

THE IMPACT OF LIFE EVENTS ON THE TOURISM
BEHAVIOUR OF SENIOR CITIZENS IN FREISING, GERMANY

BY

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Abstract

The senior market is a driving force in the tourism industry and one of the fastest growing market segments. Demographic changes, and the evolving travel routines of those people reaching senior age, suggest enormous potential for the tourism industry. Tourism scholars recognise the opportunities and importance of the tourism behaviour of seniors and within the last decade scholars paid increasingly attention to this previously under-researched field. Many studies in the tourism domain use chronological-age criteria to investigate seniors' travel behaviour, ignoring the diverse nature of this group. This thesis addresses this research gap by adopting a life events research approach to the study of senior tourism behaviour.

The underpinning rationale behind this thesis is that the life courses of seniors are shaped by meaningful transitions which not only encapsulate deteriorating physical health and abilities but also psychological effects and changes in family structure and social roles. The aim of the thesis is to identify relevant life events and to investigate how they impact on seniors' tourism behaviour. The centrepiece of the thesis is a discussion of the factors that underlie this behaviour and the exploration of why life events appear to be so meaningful in explaining seniors' tourism behaviour.

The theoretical framework on which the thesis is based draws on leisure constraints and facilitators, ecological systems theory and gerontological theories. The thesis is guided by a post-positivist, pragmatist research paradigm and employs qualitative in-depth biographic interviews with 23 seniors (older than 60) who are residents of Freising, Germany. The study design consists of two qualitative interview phases with

those in the second phase being a subset of those interviewed in the first phase, thus advancing the validity and rigor of the research. The thesis adopts both an intra- and inter-individual data analysis method employing thematic analysis.

The thesis results in a senior tourism behaviour model which integrates Crawford, Jackson, and Godbey's (1991) hierarchical leisure-constraints approach and the fundamentals of ecological systems theory. The thesis advances this model by translating the leisure-based concept into tourism specifics, introducing intrastructural constraints and facilitators, distinguishing between microstructural and macrostructural factors, and recognising travel practices at the destination level.

The thesis demonstrates that life events operate on different constraint and facilitator levels, reflecting the complexity of their impact on tourism behaviour. Younger seniors are largely free from microstructural constraints and tourism participation is relatively facilitated. Tourism can contribute to individual well-being and is used as a vehicle to remain physically and emotionally healthy. Those who enjoyed travelling in their younger years continue or even increase their participation until constraining factors come into play, operating on the individual's biology and psychology and socio-ecological structures.

The thesis concludes that with increased age it becomes a challenging task to negotiate through constraints, resulting in reduced tourism participation and the adoption of alternative forms of travelling. Opportunities and challenges for the tourism industry lie in the development of new tourism products that help to overcome and mitigate the travel constraints that confront senior citizens.

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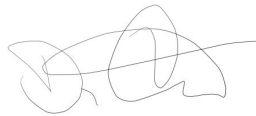
List of Abbreviations

AUT	Auckland University of Technology
FDGB	Freier Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund
FLAG	fits like a glove
FLC	family life cycle
FOF	fear of flying
FUR	Forschungsgemeinschaft Urlaub und Reisen
ICT	information and communication technologies
KdF	Kraft durch Freude
NZTRI	New Zealand Tourism Research Institute
SOC	selective optimisation with compensation
TCL	travel career ladder
TCP	travel career pattern
VFR	visiting friends and relatives
VHFP	visiting home and familiar places
WTO	World Tourism Organization

Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material, which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Auckland, 27.11.2014

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

**For Tobi and Martin,
your endurance, love and will encouraged and inspired me on this journey.**

**To the participants in this thesis,
I wish you wonderful travels**

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Chapter 1. Introduction

“The finitude of life alters the meaning of the way in which we use time. If time were infinite, we could have time to do many things and we would not need to establish priorities or to give up desirable options.”

– Kalish, 1976, p. 486

1.1 Rationale and significance of the thesis

Following an uncertain first decade of the 21st century tourism is on the rise again and appears to be a constantly growing sector and contributes in many countries to economic development and prosperity. In 2013, travel and tourism contributed about USD 7 trillion to worldwide gross domestic product (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2014), and almost one tenth of global formal sector employment can be allocated to the tourism industry. Trend studies forecast a significant development of the tourism sector in the future in terms of travel activities and expenditures and therefore economic value and employment opportunities (World Tourism Organization, 2013b; World Travel and Tourism Council, 2014). The global tourism market is dominated by intranational travel, which contributes more than 70% of the total spend (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2014). Three out of every four tourism dollars are generated from leisure tourism.

This tourism growth trend is influenced also by demographic changes and an aging population. Demographic changes can be roughly explained by the transitions from high to low fertility and mortality rates which started in industrialised countries in the mid-18th century. This trend is still ongoing and is now also found in less-developed

countries. It is estimated that by 2050 every fifth person on Earth (about 2 billion people) will be older than 60 years, which is almost a doubling of the proportion compared with 2013 (United Nations, 2012). These demographic changes are mainly driven by Asian developing countries, despite the fact that the aging population phenomenon is more advanced in the industrialised world. Not only is the population aging, but the group of 'older' elderlies (aged more than 75 years) will also significantly increase. Most of the older population are female due to gender-specific mortality differences.

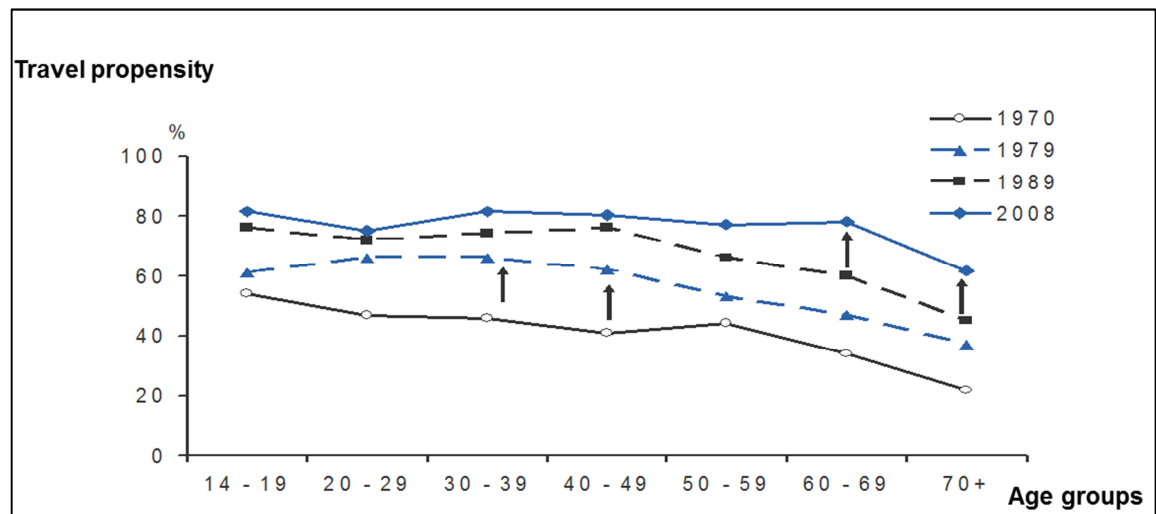
Aging developed societies are confronted with enormous challenges and unsolved issues: How can societies ensure a skilled labour force from a shrinking population? What is the future of social security? How can the economy maintain an affordable health system? Who will take care of the elderly, who face longevity but suffer inevitably at some stage from physical and mental deterioration? And most importantly for the tourism industry and tourism destinations: How do demographic changes affect tourism participation and behaviour and tourist practices?

The latter question is of particular importance for this thesis because in the next few decades senior travellers will be a key driving force of the tourism industry. It will be mainly the wealthy population of the baby boomers from major travel source markets in Europe and Japan who will contribute to the growing senior tourism sector. According to Yeoman (2012), about 70% of the world's tourism expenditure is generated from the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy and Japan.

Germany exemplifies an aging society and, at the same time, represents one of the largest tourism markets worldwide. In 2010 the German population undertook more than 75 million holiday trips. In the same year Germans spend about EUR 63.3 billion on domestic travel and EUR 60 billion on outbound travel (Deutscher Reiseverband, 2011). In recent years, senior travellers have become increasingly important to the German tourism market. German baby boomers (people born between the mid-1950s and mid-1960s) are the largest age bracket of the German population. They are experienced travellers and are just about to enter retirement age.

The senior population is not only of interest to the tourism industry because of its growing size, but also because of its increasing participation in travel. Between 1970 and 2008, the travel propensity (the percentage of a population that engage in a holiday trip of at least five days within one year) of seniors in Germany aged 60 to 69 years changed from 41% to 78% (Lohmann & Aderhold, 2009). Even more remarkable are the numbers for people over 70 years, with an increase in travel propensity to 62% (Figure 1.1). It is predicted that the travel propensity of these older seniors aged between 70 and 79 will eventually catch up with the younger population (Lohmann & Aderhold, 2009).

Figure 1.1: Travel propensity by age groups in Germany, 1970–2008



Source: Lohmann and Aderhold (2009, p. 150).

In 2007 almost 13.5 million German seniors who were 60 years or older had a holiday trip of more than five days. This means that every fourth holiday trip is undertaken by an elderly person (Lohmann & Aderhold, 2009). It is predicted that by the year 2020 every third traveller will be a senior.

Despite these significant trends, little is known about the meanings behind senior tourism (Sedgley, Pritchard, & Morgan, 2006). The research on linkages between old age and tourism is of importance considering that a number of studies emphasise the opportunities and resulting challenges that come with the increased number of senior tourists worldwide (Alén, Domínguez, & Losada, 2012; Ginevičius, Hausmann, & Schafir, 2007; Paxson, 2009). By knowing more about the phenomenon of senior tourism, the tourism industry, tourism destinations and policymakers can act rather than react to upcoming demographic challenges. It is of paramount importance to get a better understanding of why seniors travel and, just as important, to understand why

they cease travelling at some point in their lives. This gives businesses, travel destinations and policymakers the opportunity to adjust their strategic planning by matching supply to likely demand patterns with the objective to maximise visitor satisfaction (Freyer, 2001, p. 73; Williams, 2009). A corollary of this would be that improved customer-tailored tourism products may give more seniors the opportunity to participate in tourism well into their old age.

