

Mobility and Territorial Belonging

Per Gustafson

Uppsala University

Much existing research assumes that there is an opposition between mobility and territorial belonging, so that mobile persons tend to have a weak sense of belonging whereas persons with a strong sense of belonging are less willing than others to move. Some studies, however, suggest that mobility may coexist with or even reinforce territorial belonging. This article uses Swedish survey data to introduce two important qualifications to this discussion. First, it shows that different kinds of mobility—daily commuting, long-distance travel, residential mobility, and international migration—are differently related to people's sense of belonging. Second, by examining local, regional, national, and European belonging, it shows that the relationship between mobility and belonging is to some extent a matter of territorial scale.

Keywords: *mobility; travel; migration; territorial belonging; place attachment*

Human mobility in various forms is attracting increasing attention from social scientists. At least in Western countries, many inhabitants are dependent on transport and travel in their everyday life, long-distance journeys for business and tourism are becoming more and more common, and international migration is an important political issue in many countries. Processes of globalization together with an increasing awareness of such processes further highlight the importance of different forms of mobility, and several theorists argue that practices and representations of mobility are crucial for understanding contemporary societies (Cresswell, 2006; Sheller & Urry, 2006; Urry, 2000).

One set of questions in these discussions concerns the relationship between mobility and people's territorial belonging. Does extensive mobility

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produce uprootedness and loss of meaningful places, or can mobile persons maintain a sense of territorial belonging? Or do territorial bonds acquire a particular significance for mobile persons precisely because of their mobility? Or perhaps mobility in itself produces a sense of territorial belonging? These are important questions, as several studies indicate that territorial belonging is associated with personal well-being, involvement in community life, and social solidarity more generally (Hay, 1998; Lewicka, 2005; Putnam, 2000). As Kaufmann (2002, pp. 11-17) points out, however, academic discussions about the individual and societal implications of mobility have often been theoretical and at times quite speculative, and there is a lack of systematic empirical research in this field.

The starting point for this article is the assumption that when examining the relationship between mobility and belonging, some qualifications are important (Gustafson, 2001a, pp. 680-681). First, human mobility may take many different forms with regard to, for example, frequency, distance, and duration (Bell & Ward, 2000), and different forms of mobility may have different implications for people's sense of territorial belonging. Second, territorial belonging may occur at different spatial levels (Gubert, 1999; Laczko, 2005)—neighborhoods, cities, regions, countries, and possibly even supranational territorial entities—and belonging on different territorial levels may be affected in different ways by various forms of mobility. The purpose of this article, therefore, is to explore empirically to what extent different forms of mobility are associated with a sense of belonging—or a lack thereof—on different territorial levels. Survey data from Sweden gathered in conjunction with the national labor force survey are used.

Mobility and Belonging

It is a fairly common assumption that mobile persons are less likely than others to develop or maintain a strong sense of territorial belonging and, conversely, that people with strong territorial bonds are less willing to move (Bauman, 1998; Fried, 2000; Fuhrer, Kaiser, & Hartig, 1993; Laczko, 2005). However, a number of studies suggest that mobility and belonging are not necessarily mutually exclusive and that mobile persons too may have strong territorial bonds (Feldman, 1990; Pollini, 2005; Savage, Bagnall, & Longhurst, 2005). A study by van der Land (1998) goes even further, suggesting that "mobility might in fact be conducive to forming ties with a place" (p. 133). This section provides a review of some arguments along these lines, considering that both belonging and mobility are broad

concepts—there are different forms of belonging and different forms of mobility, and this diversity needs to be taken into account.

To begin with, territorial belonging is a complex phenomenon. Pollini (2005) suggests that it involves social, cultural, mental, and ecological dimensions, and the psychological literature discusses different aspects of territorial belonging in terms of, for example, place identity (Proshansky, Fabian, & Kaminoff, 1983), place attachment (Altman & Low, 1992), and sense of place (Hay, 1998). In the present study, no attempt has been made to distinguish between such different dimensions or aspects. The starting point for the analysis is a set of survey questions about the sense of belonging in general. The complexity that is considered, though, is that places and territories of various spatial scales may matter to people for different reasons, and that the factors that promote territorial belonging may therefore differ (Gustafson, 2001b; Pollini, 2005). Neighborhoods, villages, cities, regions, nations, and larger entities may all give rise to a sense of belonging, partly because of direct personal experiences and partly because of mediated experiences, socially and culturally ascribed meanings, and so forth (Anderson, 1991; Gubert, 1999; Proshansky et al., 1983). It therefore seems pertinent to investigate people's sense of belonging on different territorial levels and to examine to what extent such belonging is associated with human mobility.

