts on mobility in an ageing Europe”; Chapter 10, “The predicaments of European disabled people”; Chapter 11, “Migrants, ethnic minorities and mobility poverty”; and Chapter 12, “Children and young people”.

Part IV covers the results of the theoretical enquiry to the field. In this final part, the investigation of six case studies as carried out in Portugal (Chapter 13), Italy (Chapter 14), Greece (Chapter 15), Romania (Chapter 16), Germany (Chapter 17) and Luxembourg (Chapter 18) is offered to the reader, including the outcomes of the focus groups and users' engagement. The conclusion ends this volume.

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Note

- 1 The low income of households, the need for travel in everyday life and the lack of alternatives to the car in the form of public transport are central to the concept of forced car ownership. In such a context, expenditure on a car is seen as essential and unavoidable in the household concerned. Hence, there is an incidence of high car ownership, but at high cost to low income groups (see Currie and Senbergs 2007, 2).

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