1.2 Research questions and objectives

The aim of the thesis is to gain a better understanding of seniors' tourism behaviour and to uncover the meanings behind travelling in later years. Seniors represent a heterogeneous population and show even greater diversity in their behaviours than their younger counterparts do (Jang, Bai, Hu, & Wu, 2009). This diversity refers to differing aging processes, which are reflected in changes in behaviours, attitudes and capabilities in later life (Moschis, 1993, p. 44). From a human development point of view, transitions in seniors' life courses are associated with changes in physical, cognitive and social dimensions (Boyd & Bee, 2009). In human sciences, transition is a commonly used term to conceptualise key life events that are forming the individual life course (Moody, 2009).

The dynamics of tourism behaviour in senior age can be explained by life course transitions. Grenier (2012, p. 5) notes that "transition can be considered a meaningful concept that shapes understandings of aging and late life on a discursive and practice level." Jackson (2005a, p. 115) explains changes in leisure behaviour in a similar way when he states that "leisure changes most at transitional points in people's lives". This

is supported by Decrop (2006), who also takes a dynamic perspective in the choice of travel decisions.

Grenier (2012, p. 20) states that “aging should be conceptualized as a process across the life span of a life time rather than as a separate or distinct period.” This encourages the employment of biographic qualitative research methods in order to gain in-depth understanding of the relationships between an individual’s life course and the phenomenon under investigation. Phillimore and Goodson (2004, p. 4) identify a need for a better understanding of the human dimension in tourism when they note: “With qualitative approaches, the emphasis is placed upon studying things in their natural settings, interpreting phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them, humanising problems and gaining an ‘emic’, or insider’s perspective.”

The thesis adopts a ‘real life events’ approach to investigate changes in senior tourism behaviour and goes beyond the age paradigm on which many senior studies are based. The thesis draws on multiple conceptual frameworks including gerontological theories, constraints and facilitators, and ecological systems theory, which broadens the theoretical spectrum in senior tourism literature. Most prominent, gerontological approaches conceptualise strategies of successful aging such as ‘continuity theory’ (Atchley, 1989), ‘selective optimisation with compensation’ (SOC) (Baltes, 1997) and ‘innovation theory on successful aging’ (Nimrod & Kleiber, 2007). ‘Disengagement theories’ (Cumming, 1963), on the other side, presume a reciprocal disconnection between older adults and society and thus draw a more negative picture on aging.

Transitions in life courses and consequent influences on tourism behaviour can be explored through constraints and facilitators. This is suggested by Jackson (2005a, p. 115) who notes that “it is precisely at transitional points that new leisure opportunities become available or foreclosed, new leisure constraints disappear or emerge, and new strategies to negotiate leisure constraints are perceived and adopted or rejected.” Life events operate on multiple constraints or facilitators on different levels. Crawford et al. (1991) conceptualised this approach by developing a hierarchical model of leisure constraints.

Another perspective on tourism behaviour comes from ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Human behaviour is embedded in a socio-cultural context and therefore only comprehensible by considering an environmental perspective (Woodside, Krauss, Caldwell, & Chebat, 2007). The social environment takes a paramount position in tourism behaviour since travelling involves various interpersonal interactions, group decision-making processes, travel-group composition and companionship, socialisation motives and tourism practices.

The objectives of the thesis are:

- to gain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of life events on seniors’ tourism behaviour
- to understand the development of travel behaviour over the life course
- to discover variances in senior travel behaviour caused by identifiable life events
- to understand why seniors cease travelling

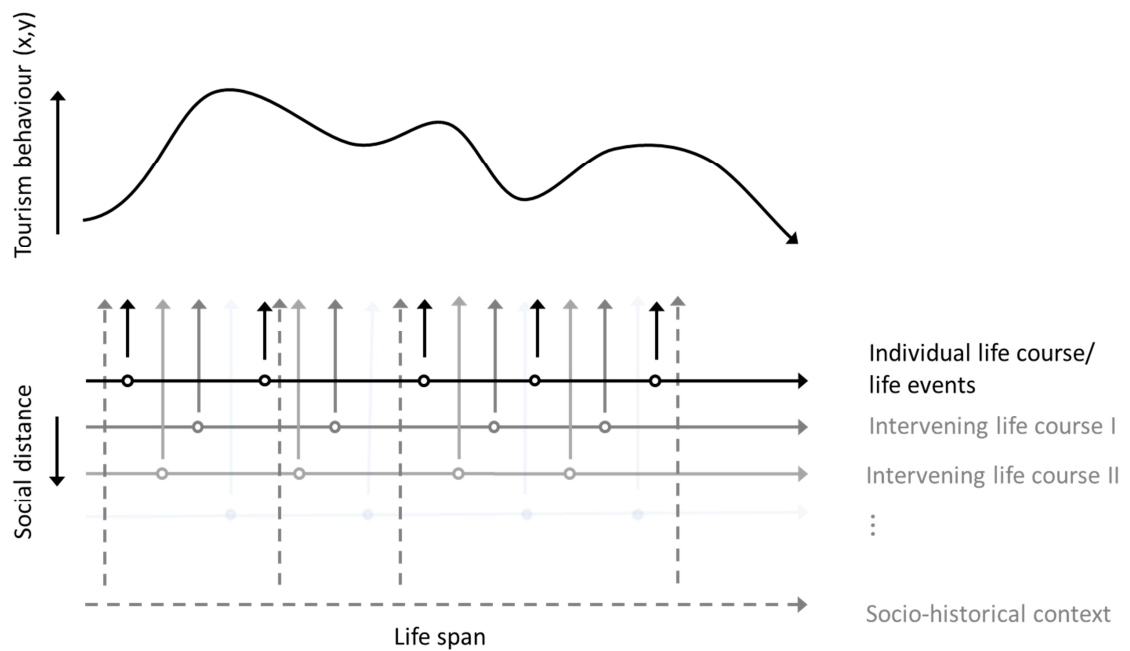
- to contribute to the methodological body of knowledge by applying qualitative biographic research methods to investigate seniors' tourism behaviour
- to contribute to academic theory by applying an interdisciplinary approach of tourism social sciences, gerontology and human development
- to contribute to academic theory by merging tourism constraint and facilitator models with an ecological perspective.

These objectives lead to the following research questions:

- What life events impact on the tourism behaviour of seniors?
- How does tourism behaviour change relative to identified life events?
- Why does tourism behaviour change in senior age?

The underpinning assumptions of the thesis are illustrated in Figure 1.2. Life events are an integral part of the individual biography, which in turn shapes tourism behaviour across the life course. Tourism behaviours consist of a variety of different dimensions (x,y), which are subject to change and can be either constrained or facilitated by life events. Being a social practice, seniors' tourism behaviour is also shaped by the life courses of significant others at different levels of social distance (indicated by the solid lines in Figure 1.2), which are part of the individual ecological system. The socio-historical context impacts on tourism behaviours on a broader cultural level.

Figure 1.2: The impact of life events of seniors' tourism behaviour



1.3 Definitions of key terms

The literature shows inconsistency in the use of a number of terms related to the research. This includes the definition of seniors and tourism-related terms such as visitors, travellers, holidaymakers, vacationers, potential tourists or tourists.

Tourism terminology

Travelling relates to a functional term that describes the logistics of getting from one point to another. The World Tourism Organization (WTO) defines the 'traveller' as "someone who moves between different geographic locations, for any purpose and any duration" (World Tourism Organization, 2013a). Travelling is thus not only associated with transportation as part of the tourism product but also everyday life mobility such as commuting or shopping trips.

Tourism is a subset of travelling with the 'visitor' or the 'tourist' as the main actor. A visitor is defined as a traveller "taking a trip to a main destination outside his/her usual environment, for less than a year, for any main purpose (business, leisure or other personal purpose) other than to be employed by a resident entity in the country or place visited" (World Tourism Organization, 2013a). According to the WTO (2013), a tourist differs from a visitor in so far as they include an overnight stay in their trip; otherwise, a visitor is defined as a same-day visitor. The 'usual environment' is described by the geographical area within which regular life routines are conducted.

In the thesis tourism behaviour encapsulates the complete tourism experience including decision-making processes and travel organisation, the stay at the destination, and any kind of post-purchase activities. The thesis adopts both terms travel and tourism behaviour to describe the all-embracing experience of a visit, trip, travel, vacation or holiday. The use of the terms holiday and vacation for retired seniors may appear problematic because of their associated meaning of 'having a break from work' (Decrop, 2006, p. 15), which is less relevant for (retired) seniors. The data collection, however, revealed that vacation might be an appropriate term for seniors' travel activity because it is not necessarily a break from work that is relevant but also the break from everyday life and daily routine.

The thesis distinguishes between tourist practice and tourism behaviour. Tourist practice relates to the behaviour of visitors specifically at the destination. Tourism and travel behaviour contains, in particular, the structuring aspects of the travel experience such as means of transport, accommodation, duration, distance and motivation or purpose of a trip (Freyer, 2001). The travel duration includes day trips without

accommodation, short trips of 2 to 4 days and longer travels of 5 days or more. This definition aligns with the 'Reiseanalyse', the largest tourism survey in Germany. The focus of the thesis will be on leisure travel but does not exclude any other form of travel activity such as business or religious travels.

Seniors

The term senior comes from Latin and basically means the 'elderly'. One issue that makes it difficult to compare demographic changes on a global basis is the fact that the age classification of 'senior' varies considerably from society to society, and from study to study. In China, for example, the 60th birthday is considered the 'big birthday' associated with prestigious status and respect (Hsu, Cai, & Wong, 2007). There is no official definition of seniors, and the literature shows much variation in the use of this term (Patterson, 2006).

Most studies apply an age criterion when defining seniors. Some studies use 55 (Sangpikul, 2008), while others use 60 (Jang & Wu, 2006) or 65 years and older (Jang et al., 2009) to segment the senior population. Others use retirement or early retirement as a category to segment the senior population (Faranda & Schmidt, 2000). This thesis follows Faranda and Schmidt's (2000) suggestion as to how to characterise seniors: "Whatever the cut off chosen, decision makers must ensure that it allows them to uncover and not miss relevant opportunities and unmet needs." Taking this point of view, the thesis applies the age definition used by Reiseanalyse, which defines seniors as people aged 60 years and older. Using the same classification as Reiseanalyse is advantageous because it increases the comparability of the study.