Mobility in turn may involve international migration, residential mobility, travel, daily mobility, and so forth (Bell & Ward, 2000; Kaufmann, 2002, pp. 40-43). Such different forms of mobility may have different meanings and implications for those who move, for example when it comes to their territorial belonging. Some different forms of mobility and their possible relationship(s) with belonging on different territorial levels are discussed in the following, although the space available here does not permit an exhaustive review of existing literature. The section ends with some considerations about sociodemographic factors that may be related to both mobility and belonging.

Commuting and Territorial Belonging

Many people travel some distance to and from work every day. This may seem a banal and unimportant form of mobility, yet several studies suggest that it may have an influence on the travelers' local belonging, mainly because it restricts the time that can be spent at the home place and thus limits the opportunities for local social interaction. Putnam finds that commuting time has a clear and strong negative influence on local involvement

in a number of respects: "The car and the commute . . . are demonstratively bad for community life" (2000, p. 213). Arguments along the same line are also put forward by Cass, Shove, and Urry (2005, p. 542) and Whitelegg (1997, p. 60). Yet there may also be mechanisms that work in the opposite direction. Lewicka (2005, p. 382) claims, with reference to a Polish study, that commuting to work a certain distance away from one's hometown may in fact increase one's attachment to the hometown. In a more general argument based on a qualitative study about the dialectical experience of at home and away, Case (1996) suggests that short- as well as long-distance journeys away may reinforce positive feelings about the home place.

Long-Distance Travel and Territorial Belonging

Long-distance travel is often presumed to influence the attitudes, orientations, and identities of those who travel, as it provides experiences, knowledge, and social contacts that are more geographically dispersed than for immobile persons (Gustafson, 2007; Hannerz, 1990; Lassen, 2006). Frequent international travel in particular is according to several writers associated with orientations and lifestyles that devalue local and national belonging in favor of global or cosmopolitan identifications (Bauman, 1998; Lasch, 1995, pp. 5-6, 44-47; Micklethwait & Wooldridge, 2000, pp. 225-245). Sager for his part suggests that travel is not necessarily opposed to belonging, but that the relationship may be a matter of territorial scale: "Mobility may be . . . about creating a pattern, a tapestry of familiar places, in order to gain knowledge of, master, and feel at home in a larger geographical space" (2006, p. 471). In a similar vein, Urry (2000, pp. 148-149) points out the historical importance of travel for creating national identities, and Weibull (2004, p. 129) shows that international travelers are more likely than others to express a sense of affinity with people in other countries.

Residential Mobility and Territorial Belonging

In addition to travel, residential mobility is often considered a crucial factor that affects territorial belonging, especially on the local level. Importantly, *residential mobility* in the following discussion and analyses refers to moving out of one's village, town, or city but not to moving between homes or residential areas within the same city. Several studies suggest that belonging grows stronger over time, so that frequent residential mobility makes it difficult to develop a strong sense of local belonging, and also that people with a strong sense of belonging are less willing to move (Fischer &

Malmberg, 2001; Fried, 2000; Hay, 1998; Kasarda & Janowitz, 1974; Knez, 2005; Lewicka, 2005). However, other studies indicate that persons who have lived a relatively short time in a place may still under certain circumstances develop territorial belonging (Brown, Brown, & Perkins, 2004, p. 767; Feldman, 1990). Savage et al. (2005) found that mobile middle-class persons tended to develop an “elective” belonging to their home places—a sense of belonging based on a deliberate choice about where to live, rather than on the taken-for-granted rootedness that may characterize long-time residents. Yet another possibility, suggested by Pollini (2005, p. 507), is that residential mobility may give rise to multiple local ties rather than to disconnectedness.