Life event and life course

The definitions of Moody and Levinson are adopted here to describe the terminology of life events and life course. Moody (2009) defines life events (also called transition points or watersheds in life) as markers in the life course of the individual. The thesis adopts this terminology as it relates to key events, which can impact on the travel behaviour of seniors. Life transitions, which can be gradual in nature, indicate the change from one life stage to another caused by a certain event. Levinson (1986, p. 3) describes the life course from an evolutionary point of view and highlights the temporal flow, the life as a sequence, which is subject to continuity and discontinuity, stability and change.

1.4 The methodological approach and research design

This thesis has its scientific-philosophical foundations in a post-positivist, pragmatist research paradigm, which includes a critical realist ontology. This paradigm supports an approach where the researcher is part of the research process, with the objective to gain an in-depth understanding of linkages between life events and seniors' travel behaviour.

The research draws on a multiple case study in Freising, Germany, where each case is represented by a participant aged 60 years and older. Purposive snowball sampling strategy was utilised to recruit 23 interviewees. A maximum variation sampling strategy combined with an attribute space analysis ensured diversity in the socio-demographic profiles of the participants.

Each individual's travel history was investigated through audio-recorded biographic in-depth face-to-face interviews, between October 2011 and September 2012. The data collection occurred in two phases. The first phase included 20 individual and group interviews to elicit narratives of the interviewees about their life course and travel history. Results of the first qualitative data analysis formed the basis for a second, more structured interview phase with 16 of the participants from Phase I. The median duration of the interviews was 1.5 hours.

The analytical framework consists of descriptive within-case analysis and a thematic cross-case analysis. The data analysis was supported by using the qualitative data analysis software NVivo, ecomaps and thematic timelines.

1.5 Thesis outline

The thesis is structured in eight chapters. Chapter Two is the literature review, which places the research into the existing body of knowledge. A critical view on the wider literature identifies strengths and weaknesses of published work related to the research topic. This chapter concludes with the theoretical framework on which the study draws. This is followed by the research context, outlined in Chapter Three. The socio-historic context of the development of tourism in Germany and the life conditions of seniors in Germany provide background information to cross-fertilise the findings of the thesis, which is elementary for the interpretation process.

Chapter Four focuses on the research methodology and methods used. The first part of the chapter gives an outline of the research design and then focuses on the scientific-philosophical underpinnings of the research process. The next sections present the

qualitative research approach and describe in detail the research process including sampling technique, strategies of participant recruitment, data collection and analysis.

The research findings are presented in the following two chapters. Chapter Five gives a rich description of seven cases, focusing on their travel biographies and how they are shaped by each senior's life course and life events. This is followed by Chapter Six, a cross-case analysis, which identifies and contrasts themes and sub-themes related to the impact of life events on seniors' travel behaviour.

Findings are presented and discussed in Chapter Eight in the light of relevant literature and theoretical considerations. This includes the presentation and interpretation of a developed senior tourism constraints and facilitators model. The thesis finishes with a summative conclusion focusing on the key findings, which are the essence of the thesis. The guiding research questions are revisited, followed by an outline of the methodological, theoretical and practical contributions of the thesis as well as recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2. Issues of seniors' tourism behaviour: A literature review

The aim of the thesis is to gain a better understanding of seniors' tourism behaviour. The objective of the literature review is to evaluate previous research on the topic and to identify gaps in the existing body of knowledge. The first section of this chapter introduces accepted theoretical concepts in the field of tourism behaviour including theories of tourist personality, travel motivation and the decision-making process. These concepts, serving as a basis to explain tourism behaviour of older adults, are interrelated and thus boundaries between different elements of tourism behaviour are often fuzzy. Theories on the family life cycle and age-related concepts bring a developmental perspective to the tourism behaviour discourse and therefore are of special interest for the thesis.

The second section provides an overview of existing senior tourism literature, which is followed by a general critique on the state of research in senior tourism behaviour. The third section presents the theoretical framework on which the thesis is built. The construction of this framework aims to provide an interdisciplinary perspective on the research questions posed.

2.1 Underpinning theories of tourism behaviour

Travel behaviour has a paramount position in tourism research and scholars attempt to conceptualise this phenomenon from different angles. Pearce (2005) adopts a holistic approach and conceptualises tourism behaviour in tourist choices based on tourist and destination attributes, the tourist's on-site experience and tourism

outcome. Mayo and Jarvis (1981, p. 19) hold a more ecological perspective when they state that internal forces of the tourist's psychology (personality, attitudes, perceptions, motives) do not operate in a vacuum, which means that tourism behaviour has not only a psychological dimension but also determinants that lay outside of the individual. Thus, external forces and social influences create and shape travel activities and patterns.

2.1.1 Tourist personality

Tourist personality relates to Pearce's (2005) tourist attributes and has its foundations in psychology. Personality revolves around the question about how one functions in the world, in order to understand differences between people (Madrigal, 1995, p. 2). Some tourism studies employ theories from psychology to examine the relationship between personality and tourism behaviour; for example, Holland's personality theory (Frew & Shaw, 1999) or Jung's personal orientation items (Gountas & Gountas, 2007). Others examine how specific personal attributes impact on tourism behaviour and tourist practices. A very significant factor in the choice of means of transport is, for example, fear of flying (FOF) and this is explored by a number of studies (Boksberger, Bieger, & Laesser, 2007; Capafóns, Sosa, & Viña, 1999; Fleischer, Tchetchik, & Toledo, 2012). FOF is an integral component of the tourism experiences and is mostly researched in its psychological and economical dimensions (Fleischer et al., 2012).

Tourist practices and personality are interrelated and influence each other. Pritchard and Morgan (2013) claim that tourism can transform human beings; for example, the tourist learns new skills or acquires new knowledge. Desforges (2000) takes a

psychological point of view and applies the concept of 'personhood' (composed of identity, subjectivity and the self) in his investigation into the extent that tourism plays in a tourist's personal development. His study reveals linkages between self-identity, travel desires and spatial imaginations, which are influenced and shaped by travel experiences.

Another component of personality is 'role conception' (Lepp & Gibson, 2008), which suggests that tourists enact specific forms of behaviours on vacation (Cohen, 1972, 1973; Gibson & Yiannakis, 2002; Pearce, 1982; Plog, 1974; Yiannakis & Gibson, 1992). Gibson and Yiannakis (2002) state that tourist role preferences may appear as stable patterns, which are determined by the individual's life course. Even though personality shows consistency over time, personal attributes are not static and can change in the course of human development (Caspi & Roberts, 2001; Neugarten, 1973) and the individual's past history (Moutinho, 1987).

A significant contribution to the tourist personality conception comes from Cohen (1972) who proposes four types of distinct tourist roles, which are located in a continuum of novelty and familiar experiences: the organised mass tourist, the individual mass tourist, the explorer and the drifter. A more psychological perspective comes from Plog (1974, 1994, 2002) who claims that socio-demographic similarities alone do not sufficiently explain underlying motivations for travel activities (Plog, 1994, p. 209). Plog (1974) structures tourist personality in the dimensions 'psychocentrism' (also called dependables) and 'allocentrism' (venturers). The original work relates to air-travel users and their destination choices, and distinguishes between motivated air travellers (allocentrics) and people more reluctant to fly (psychocentrics). Plog's

psychographic model is widely applied and tested by tourism scholars but also faces criticism in terms of its applicability and validity (Litvin, 2006; S. Smith, 1990) and static nature (Park & Jang, 2012).

Decrop (2006) introduced an economic variable and distinguishes between 'prodigal' and 'avaricious' vacationers. Prodigal travellers follow a more hedonistic lifestyle by 'living the moment', which is also reflected in their expenditure behaviour. Avaricious vacationers, however, prefer to spend rather less money, either because of a limited financial situation or risk aversion.

2.1.2 Travel motivation

One of the most fundamental questions in the field of tourism behaviour embodies the motivational aspect of tourism: Why do people travel? (Jang et al., 2009; Mansfeld, 1992). Motivational determinants represent a main factor in the concept of tourism behaviour (Hudson, 1999, p. 7). Petri and Govern (2004, p. 16) define motivation as a concept that "helps to explain why behaviour occurs in the one situation but not in the others."

Travel motivation can be analysed at different levels, and can incorporate physiological, individual, social and philosophical components (Petri & Govern, 2004). Pizam & Mansfeld (1999, p. 5) use an integrated approach when they state that travel motivation "determines not only if consumers will engage in tourism activity or not, but also when, where, and what type of tourism they pursue."

A prominent motivation approach to tourism research is Maslow's 'hierarchy of needs', developed in the 1940s, which appears in many tourism motivation-related

text books (e.g. Freyer, 2001; Holden, 2004). There is disagreement in the literature, though, on whether or not leisure travel should be considered a basic human need or even a biological need (Freyer, 2001) as underpinning travel motivation.

In the late 1980s Philip Pearce coupled Maslow's needs approach with the concept of a leisure/tourism career to develop the 'travel career ladder' (TCL) as a theoretical basis of travel motivation (Pearce & Lee, 2005). The TCL presumes a developmental component in tourism behaviour expressed by the cumulated travel experience across the life course. Using Maslow's hierarchy of needs Pearce conceptualizes the travel career ladder as following a five step hierarchy or ladder, with the lowest level being relaxation needs, followed by safety and security, then relationships, self-esteem and, at the highest level, need for self-actualisation and fulfilment.

Maslow's model and the TCL face some criticisms. The former shows a lack of empirical evidence to underpin the hierarchal structure and insufficient explanations of how and why the five stages of needs are selected and ranked (Bowen & Clarke, 2009, p. 89). C. Ryan (1998) found in his study on UK holidaymakers no support for the TCL, which brought Gibson and Yiannakis (2002) to the conclusion that travel careers might be better explained by life-stage motivation and preferences. Pearce replied to this criticism by re-conceptualising the TCL theory. In response to the criticism of using the term ladder, which is perceived as static and one-dimensional, he introduced the travel career pattern (TCP) (Pearce & Lee, 2005). The modified TCP considers the dynamic and multilevel structure of travel motivation within the context of the travel experience. Pearce (2005) found in his TCP study that highly experienced travellers seek self-development through host-site involvement and nature activities.

Conversely, travellers with limited experience exhibit other motivations to travel, such as stimulation, self-actualisation, security or romance.

Another yet well-accepted theory on travel motivation is the concept of 'push' and 'pull' factors (Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1977). Push factors relate to socio-psychological circumstances in the individual's everyday life that motivate the person to travel; thus, push factors can be used to define "travel as a response to what is lacking yet desired" (Dann, 1981, p. 190). Push factors include, for example, anomie and ego-enhancement (Dann, 1977) but also relaxation, prestige and facilitation of social interaction. By contrast, pull factors relate to elements of the destinations that attract travellers.

Crompton (1979) identifies in his US study on motivation for pleasure vacations a continuum consisting of seven socio-psychological motives: escaping from a perceived mundane environment, exploration and evaluation of self, relaxation, prestige, regression, enhancement of kinship relationship, and facilitation of social interaction. Identified cultural (pull) factors are novelty and education.

From the push-pull factors approach, a continuum of seeking (approaching) to escaping (avoidance) emerged. This conception explains motivational force as either escaping from everyday life or seeking recreational opportunities (Iso-Ahola, 1982; Krippendorff, 1999). Iso-Ahola (1982, p. 258) applied this approach to leisure activities in general and tourism motivation more specifically.

Escaping the everyday routine and seeking intrinsic rewards are not exclusive dimensions and both factors operate simultaneously on individual motivation. The escaping-seeking continuum comprises also a personal/environmental dichotomy,

which unfolds four motivation dimensions including personal escape, personal seeking, interpersonal escape and interpersonal seeking (Iso-Ahola, 1982, p. 259).

2.1.3 The decision-making process

Most acts of travel are based on a preceding decision-making process. Contemporary literature concentrates largely on processes at the individual level and pays only limited attention to how households as decision-making units are involved in vacation choices (Hyde & Decrop, 2011).

The importance of joint tourism decisions, however, finds increasing consideration in tourism studies (Bronner & de Hoog, 2008; Decrop, 2006; Hyde & Decrop, 2011; Kozak, 2010; K. Wang, Hsieh, & Tsai, 2004; Woodside, Caldwell, & Spurr, 2006). Kozak (2010) found that spousal decision-making tactics are dominated by making compromises, followed by persuading and giving priority to the other spouse. Bronner and de Hoog's (2008) study on family-vacation decision making also suggests joint decision-making processes based on information seeking and discussion, and disagreement-resolution strategies. The most common strategy to overcome disagreements in the decision-making process was the so-called 'golden mean' strategy: give and take and reach a compromise (Bronner & de Hoog, 2008, p. 977). K. Wang et al. (2004) identified differences in the type of decisions made. Households are jointly involved in the problem recognition and final decision making of undertaking a group package tour while wives play a dominant role in the collecting of information.

Societal developments provoke changes in gender and family roles (Bronner & de Hoog, 2008; Fodness, 1992; Kozak, 2010), which in turn have implications for intra-

household decision making. Fodness (1992) found that family structures change through the life course and this brings a socio-psychological dynamic in the discussion on joint decision-making processes. The study concludes that travel decision making varies across the different stages of the family life cycle (FLC). Decrop (2006) goes a step further and supports a dynamic development in decision making and vacation choices based on a number of transition moments, including modification of family structure, employment status, spatial environment, and aging and health problems.

From an economic point of view, decision-making models are used to explain consumer behaviour mainly from a rational-choice perspective where customers aim to maximise value (Weeden, 2011, p. 18). Viewing tourists as functional, cognitive entities who behave as 'homo economicus' (driven primarily by economic considerations) represents a common approach in tourism behaviour models (Sirakaya & Woodside, 2005, p. 817). Despite travelling entailing a strong, rational-based economic component, tourism theories also take into account irrational elements in the tourism decision-making process (Decrop, 1999a; Mansfeld, 1992, p. 400). Irrational choices are derived from socio-psychological theories linking the decision-making process to individual and social factors such as fantasy, emotions or nostalgia (Decrop & Snelders, 2004). Woodside and Martin (2008) even argue that consumer choices are mainly based on an unconscious process as opposed to conscious decisions. Decrop (1999a) adds a contextual component to the decision-making process, which lies outside the individual. Context as an ecological setting operates on different socio-cultural levels, such as family units, (sub)cultures and situational influences (for example, geographical conditions, timing).

An important dimension in the decision-making processes refers to the 'type of involvement' (the level of interest) and the 'level of decision making'. The spectrum of the level of decision making lies between habitual and extensive decision making (Mayo & Jarvis, 1981, p. 16 pp.). Due to the great purchasing experience of senior people, their decision-making processes tend to be more habitual. The purchase decision of tourism products, however, is often based on high involvement and extensive decision making due to the relatively great investment (Sirakaya & Woodside, 2005).

Current research emphasises the processual nature of decision making, advocating naturalistic research approaches in order to unfold processes in their natural settings (Moore, Smallman, Wilson, & Simmons, 2012; Smallman & Moore, 2010). Decision making is complex and involves multiple units of consideration such as personal relationships, tasks, environments and strategies (Moore et al., 2012).

2.1.4 The family life cycle

The family life cycle (FLC) adds a developmental element to the discussion of travel behaviour. The FLC conceptualises how the individual progresses through life in order to describe behavioural differences across the life stages. Life stages are structured by economic and socio-demographic dimensions such as age, marital and family status, and employment participation.

Wells and Gubar are recognised as the pioneers of family life cycle theory (Collins & Tisdell, 2002). They adopted life cycle positions as independent variables in marketing research (Wells & Gubar, 1966) based on the underpinning assumption that

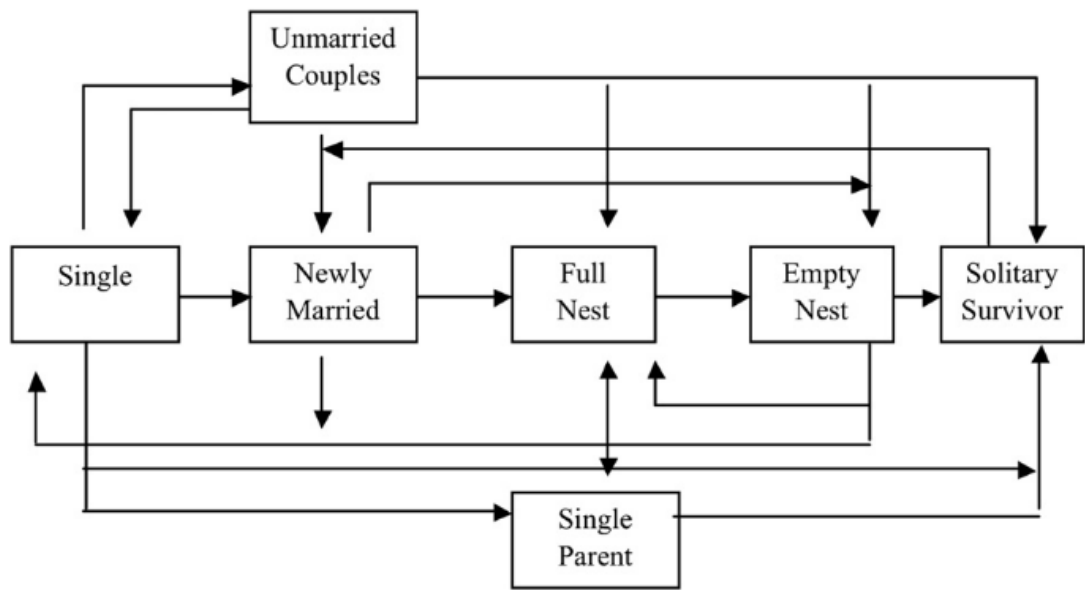
households in the US experience several stages in family life throughout their lifetime. Life stages include, in chronological order, the bachelor stage, newly married, full nest I (young married couples with dependent children under and above six years), full nest II (older married couples with dependent children), the empty nest (older married couples with no children living with them, with the head of the household either still in labour force or retired) and solitary survivor (in labour force or retired).

Contemporary literature recognises that the traditional, but still applied, family concept is antiquated and suggests a more modern concept is needed in the discussion (Blichfeldt, 2007; Bojanic, 1992; Wilkes, 1995). Literature is also inconsistent on the exact delimitation of distinct FLC stages, which makes the comparison of analyses difficult (Sund & Boksberger, 2007). This results from inherited conceptual issues due to the fact that there is no theoretical model underlying the categories.

Lawson (1991) was unable to categorise 40% of his research participants by using the original FLC classification. This conceptual and methodological problem has also been identified by Gibson and Yiannakis (2002) and Oppermann (1995b), who notes that the variety of modern family concepts makes it difficult to address all circumstances in family life, as well as to collect, standardise and operationalise data related to the FLC.

For this reason, studies have adjusted the FLC stages by integrating modern family circumstances (Collins & Tisdell, 2002; Kapinus & Johnson, 2003). Bojanic (1992) increased the heterogeneity with a modernised FLC concept by adding the two dimensions 'single parents' and 'middle-aged couples without children' and accomplished a classification rate of 89% (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1: Modernised family life cycle



Source: Bojanic (2011, p. 408).

Tourism studies often use the FLC as a conceptual framework to explain phenomena in the field but the categorisation is often linked with age rather than with family stage (see e.g. Collins & Tisdell, 2002; Sund & Boksberger, 2007). This is explained by an assumed close correlation between the variables age and stages in the FLC, which tempts researchers to build homogeneous categories depending on available data sets (see e.g. Kattiyapornpong & Miller, 2009).

Collins and Tisdell (2002, p. 134) define the FLC as a model that “is used to explain variations in travel patterns through life, starting when individuals are young and single and ending with the death of the last partner.” This definition ignores the fact that even when one person survives their spouse, there is still family in peoples’ lives, like children or grandchildren or even housemates and caregivers in nursing homes. Thus,

Gibson (2002) and Gibson and Yiannakis (2002) advocate employing individual life courses that consider life context to address conceptual issues associated with the FLC. Studies applying the FLC as a static conception often ignore real-life conditions and tend to overgeneralisation. This critique is not new since Neugarten (1979) stated that a stage theory oversimplifies human development. In modern societies, age is increasingly meaningless and even irrelevant because timing and sequences of life events are becoming less regular, and this change favours a 'fluid life cycle' perspective.