International Migration and Territorial Belonging

Similar themes occur with regard to national belonging in discussions about international migration (although residential mobility and international migration are rarely brought together in academic discussions). A basic assumption in much migration research holds that immigrants initially have little or no belonging to the host country, but that their sense of belonging gradually is (or should be) transferred from the sending country to the receiving country, in a process of assimilation or integration. Recent research on transnationalism and diasporic populations suggests a more complex picture, where international migrants at times develop a sense of belonging to both sending and receiving countries (Castles, 2002; Castles & Miller, 1998; Faist, 2000). Research about expatriates and temporary migrants also suggests other possibilities. Kennedy (2004), investigating transnational professionals in the Western world, claims that temporary residence abroad may reduce both local and national attachments while reinforcing postnational or cosmopolitan orientations.

Sociodemographic Factors, Mobility, and Territorial Belonging

There is much to suggest that sociodemographic factors such as sex, age, and social class are associated with different levels of territorial belonging as well as with differences in mobility. Women have at least in some studies been shown to have a stronger sense of territorial belonging than men (Brown et al., 2004, p. 757), whereas mobility has often been strongly associated with men and masculinity (Leed, 1991). Territorial belonging also tends to be higher among the more aged (Lewicka, 2005); younger persons often are more mobile, especially when it comes to residential mobility and

migration (Boyle, Halfacree, & Robinson, 1998, pp. 105-127). As for social class, higher education and professional careers are often associated with residential mobility as well as with travel (Goldthorpe, 1987, p. 152; Gustafson, 2006; Savage et al., 2005), whereas strong ties to place have been associated with the working class (Fried, 2000). Such patterns of territorial belonging may differ, however, when it comes to nation-states and larger territorial units. For example, Nagel (1998) suggests that nations and nationalisms have to an important extent been "male" projects, and Eurobarometer surveys indicate that well-educated and well-paid persons, and men, are more likely than others to express a European identity (Duchesne & Frogner, 1995). For these reasons, data on sociodemographic characteristics are included in the following analyses of the relationship between different forms of mobility and territorial belonging on different spatial scales.

Method

This article uses data from a study whose main purpose was to examine work-related travel in Sweden and its possible implications for frequent travelers (Gustafson, 2007). Data were gathered in 2005, partly through the regular labor force surveys carried out by Statistics Sweden (a combination of telephone interviews and register data), and partly through a mail questionnaire, also administered by Statistics Sweden. The population under study was the Swedish working population aged 16-64 years.

The research design aimed at obtaining a sample that included a relatively large number of persons who traveled for work. Therefore, all respondents who were interviewed in the labor force survey in March 2005 and who were working, 8,010 persons, were asked whether or not they traveled 100 km or more for work (not including travel to and from the ordinary workplace) during a normal working month. Answers were obtained from 7,763 persons; 2,326 answered yes and 5,437 no. On a follow-up question, regarding willingness to participate in a subsequent mail survey, mail addresses were obtained from 6,509 persons, whereas 1,254 declined participation. Questionnaires were then sent to all respondents who tended to travel at least 100 km per month for work and who had not declined participation ($n = 2,041$), and to a random sample ($n = 2,000$) of those who traveled less or not at all and who had not declined participation. After two reminders, questionnaires were returned by 2,804 (69.4%) of these respondents, with no significant difference in response rates between the two

groups. The following analyses use a weighted variable provided by Statistics Sweden to compensate for the stratification that was made with regard to work-related travel, and also for the stratified sampling design used in the national labor force survey.

The questionnaire contained questions about work-related travel and about some possible implications of travel, including a set of questions about the respondents' sense of belonging (*samhörighet*) on different territorial levels. There were also questions about other forms of mobility—residential mobility, international migration, and overnight leisure travel. In addition, as the respondents had participated in the labor force survey, Statistics Sweden could supply some complementary sociodemographic data.

The analyses presented in the following are a series of logistic regressions, which examine to what extent local, regional, national, and European belonging (treated as dependent variables) were associated with different forms of mobility and with some sociodemographic factors (treated as independent variables). Analyses were made separately for each territorial level, so that patterns of associations across levels could be examined.

The dependent variables were dichotomized, so that respondents who expressed a strong or very strong sense of belonging were compared with those who did not. In the survey, the respondents were asked about their sense of belonging on five different territorial levels—neighborhood (“the part of the town or the area where you live”), town (“the town or the municipality where you live”), region (“the part of the country where you live”), nation (Sweden), and a supranational level (Europe). The regression analyses were limited to four territorial levels, however—local, regional, national, and European.

As for the local level, the two questions about neighborhood and town may have different meanings and be more or less relevant in different places (rural areas, villages, small towns, bigger cities, etc.). In some places, a strong local belonging may concentrate on the neighborhood or village, whereas the municipal center is of little importance; in other places the town or center may have a strong identity whereas individual suburbs or residential areas matter little to their inhabitants. Distinguishing between neighborhood and town or city may be highly useful in local case studies, where such a distinction can be put in context (Moser, Ratiu, & Fleury-Bahi, 2002). But in a nationwide survey, it seems more useful to merge these two variables into one single measure of local belonging. In the regression analyses, therefore, the respondents who declared a strong or very strong sense of belonging to either their neighborhood or their hometown were compared with those who did not.

All respondents who answered each of the five questions about belonging were included in the analyses, even those who chose the alternative “do not know/not relevant.” The latter answer was then interpreted as absence of a strong or very strong sense of belonging. This interpretation may be debatable, especially in the case of European belonging where a relatively high percentage of the respondents chose that alternative. Therefore, analyses of European belonging were made both including and excluding this category (see below, section on European Belonging).

The independent variables in the analyses were all treated as categorical. To begin with, the analyses included five variables measuring different forms of mobility: (1) Commuting time: 1 hr per day or less versus more than 1 hr. (2) Domestic travel: more than five domestic overnight journeys to visit friends or relatives during the past 12 months, *or* more than five domestic overnight journeys for other leisure purposes during the past 12 months, *or* business trips to other parts of the country every month (several journeys), versus those who traveled less or not at all (few/no journeys). (3) International travel: two or more international overnight journeys for leisure purposes during the past 12 months, *or* business trips abroad several times a year (several journeys), versus those who traveled less or not at all (few/no journeys). (4) Residential mobility: lived for 10 years or more, versus less than 10 years, at the current place of residence (village, town, or city). (5) International migration: three categories, (a) born in Sweden and lived the whole life in Sweden; (b) born in Sweden but lived abroad for some time; (c) born abroad. In addition, three sociodemographic variables were examined—sex, age, and socioeconomic status. The socioeconomic categorization was based on the classification used by Statistics Sweden (1982).

In all the following analyses, only those respondents were included who had valid data for all variables ($N = 2,648$). Nonresponse was low for most questions; at most 3.2%, in the case of European belonging. Descriptive statistics for the independent variables in the analyses are provided in an appendix. Tests of bivariate associations between these variables do not indicate any problems with collinearity (all correlation coefficients were lower than .4).

Results

Table 1 shows responses for the five questions about territorial belonging. The response patterns for neighborhood, town, and region were very similar. Between 20% and 25% (with weighted data) expressed a very

strong sense of belonging and around 50% a strong sense of belonging, whereas very few had no sense of belonging at all. National belonging was even more common, with some 87% having a strong or very strong sense of belonging to Sweden. European belonging, on the other hand, was considerably weaker. Less than a third expressed a strong or very strong sense of belonging to Europe, almost 45% had a weak belonging or no belonging at all, whereas as many as 23.5% chose the alternative “do not know/not relevant.”

With the variables of belonging to neighborhood and town being merged, as described above, some 82% of the Swedish working population expressed a strong or very strong sense of belonging locally, 74% regionally, and 87% nationally, and 32% had a strong or very strong sense of belonging to Europe (according to weighted data). Respondents with a strong sense of belonging on one territorial level were more likely than others to express a strong sense of belonging on other levels as well—all bivariate associations between the dichotomized variables for belonging on different territorial levels were positive and statistically significant, although the association between local and European belonging was not very strong. (Pearson correlations for unweighted data ranged from .07 for local/European belonging to .48 for regional/national belonging.)

Local Belonging

Results from logistic regression analyses with local, regional, national, and European belonging as dependent variables are shown in Table 2. To begin with, several different forms of mobility were associated with a weaker sense of belonging on the local level. Local belonging tended to be lower among respondents who traveled more than 1 hr a day to and from work, as well as among those who made frequent long-distance or overnight domestic journeys. Residential mobility, too, had a strong negative relationship with local belonging. International travel and temporary residence abroad were not significantly related to local belonging, whereas respondents who were born abroad were less likely than native Swedes to express a strong sense of local belonging. As for sociodemographic factors, strong local belonging was more prevalent among women than men. Age differences were moderate, but young persons tended to have a weaker sense of belonging than others (the difference between respondents aged 16-24 and 45-54 was significant at the $p < .05$ level). The comparison between socioeconomic categories showed no significant differences.