2.1.5 Age-related concepts

Biological age as an universal demographic descriptor is commonly applied in tourism research to describe seniors and their travel behaviour (Pearce, 2005, p. 28). Literature accepts the fact that the simple age effect alone does not provide sufficient explanatory power to understand demographic phenomena. For this reason, recent tourism researchers have utilised self-perceived or cognitive age instead of chronological age to analyse older people's tourism behaviours (Gonzalez, Guez, Miranda, & Cervantes, 2009; Sellick, 2004). This approach is not free of criticism, though, due to a possible correlation between self-perceived or cognitive age and chronological age (Moschis, 2012).

To address the existing cultural and social environment of the elderly in a broader context, literature on senior travellers recognises cohort or generational effects as underlying age-related factors of travel behaviour (Beldona, Nusair, & Demicco, 2009; Li, Li, & Hudson, 2013; Lohmann & Danielsson, 2001; Sund & Boksberger, 2007).

Cohort effects suggest that behaviour is not entirely subject to aging but also to earlier experiences and early socialisation (Lehto, Jang, Achana, & O'Leary, 2008; Lohmann & Danielsson, 2001). Based on this assumption, generational differences in lifestyle and tourism behaviour can be explained by these effects.

Strauss and Howe (1991, p. 30), who laid the groundwork for generational theory, argue that the foundations of cohorts are shared epochal events, which produce collective behavioural traits. Strauss and Howe (1991, p. 26) claim that cohorts have a better validity than age classifications and suggest reading social history along a 'generational diagonal'. In their study on the US population, the authors build generational segmentations including the 'GI Generation' (born between 1901 and 1924), 'Silent Generation' (1925–1943), 'Boomers' (1944–1964), '13th Generation' (1965–1981), and 'Millennium Generation' (1982 to the present).

The theory of generational effects allows a reasonable age delimitation for senior tourists by the distinction between the Silent Generation and the Baby Boomers, (Moody, 2009), terms that are widely applied in studies on the tourism behaviour of older adults. Due to socio-historical differences across cultures and nations, cohort analysis of differing travel markets show essential dissimilarities. For example, the historic circumstances of World War II resulted in a 10-year delay in the development of German baby boomers.

2.2 The theoretical discussion of seniors' tourism behaviour: An overview

Recent studies on seniors' tourism behaviour have delved into various areas of the phenomenon. The majority of studies adopt quantitative research designs and pay little attention to the qualitative research paradigm (Nimrod, 2008b). Literature criticises the dominance of quantitative research and positivist stances in senior tourism studies. (Nimrod, 2008b; Patterson, 2006; Phillimore & Goodson, 2004; Sedgley, Pritchard, & Morgan, 2011).

Some researchers have examined psychological motivational aspects of senior tourism. A commonly applied method is factor analysis to extract underlying dimensions associated with senior tourism motivation (C.-F. Chen & Wu, 2009; Hsu et al., 2007; L. Huang & Tsai, 2003; Jang et al., 2009; Jang & Wu, 2006; Sangpikul, 2008). Studies identify motivational push factors such as 'novelty-seeking,' 'ego-enhancement,' 'socialisation,' 'self-esteem' and 'rest and relaxation' (Jang et al., 2009; Jang & Wu, 2006; Sangpikul, 2008). C.-F. Chen and Wu (2009) add 'escaping' and Sellick (2004) 'nostalgia' to the motivational spectrum. Identified pull factors include, for example, 'cleanliness and safety', 'facilities, event and costs' and 'natural and historical sights' (Jang & Wu, 2006) as well as 'cultural and historical attractions', 'travel arrangements and facilities', and 'shopping and leisure activities' (Sangpikul, 2008).

Others have researched distinct aspects of travel behaviour such as expenditure patterns (Hong, 1999; Jang & Ham, 2009; Littrell, Paige, & Song, 2004) or more descriptive socio-economic characteristics of seniors (Horneman, Carter, Wei, & Ruys, 2002; Lohmann & Aderhold, 2009; Romsa & Blenman, 1989; Sonntag & Sierck, 2005).

Hong's (1999) examination of the US senior population shows that the older population spend most of their money on transportation, food, accommodation, sightseeing and entertainment. Travel expenditures increase in the earlier stages of aging and decline throughout the later years. In this aspect, the study depicts contradictory results to Jang and Ham's (2009) analysis which found greater expenditure among the older US population compared with the younger baby boomers.

Batra (2009) investigated the impact of social-demographic factors on seniors' travel behaviour in Thailand and found that significant differences in variables such as length of stay, accommodation preferences and types of tour according to an individual's marital status, age and education. Sonntag and Sierck (2005) and Lohmann and Aderhold (2009) employed quantitative analysis when they researched the travel behaviour of German seniors and identified specific tourism behaviours. Seniors are willing to spend more money on vacation than are younger age groups, which is also reflected by seniors travelling more and staying longer at the destination compared with younger travellers. The use of basic accommodation decreases with age – seniors prefer to purchase travel packages and comfort and luxury are also increasingly important to them. German elderlies' travel is less seasonally dependent compared with the travel of younger age groups, and the elderly prefer domestic destinations, even though the outbound traveller market of senior citizens is also growing. Health tourism increasingly becomes a popular type of travel in later age.

Other studies concentrated on traveller constraints influenced by age and other socio-demographic factors have found that aging plays a fundamental role in identifying

travel barriers (C.-F. Chen & Wu, 2009; Fleischer & Pizam, 2002; Kattiyapornpong & Miller, 2009; Kazeminia, Del Chiappa, & Jafari, 2013; S. Lee & Tideswell, 2005; Wilson & Little, 2005). A prominent model in senior tourism studies is Crawford, Jackson, and Godbey's (1991) hierarchical constraints model which is discussed later in this chapter as a key concept (see section 2.3.1).

Some researchers have analysed the factors associated with non-travelling. Strain, Grabusic, Searle, and Dunn (2002) examined the ceasing of leisure activities in late life. Their study identified travelling as one of the leisure activities least likely to continue over a eight-year period for seniors 60 year and older. Zimmer, Brayley, and Searle (1995) researched the characteristics of those seniors who are not travelling and found that household income level is an predictor for not travelling.

McGuire et al. (1986) examined constraints to participation in outdoor recreation. They adopt a life course perspective and distinguish between 'limitors' and 'prohibitors.' Limitors reduce participation in a particular activity, while prohibitors prevent individuals from participating in certain activities, causing the activity to no longer be pursued. Their work is significant for the thesis because it provides an early attempt to include a developmental perspective to constraints. The life course is defined by seven age groups, which are assumed to be related to different life stages. Regarding the later life years, most apparent is the decrease of limitors and prohibitors (particularly limitors) due to 'lack of time' and 'lack of companions'. In the earlier senior years, the social component of a missing outdoor recreation partner is a stronger limitor, but this becomes less significant in later years. By the age of about 45 years, personal health becomes an important prohibitor to pursuing outdoor

recreation, and by about 60 years, it is a significant limiter. Socio-demographic transitions within the last 30 years may result in different constraint patterns in present times than those suggested by McGuire, Dottavio, and O'Leary (1986).

Huang and Tsai (2003) applied factor analyses and calculated three travel barrier factors of Taiwanese senior tourists. The first factor is 'traveller's ability', which implies physical ability, fear, financial considerations, and the lack of a travel companion. The second factor is 'travel direct suppliers', which contains dietary considerations, lack of information, and fear of wasting time without having a good time. The third factor is 'travel indirect motivators', which consists of fear of hassles, finding time, and age problems.

An examination of senior travellers in Israel discovered that self-assessed health conditions and level of income are constraining factors in the travel participation of elderly (Fleischer & Pizam, 2002). The authors also identified that lack of time is no longer a barrier to travel in senior age. In contrast, C.-F. Chen and Wu (2009) found that time commitments still exist in senior age which, together with perceived risk and personal reasons, constrain seniors' propensity to travel overseas.

Some studies have examined the phenomenon of temporary migration in old age to warmer climates, focusing on related motivations, behaviours, characteristics of tourists and their impact on, and interaction with, the host destination (Gustafson, 2002; Viallon, 2012). Other researchers focus on the market segmentation of senior travellers (Faranda & Schmidt, 2000; Hsu & Lee, 2002; J. Kim, Wei, & Ruys, 2003; Shoemaker, 1989, 2000). Hsu and Lee (2002), for instance, identified three segments

of senior motor-coach users in the US: 'dependents', 'sociables' and 'independents'. J. Kim et al. (2003) applied a descriptive analysis of neural network methodology to categorise Australian senior travellers based on their travel motivations and travel concerns. They identify the subgroups 'active learner' (interest in personal growth, experiences, activities; concerns about falling ill or doctor availability), 'relaxed family body' (interested in relaxation and VFR), 'careful participants' (motivated by experiences and concerns about well-being and health), and 'elementary vacation' (interested in embracing and observing new experiences; concerns about long coach travels and hygiene and sanitation). All of these studies share findings that the senior tourism market is heterogeneous in nature and that sub-segments among older people show a great variety in their tourism behaviour and tourist practices.

Tourism literature also compares different senior cohorts to identify age-related variations in behaviour (e.g. Beldona et al., 2009; Jang & Ham, 2009; Lehto et al., 2008; Li et al., 2013). Several studies mention the difficulties that occur in using chronological age to explain the travel behaviour of seniors but age or age groups are still commonly used to speculate about underlying processes determining specific behaviour (Patterson, 2006; Sedgley et al., 2011). Faranda and Schmidt (2000, p. 8) criticise the use of "magical age" classifications and Pearce (2005, p. 2) warns against the 'sin' of homogeneity in tourism market research. Hence, there is the need for a better understanding of the heterogeneity of senior customers (Ginevičius et al., 2007, p. 7; Gonzalez et al., 2009, p. 157).

A number of studies examined different tourism behaviours by applying generational theory. Lehto et al. (2008) compared Baby Boomers and the Silent Generation in the

US and Canada. Baby Boomers show stronger interests in adventures, personal challenges and cultural/novelty experiences while the Silent Generation pursues more calm and passive travel experiences. Pennington-Gray, Fridgen, and Stynes (2003) contrasted the two cohorts aged 55 to 64 years (Depression Babies) and 65+ years (The Roaring Twenties Generation) and examined generational differences of the Canadian population regarding their travel preferences. The longitudinal study applied data from two surveys conducted in 1983 and 1995. It was found that five out of ten preferences differed significantly between the two cohorts: beaches for swimming and sunning, budget accommodation, shopping, nightlife and entertainment, and theme parks and amusement parks. All dimensions showed higher values for the younger age group and increased their importance between the reference years 1983 and 1995, no matter the cohort.

Y.-C. Huang and Petrick (2010) also found differences in travel behaviours between Baby Boomers and the younger age cohorts Generation X (born between 1965 and 1976) and Generation Y (1977 and 1994). Baby Boomers use newspapers as a source of travel information significantly more often and are more engaged in visiting museums, golfing, tennis and hunting and fishing than the younger age groups. Li et al. (2013) included also the Silent Generation in their examination of tourism consumer behaviour and found significant differences between cohorts.

Gonzalez et al. (2009, p. 158) used a different approach and investigated differences between cognitive and chronological age regarding the travel motivation of a population in Spain. 'Active livers' perceive their subjective age to be lower than their chronological; they prefer city and family trips and tend to spend more money on

accommodation. 'Stable passives' rate their subjective age as equal or higher than their chronological; they show more inactive travel behaviours, prefer travel packages and use buses more often as a means of transport.

There are both cultural dissimilarities and parallels in travel behaviour among the senior population. S. Chen (2012) researched cultural behavioural differences between Chinese and US senior travellers. Both senior populations prefer social and family-related travels and short trips, and are motivated by a desire to escape from their daily routine. Differences exist in travel frequency, means of transport and booking behaviours: compared with Chinese senior travellers, the US seniors travel more often, prefer cars as a means of transport, and arrange their trips often independently. S. Lee and Tideswell (2005) examined tourism constraints of Korean seniors and found that Confucianism plays an important role in shaping tourism behaviour. Findings identified, for example, that a feeling of guilt constrains some Korean seniors from travelling, possibly because they have spent a lifetime focusing strongly on work and non-leisure activities.

A more recent topic of research is seniors' use of internet technologies and how this affects their tourism behaviour (Beldona et al., 2009; Graeupl & McCabe, 2004; Nimrod, 2012). Seniors are increasingly adapting to the internet and other forms of information and communication technologies (ICT) (Beldona et al., 2009; Deutsches Zentrum für Altersfragen, 2010; Nimrod, 2012; Viallon, 2012), which will likely play a greater role in their tourism planning and participation in the future.

Even though there exists a variety of studies focusing on the internet usage of 'silver surfers' (elderly who are actively using the internet) and its impact on their well-being and social connectivity, not much research links ICT specifically with older tourists and their travel. Nimrod (2012) applied qualitative 'netnography' and investigated how online communities are used before and after travelling. Another field applies to seniors' information search behaviour as part of the tourism decision-making process, which has been analysed, for example, by Graeupl and McCabe (2004).

Some studies focus on specific living situations of seniors. Gladwell and Bedini (2004) found a change of travel motivation for those mature adults who are caregivers for family members or relatives. Caregivers lose their enthusiasm for travelling and functional travel purposes become more important than leisure motives. Identified constraining dimensions to travel are physical (accessibility, time, mobility and energy), social (financial and family support) and emotional (fear, loss of freedom and spontaneity). The escape theme as a travel motivation was also reported by Mactavish, MacKay, Iwasaki, and Betteridge (2007) for parental caregivers of children with mental disabilities and adds that destination choices are driven by health-related considerations.

Not much research exists that establishes linkages between old age and visiting friends and relatives (VFR) activities. Studies found that VFR is characterised by considerable differences in expenditures (G. Lee, Morrison, Lheto, Webb, & Reid, 2005), life cycle stages and age (Asiedu, 2008; Seaton & Palmer, 1997). Southall (2012) found that travelling with the extended family including grandparents became a more popular type of travelling. Data drawn from the German independent tourism research

association FUR (released in 2008) add weight to the argument that the phenomenon of visiting friends and relatives is affected by age. Data indicate that VFR-related travel plays a stronger role in the lives of the German population aged older than 70 years than for other populations (Aderhold, 2011). P. Pearce (2012) suggests that not only is the personal dimension meaningful in returning to familiar places but also the place and associated memories. This might apply in particular to seniors who have survived many of their relatives and for whom a familiar place may give more meaning to their reminiscences.

The majority of quantitative studies neglect the developmental nature of aging processes, an oversight criticised by some researchers (Oppermann, 1995b; Pennington-Gray & Kerstetter, 2001). Not many studies have examined the extent to which historical and contextual life events influence the travel behaviour of seniors. In this context, Sedgley et al. (2006, p. 43) state that “it is not possible to study older people’s leisure behaviour through ‘snapshot’ research”, which isolates one moment in time. Nimrod (2008b) claims that tourism scholars need to pay more attention to the context and life structure of the individual.

Recent studies identified this research gap and focused on the meanings behind the phenomenon of seniors’ travel behaviour by using qualitative and biographic study designs. Qualitative narrative biographic interviews are employed to gain first-hand insights and an emic perspective on seniors’ travel behaviours across the life course (Blichfeldt, 2007; Ladkin, 1999; Nimrod, 2008b, 2012; Sedgley et al., 2006).

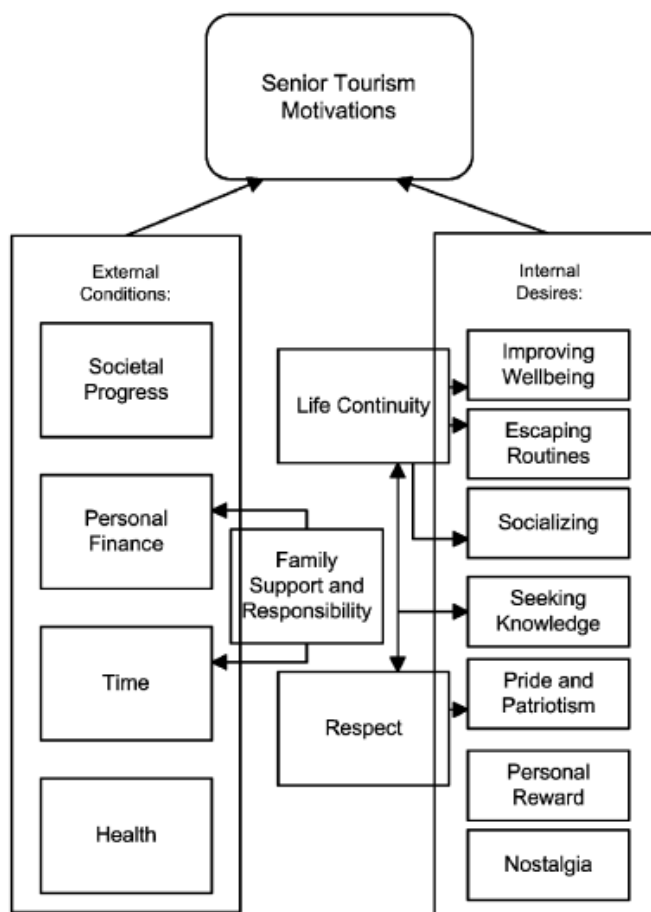
Gibson (2002) conducted the first qualitative study on the meaning of travel in retirement. The study carried out eleven face-to-face semi-structured interviews with seniors between 65 and 90 years to uncover the meanings behind their leisure travel patterns. Findings of this grounded theory study suggest that the meaning of leisure in people's lives is dynamic and subject to transitions as they encounter different life phases. The post-retirement period is not only associated with more freedom but also with a stronger focus on family-related tourism activities. Findings also indicate that travelling can become a more meaningful activity in later life, when older adults are striving for spirituality or educational gratification while they are away.

Nimrod (2008b) followed a similar method when she conducted 20 in-depth interviews to investigate perceptions of US citizens and linkages between their retirement and tourism behaviour. The study, using the grounded theory method, identified five main themes. The first theme addresses 'retirement as an opportunity', given that seniors often have fewer obligations and more discretionary time. 'Negotiating constraints' refers to limitations such as health, income, caregiving or a lack of travelling partners. Strategies to overcome these constraints are 'changes in tourism style', 'reduction', 'finding substitutes' and 'ignoring constraints'. Another theme is the 'spill over' between leisure and tourism, which describes the fluid transition between leisure as daily practice and tourism activities. This category shows that leisure activities of retirees and tourism can be strongly interrelated. 'Old interests' is a theme, which addresses interests or hobbies. Interest and hobbies are continuous and only slightly affected by retirement. The last theme is 'quality time with loved ones', which implies the importance of VFR activities in retirees' life. Sub-themes relate to the type of

travel, which can be either to friends or family, with children or grandchildren, or to a rented or owned holiday house with loved ones.

Hsu et al. (2007) conducted 27 in-depth interviews with Chinese seniors aged between 55 and 90 years. The study adopted a grounded theory approach focusing on leisure tourism motivations and factors influencing travel realisation and participation. Findings suggest that external conditions (societal progress, time, finances and health) and internal desires (for example, improving well-being or escaping routines) impact on seniors' travel motivation (Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2: A model of senior tourism motivations



Source: Hsu et al. (2007, p. 1269).

Underpinning age-related concepts of Hsu et al.'s (2007) study are continuity and respect theories, which are found to affect the internal components of tourism motivation. In fact, there is not much research that links senior tourism phenomena with appropriate theoretical gerontological concepts. For this reason, Sedgley et al. (2011) call for a cross-disciplinary dialogue between gerontology and tourism scholars.

Sedgley et al. (2006) studied the life course of a 79-year-old woman to gain better insights into older women's leisure behaviour. The biographic approach enabled a contextual understanding of the woman's leisure behaviour in terms of social, cultural and historical circumstances. In summary, the review on senior tourism literature uncovers some criticism and research gaps in the field. The main criticism of existing literature revolves around the quantitative research paradigm in tourism studies, an often-presumed homogeneous senior population, a static conception of age, and the lack of integrating interdisciplinary theories, such as gerontology. Tourism studies also heavily emphasise 'touristcentricity' and underlying social components are often neglected (Franklin, 2007, p. 132).

2.3 The theoretical framework of the thesis

In addition to accepted traditional behavioural theories in the field of tourism, a number of other research areas fertilise the thesis. Constraints and facilitators are a well-accepted approach in the tourism domain, whereas only few studies have adopted ecological systems theory, human development and theories on the life course, and gerontological approaches.