Table 1
Sense of Belonging on Different Territorial Levels,
Percentages, Weighted Data (*N* = 2,648)

	Neighborhood	Town	Region	Sweden	Europe
Very strong sense of belonging	24.3	21.6	23.0	39.1	5.0
Strong sense of belonging	49.7	52.1	51.4	48.0	26.9
Weak sense of belonging	20.9	21.9	21.0	9.8	33.7
No sense of belonging	3.6	2.7	2.6	1.5	10.9
Do not know/not relevant	1.6	1.7	2.1	1.6	23.5
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Regional Belonging

The regression results for the regional level resembled in several respects those for local belonging. Commuting time and residential mobility were negatively associated with regional belonging. Domestic and international travel on the other hand were not, and neither was temporary residence abroad. Respondents who had lived less than 10 years in their current place of residence were less likely than long-time residents to have a strong sense of regional belonging, as were immigrants when compared with native Swedes. Strong regional belonging was more common among women than among men, and more common among older and middle-aged persons than among youth. Social class showed no significant association with regional belonging.

National Belonging

On the national level, commuting time was not associated with territorial belonging. Domestic travel, which was negatively related to local belonging, was positively related to national belonging—respondents who often made domestic overnight journeys or frequent work-related journeys to other parts of the country were more likely than others to express a strong sense of national belonging. As on the local and regional levels, neither international travel nor residence abroad was significantly associated with national belonging—whereas for both residential mobility and immigration, the relationship with national belonging was negative. Also, women were more likely than men to express a strong sense of belonging to Sweden, and the age differences were more pronounced than on the local and regional levels. Older persons tended to have a considerably stronger

Table 2
Relative Effects on the Odds of Having a Strong or Very Strong Sense of Belonging, Weighted Data (N = 2,648)

	Local	Regional	National	European
Travel time to and from work				
1 hr or less (ref.)	1	1	1	1
More than 1 hr	0.64**	0.74*	1.10	1.00
Domestic travel				
Few/no journeys (ref.)	1	1	1	1
Several journeys	0.75*	1.10	1.53*	1.28*
International travel				
Few/no journeys (ref.)	1	1	1	1
Several journeys	1.09	0.94	1.19	2.07***
Lived at current place of residence				
10 years or more (ref.)	1	1	1	1
Less than 10 years	0.40***	0.71**	0.71*	1.08
International migration				
Born and lived in Sweden (ref.)	1	1	1	1
Born in Sweden, lived abroad	0.95	0.91	1.05	1.45**
Born abroad	0.54**	0.46***	0.32***	2.37***
Sex				
Female (ref.)	1	1	1	1
Male	0.60***	0.74**	0.68**	1.04
Age				
16-24	0.60	0.67	0.61	1.15
25-34	0.91	0.81	1.12	1.17
35-44 (ref.)	1	1	1	1
45-54	1.18	1.28	1.43	1.06
55-64	0.99	1.54*	2.20***	1.50**
Socioeconomic category				
Blue-collar (ref.)	1	1	1	1
White-collar lower/intermediate	1.00	1.13	1.67**	1.62***
White-collar upper	1.03	1.11	1.68*	2.48***
Self-employed	1.29	1.15	1.34	1.68**

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

national belonging than young persons. On the national level, territorial belonging was also associated with social class. White-collar workers were significantly more likely to have a strong national belonging than blue-collar workers. Yet one has to remember that more than 87% of the respondents expressed a strong or very strong sense of belonging to Sweden. Thus, even though the analysis produced statistically significant differences

between several categories of respondents, the majority of respondents (in fact more than 70%) within each category had a strong national belonging.

European Belonging

The response pattern for European belonging differed in several respects from those related to local, regional, and national belonging. Commuting time was not related to European belonging, whereas frequent domestic and (in particular) international travelers were more likely than others to have a strong sense of belonging to Europe. Unlike belonging on lower territorial levels, European belonging was not associated with residential mobility. However, both immigration (being born abroad) and temporary residence abroad were positively associated with a strong European belonging. Women and men did not differ significantly in their European belonging. Age differences were small, except for the oldest group (age 55-64) who had a stronger sense of belonging to Europe. Social class, finally, made a significant difference—white-collar workers and the self-employed were considerably more likely to have a strong sense of European belonging than blue-collar workers.

The analyses presented in Table 2 treat persons who answered “do not know/not relevant” as not having a strong sense of belonging. In the case of European belonging, this was a fairly common answer, as discussed above. A separate analysis shows that less mobile persons generally tended to choose the “do not know/not relevant” alternative more often than those who were more mobile. In particular, among native Swedes who had never lived abroad, almost 30% chose this alternative for the question about European belonging, whereas the figures for immigrants and native Swedes who had lived abroad were 9% and 5%, respectively. In a regression analysis (data not shown) for European belonging that excluded the “do not know/not relevant” category, temporary residence abroad had no relationship with belonging to Europe, whereas all other significant associations shown in Table 2 remained statistically significant.

Discussion

Previous studies have reached different conclusions—or made different theoretical assumptions—about the relationship between mobility and territorial belonging. The present study suggests that to illuminate this relationship, two qualifications are important: mobility may take different forms and belonging may occur at different territorial levels.

Most respondents in the study—mobile or not—gave expression to a strong or very strong sense of belonging locally, regionally, and nationally, whereas strong European belonging was less common. Some writers have suggested that there is an opposition between local belonging and belonging on higher territorial levels (Duchesne & Frogner, 1995, p. 208; Kohli, 2000, p. 123). Such a pattern did not emerge here. On the contrary, there were consistent positive associations between senses of belonging on different territorial levels.

In a series of logistic regression analyses, all the different forms of mobility examined here were associated with statistically significant differences in belonging. In addition, the assumption underlying the research and analytic design—that different forms of mobility might have different implications for people's sense of belonging on different territorial levels—was confirmed by the results. For all the different forms of mobility, the association with territorial belonging differed across territorial levels.

Daily commuting times greater than 1 hr were associated with lower levels of local and regional belonging, but had no significant relationship with belonging on higher territorial levels. These results are in accordance with claims made by Putnam (2000) and others about the negative effects of commuting on local communities, while giving no support to the suggestion that journeys away may increase one's sense of local belonging (Case, 1996).

Domestic travel was negatively related to local belonging, not significantly related to regional belonging, and positively related to national and European belonging. This seems like a good illustration of Sager's (2006) suggestion that the relationship between mobility and belonging may be a matter of territorial scale and that travel outside of one's local setting may create a sense of belonging to some larger territorial unit. A similar tendency appeared in the case of international travel, which was strongly associated with European belonging. However, international travel was not related to any decrease in local, regional, or national belonging, as some writings about globally mobile persons suggest (Bauman, 1998; Micklethwait & Wooldridge, 2000).

Residential mobility was negatively related to local, regional, and national belonging. The relationship was strongest on the local level, which is not surprising, considering that several previous studies have highlighted how local belonging grows stronger over time and that persons with a strong sense of local belonging tend to be less willing to move (Fried, 2000; Hay, 1998). The negative association between residential mobility and national belonging was somewhat unexpected, though. Most of those respondents who had moved during the past 10 years had moved within

Sweden; yet unlike domestic travel, residential mobility was not related to a stronger sense of national belonging—but quite the reverse.

As for international migration, persons who were born abroad were less likely than native Swedes to have strong local, regional, or national belonging, whereas native Swedes who had lived abroad for some time did not differ in these respects from persons who had lived their whole lives in Sweden. These findings may be interpreted in the light of research on international migration, which suggests that migrants often maintain bonds (local, regional, and national) with their former home countries—bonds that may be revived if the migrants return after some time—whereas incorporation into a new home country is often a lengthy process (Castles & Miller, 1998; Faist, 2000). Both immigration and temporary residence abroad were, however, associated with a stronger sense of belonging to Europe (although in the latter case only in the analysis that included the “do not know/not relevant” category).

The overall pattern, then, was that the statistically significant associations between mobility and belonging on the local and regional levels were all negative, whereas on the national level different forms of mobility seemed to have different implications, and on the European level all significant associations were positive.

This pattern raises questions about causality—to what extent can different forms of mobility explain the respondents’ sense of belonging on different territorial levels? The literature on place attachment and territorial belonging often suggests that time spent in a place increases the degree of attachment or belonging to that place (Hay, 1998; Lewicka, 2005; Putnam, 2000). The measures of mobility used here often gave an indication as to how much time the respondents spent in places of different scale—commuting time and domestic travel reduced the time spent in the hometown or neighborhood, international travel increased the time spent in other countries, and so forth. Most of the associations found in the analysis could indeed be interpreted along such a temporal dimension. However, the present research design does not allow definite statements about causality. Mobility may certainly influence people’s territorial belonging but, conversely, their sense of belonging may also influence their willingness to travel or migrate. In this respect, the cross-sectional design was a limitation and the analyses presented here were mainly descriptive and explorative.