2.3.1 Tourism constraints and facilitators

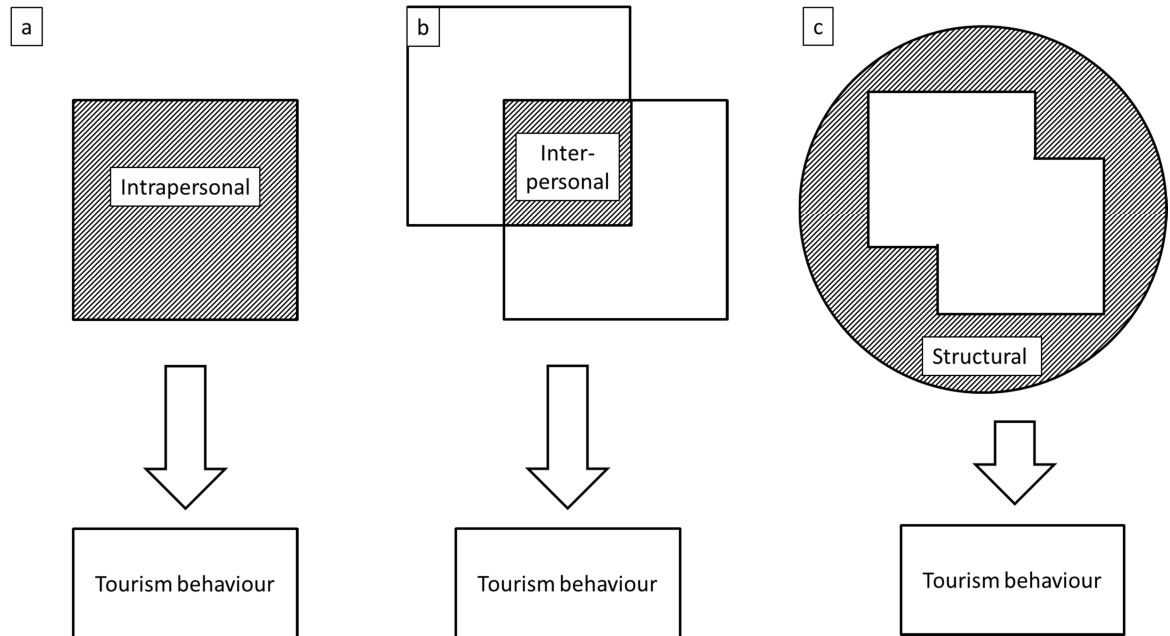
Seniors' life events and associated implications for tourism can be understood within the context of travel 'constraints' and 'facilitators'. Constraints models are applied to comprehend behaviour as being affected by the existence of constraining factors. The concept of constraints and facilitators has been adopted by the domain of tourism from two angles: geography and leisure.

The geographer Torsten Hägerstrand (1970) developed a constraints model in the 1970s, based on the presumption of the inseparability of time and space. According to Hägerstrand's time-geographical approach, activities are constrained by time-space prisms, which build the frame of the human action-space behaviour. The model distinguishes between 'capability' (biological limitations), 'coupling' (interpersonal dimensions) and 'authority' constraints (opportunities to participate in tourist attractions), and was adopted in a tourist practice context by Steinbach (1989, 2003).

Much constraints research has been done in the field of leisure since the 1980s. The initial leisure constraints models focused on structural barriers and defined the impact of constraints in terms of participation or non-participation in leisure activities. Crawford and Godbey (1987) enhanced the theory by adding a tourism preference dimension and also contributed to the constraints discourses with their differentiation of intrapersonal, interpersonal and structural constraints. Figure 2.3 illustrates how different constraint levels may influence tourism behaviour. Intrapersonal constraints link to the psychological state and psychographic characteristics (Figure 2.3 a), interpersonal constraints reflect social interactions and capabilities (Figure 2.3 b) and

structural refers to a broader context, which lies outside the individual (Figure 2.3 c) (Silva & Correia, 2008).

Figure 2.3: Constraints influencing tourism behaviour



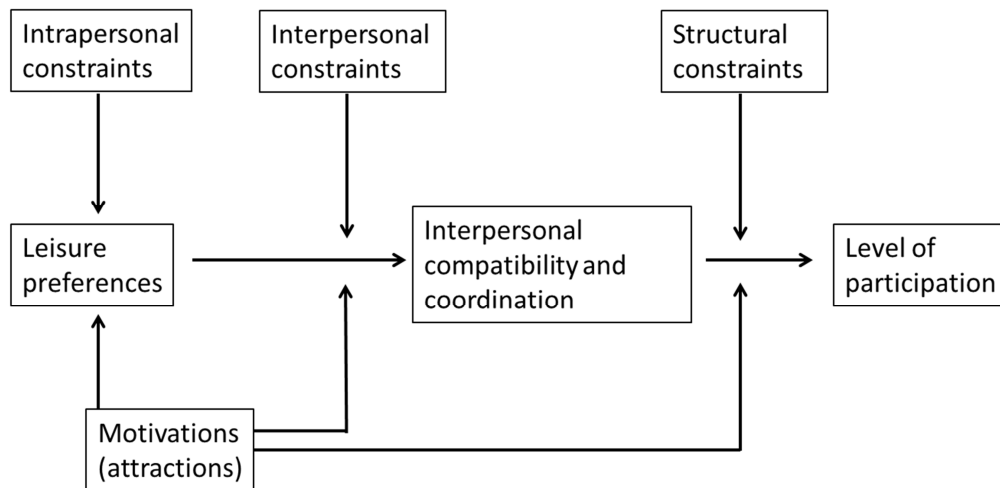
Crawford, Jackson and Godbey (1991) made a substantial contribution to the field with their work on a hierarchical model of leisure participation. In this advanced model, higher constraints levels are only encountered if intrapersonal barriers are negotiated and overcome. After preferences are shaped, leisure activities are constrained first on the interpersonal and then on the structural level.

The hierarchical model (Figure 2.4) implies a negotiation process, which was already insinuated by Jackson and Searle (1985) who suggest that constraints do not necessarily result in non-participation behaviour but maybe in a change of activity. This argument becomes more explicit with the later work of Jackson, Crawford, and

Godbey (1993, p. 4), who state that leisure participation depends on a negotiation process based on three propositions:

- There is a variety of negotiation strategies based on encountered problems, awareness, skills, alternatives and modification options.
- Constraints often do not result in non-participation.
- Negotiation results in different participation; for example, altered time schedules or frequency.

Figure 2.4: The hierarchical/negotiation model



Source: Jackson (2005b, p. 6).

Jackson (2005b) distinguishes between three negotiation processes: 'reactive responses' relate to non-participation in a desired activity, 'successful proactive' are responses that are not influenced despite the constraints, and 'partly successful proactive responses' are based on altered participation due to constraints.

In a further step, Raymore (2002, p. 37) contributed with a paradigm shift to the domain of leisure behaviour. The author incorporated, from ecological perspective, facilitators into the constraints-dominated theoretical discussion of leisure participation, proposing “that the absence of constraints does not necessarily lead to participation”. Facilitators encourage individuals into leisure activities by helping them to form preferences. In this sense, facilitators do not simply act as the opposite of constraints but rather contribute together within the constraints approach to a theoretical consistency in leisure participation models (Raymore, 2002). Pennington-Gray and Kerstetter (2002) advocate adopting facilitators to better understand tourism participation.

Kazeminia, Del Chiappa, and Jafari (2013) applied the constraints model in their study on senior tourism behaviour. The study proposes some modifications of the model for elderlies. First, interpersonal constraints (lack of a travel companion, spending time with family) affect not only the compatibility and coordination of travelling but also leisure preferences and participation. Second, the authors give physical constraints a terminating position as they can influence the tourism participation of ill seniors.

The constraints approach is not free from criticism, reflecting the fruitful discussion on the originally assumed insurmountability of leisure barriers. Samdahl and Jekubovich (1997, p. 445) argue, more fundamentally, that the constraints theory views leisure participants as passive responders rather than active agents, which disregards the “dynamics in people’s lives”. The authors enhance the constraints model by adopting a more finely graded differentiation of the sociological leisure dimension and dividing interpersonal constraints into four sub-themes. Based on grounded theory, the

researchers identified the sub-themes 'making time for self', 'coordinating time with others', 'compromise on activity' and 'significance of sharing'. Samdahl and Jekubovich (1997) also found sequential inconsistency in the hierarchy order and criticised that studies ignore the diverse effects of constraints on behaviour.

Nadirova and Jackson (2000) accept this criticism by suggesting that constraints or domains of constrained leisure may have differing intensities and arrays. Findings showed that constraints inhibit frequency or level of involvement in activities rather than absolutely blocking participation. Nadirova and Jackson (2000) also argue that constraints are not only negotiated between intrapersonal, interpersonal and structural dimensions, but also within each dimension, and in a sequential order. They suggest that, for example, costs and a lack of skills operate as a major barrier to initial participation.

Application of hierarchical constraints in senior tourism studies

In recent years tourism scholars have paid increasing attention to the constraints and facilitators approach (Gilbert & Hudson, 2000; Kattiyapornpong & Miller, 2009; Pennington-Gray & Kerstetter, 2002; Silva & Correia, 2008; Woodside et al., 2007). Most research so far has been focused on structural constraints using quantitative methods and employing predefined dimensions (Hudson & Gilbert, 2000).

Kazeminia, Del Chiappa, and Jafari (2013) adopted and modified Crawford, Jackson, and Godbey's (1991) hierarchical constraints model and identified intrapersonal, interpersonal and structural constraints. The authors used content analysis software to examine a travel blog. Findings suggest that, apart from health issues, intrapersonal

constraints have only minor impact on travel participation; instead, they help form tourism preferences. Interpersonal constraints, such as the lack of a travel partner or death of a spouse, were found to be the most influential of the three dimensions, while structural constraints are more limiting in nature, leading to a negotiation process rather than prevention of a travel activity.