Another limitation of the study may be that some of the measures of mobility and belonging were relatively simple. They were nevertheless guided by current academic discussions about mobility and belonging, and the use of relatively general measures was considered suitable for the

research design employed here (general population sample, comparisons between places and territories of different spatial scale). Yet another issue that deserves comment is the question about European belonging, where a considerable proportion of the respondents answered “do not know/not relevant.” Some respondents in the study may have understood “Europe” as the European Union (EU) whereas others referred to the European continent. It is well known that there is a strong skepticism toward the EU in the Scandinavian countries (Kohli, 2000, pp. 122-123), and this skepticism may have produced some ambivalence with regard to the question about European belonging. The European level was nevertheless included in the analyses, as it was desirable to have a measure of supranational territorial belonging that could be compared with territorial belonging on the local, regional, and national levels.

Finally, it should be stressed that the regression results presented here are net tendencies. As suggested by several studies referenced above, mechanisms that work in other directions may very well exist, in specific cases, at specific places, or under specific circumstances, and individual experiences of mobility and belonging may be more diverse than a set of closed-ended survey questions can account for. Indeed, qualitative as well as quantitative studies of such experiences related to different forms of mobility and different places and territories are a promising direction for further studies. At a time when many forms of mobility are increasing, at least in the rich parts of the world, what strategies do people develop with regard to their mobility, and how do such strategies relate to their territorial belonging?

Previous research indicates some distinctions that are important to bear in mind in such studies. Sager (2006) highlights the distinction between mobility as actual movement and mobility as potential movement—as the possibility to move or to stay. In a similar vein, Bauman’s (1998) writings on mobility and globalization suggest a distinction between voluntary movement and forced movement, between mobility as option or opportunity and mobility as necessity or even constraint (see also Cass et al., 2005). Obviously, mobility may mean different things, and have widely different implications for people’s sense of territorial belonging, under such different circumstances. The present study, in addition, suggests that distinctions between different forms of mobility—based on factors such as frequency, distance, and duration—are of considerable importance, as well as distinctions between senses of belonging on different territorial levels.

The latter point, about different territorial levels, indicates that the relationship between mobility and belonging is more complex than many writers acknowledge. Even though in the present study there were generally

positive relationships between senses of belonging on different territorial levels, the analyses also indicate that some forms of mobility may at the same time weaken local bonds and reinforce people's sense of belonging to larger territorial units. Conversely, if little or no mobility fosters local bonds and local community life, it may also limit the opportunities for participation and identification in larger communities (Fried, 2000). In academic discussions, it is often thought that territorial belonging is associated with individual well-being as well as with community involvement and social cohesion. The present study suggests that in a mobile society, such discussions need to pay more attention to the question of territorial scale.

Appendix

Descriptive Statistics for the Independent Variables

	Percentages (weighted)	<i>n</i> (unweighted)
Travel time to and from work		
1 hr or less	85.7	2,279
More than 1 hr	14.3	369
Domestic travel		
Few/no journeys	74.4	1,885
Several journeys	25.6	763
International travel		
Few/no journeys	70.4	1,848
Several journeys	29.6	800
Lived at current place of residence		
10 years or more	75.1	2,019
Less than 10 years	24.9	629
International migration		
Born and lived in Sweden	75.5	2,000
Born in Sweden, lived abroad	16.9	466
Born abroad	7.6	182
Sex		
Female	53.5	1,260
Male	46.5	1,388
Age		
16-24	6.3	148
25-34	21.0	511
35-44	25.3	674
45-54	24.7	709
55-64	22.7	606
Socioeconomic category		
Blue-collar	36.5	945
White-collar lower/intermediate	38.6	950
White-collar upper	17.2	487
Self-employed	7.7	266

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Per Gustafson is a postdoctoral fellow at the Institute for Housing and Urban Research, Uppsala University, who studies different forms of human mobility and the relationship between mobility and belonging. Business travel and international retirement migration are two of his research fields.