Pennington-Gray and Kerstetter (2002) used Crawford, Jackson and Godbey's (1991) model in their research on nature-based tourism. They found that people older than 75 years perceive significantly fewer structural constraints to travel than do those in younger age groups. A similar development of commitment constraints was identified by Jackson (2005a). In a later study on cruise tourism constraints, Kerstetter, Yen, and Yarnal (2005) could not support the hierarchical three-dimensional model. Results of a factor analysis only corresponded with structural constraints, which explained the least amount of variance of all the factors. Other extracted constraints were 'personal' (which included also interpersonal elements), 'worry' and 'not an option'.

'Not an option' as a constraint was also found in K. Hung and Petrick's (2010) study of cruise ship tourists. The researchers developed a mixed-methods design and employed an individual measurement scale of cruising constraints, which supported intrapersonal, interpersonal and structural constraints dimensions. Conversely, Nyaupane, Morais, and Graefe (2004) had difficulties structuring nature tourism constraints in the three dimensions and found inconsistency at the structural level. Cost, lack of time and unavailability of areas did not show correlations, and only interpersonal constraints showed internal homogeneity.

Constraints and facilitators theories may offer an appropriate framework to explain linkages between life events and the travel behaviour of older people. Studies suggest that seniors' life courses show specific constraints, and that the relative importance of these different constraints changes with increased age. Even though constraints models face some criticism, the literature often acknowledges the value of the concept.

2.3.2 Ecological systems theory

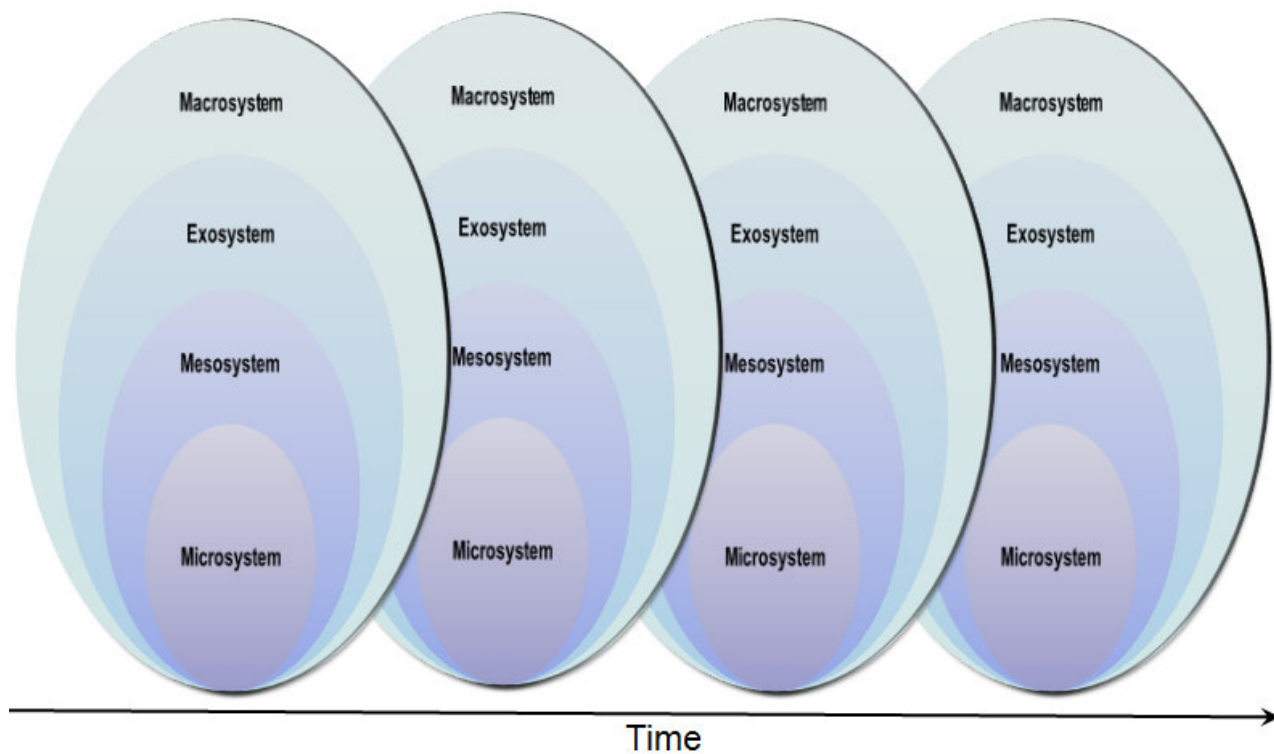
Ecological systems theory addresses problem situations of individuals by focusing on the analysis of the social environment. Bronfenbrenner (1994) developed the ecological systems theory in the early 1980s to explain human development across the life course. The original work addresses child development against a background of intra- and inter-familial processes.

Ecological systems theory defines human development within the context of different social system levels; these levels range from 'microsystems' to 'macrosystems'. The microsystem contains the pattern of individual activities and reflects experienced social roles and interpersonal relations (Figure 2.5). The macrosystem describes the external environment of an individual such as culture or lifestyle and also belief systems, ethnicity and material resources. Both dimensions affect human development and individual behaviour. Another two dimensions are the 'mesosystem' and 'exosystem'. The mesosystem refers to interrelations between different settings and environments while the exosystem forges the link between the immediate context of

the individual and external factors such as others' social networks (Bronfenbrenner, 1986).

In common with the FLC and life course approaches (see 2.4.3), ecological systems theory implies a temporal perspective on travel behaviour by presuming that behaviour changes over time. This dimension is reflected by the 'chronosystem' which implies that transitions or watersheds across the lifespan impact on the individual's or a family's development (Hosek, Harper, Lemos, & Martinez, 2008). Chronosystems can be distinguished as being normative, such as retirement, or non-normative, such as the birth of a descendant or the effects of multi-morbidity.

Figure 2.5: The ecological system



Application of ecological systems theory in tourism studies

Tourism research literature is increasingly paying attention to ecological systems theory. Most of the literature adopts the ecosystems concept to explain leisure or tourist constraints and facilitators (Kattiyapornpong & Miller, 2009; Silva & Correia, 2008; Woodside et al., 2007) or travel behaviour dimensions such as travel participation and companionship (Woodside et al., 2006; Woodside & Martin, 2008). Most tourism literature focuses on the dimensions of microsystems and macrosystems.

Significant work in the tourism field has been done by Woodside who combined ecological systems theory with a range of theories such as the folk theory of mind and the fits like a glove (FLAG) model to study human travel and leisure behaviour (Woodside et al., 2007) or micro-tipping point theory to investigate travel participation (Woodside & Martin, 2008).

Woodside and Martin (2008) understand the ecosystem as a contextual condition, which is used to understand human behaviour. Using McCracken's (1988) long-interview method, Woodside's studies employ narratives to explore the participants' lived experiences. Results indicate that travel and leisure behaviour is often based on automatic and unconsciously made choices depending on the ecological environment and historic factors, which the authors call 'wave-of-events' (Woodside et al., 2006).

Findings also support the theory of constraints and facilitators. According to Woodside et al. (2006), not only one but a whole combination (the authors suggest three to six) of facilitators and constraints leads to a certain travel outcome and therefore explains

travel behaviour. One of the participants studied was a recently retired senior in his early 60s. Because of his retirement, he and his wife spend more time travelling than they did before. At the same time, his retirement status changed his perception of money, and his plans for domestic trips within his home country, Australia, were influenced by increased prices for overseas travels.

Not much specific research interest is raised from an ecosystems perspective to address later stages in seniors' lives and the associated travel behaviours. The ecological systems theory is a promising approach that can be used to draw an appropriate picture of seniors' life circumstances by explaining life transitions and their impacts on travel behaviour from a socio-developmental perspective.

2.3.3 A developmental perspective on aging

A different perspective on tourism behaviour comes from disciplines such as human development and life course research. Elder (1994, p. 5) notes that "the later years of aging cannot be understood in depth without knowledge of the prior life course." Even though the term is rather descriptive in nature, the life course and involved stages can provide a good framework to help to understand problems, opportunities and tasks that individuals are confronted with when they pass through different periods in their lives (McGuire et al., 1986).

The life course concept differs from life cycle models (such as the FLC), which suggest that life is subject to a specific order. Scholars of human development such as Boyd and Bee (2009), Berger (2001, p. 5) and Levinson (1986) associate changes in the life course with physical (biological characteristics of the body), cognitive (for example,

memory, problem solving, intellectual skills) and social attributes (social skills, relationships). Human development theorists also defer in their relative emphasis on 'nature' (influential biological process within the individual) versus 'nurture' (forces based on experiences and which lie outside the person).

Levinson (1986) understands life transitions as eras with distinct bio-socio-psychological characteristics. Life events form these age-linked eras, beginning with pre-adulthood followed by early adulthood, middle adulthood and eventually late adulthood. Levinson (1986) suggests the term 'life structure' to describe adult development, which is formed by personal relationships with other individuals, groups, cultures or geographies. Relationships evolve over time (being subject to stability and change) and differ in their functional purposes. A large proportion of the life course consists of transitional periods and is structured by key choices and modifications, mostly driven by family building and occupation-related decisions.

Transitions in life can have a variety of properties. Grenier (2012) distinguishes transitions between fixed stages and fluid processes. Both definitions refer to changes from one state to another. Fixed stages have a categorical dimension while fluid processes incorporate a temporal element in the emergent transition. Strain et al. (2002), for example, identified that the loss of a partner (being a fixed transition) affects leisure participation of seniors. Age-related changes can be normative, normative history graded or non-normative (Boyd & Bee, 2009, p. 7 p). Normative (expected) changes are universal and occur at specific periods of development, depending on the individual's cultural background and underpinning contexts (Boyd & Bee, 2009, p. 4). Helson, Mitchell, and Moane (1984, p. 1079) refer to the 'social clock'

or 'age norms', which determine events at socially expected times. According to George (1993), 'off time' transitions are more likely to disrupt personal life than 'on time'. Surviving the spouse, for example, might be accepted and overcome more easily in old age than in younger years. Most life events are expected experiences.

Normative history-graded changes take into account historic forces that direct human development and behavioural changes and refer to cohort effects. Non-normative changes result from unique unexpected events and are specific to the individual; for example, divorce or the loss of a spouse.

Theories on human development differentiate between quantitative and qualitative changes (Boyd & Bee, 2009). In terms of tourism, travel behaviour can change regarding the number of trips per year or with respect to the type of trip (VFR, family holiday, adventure trip) and underlying motivations.

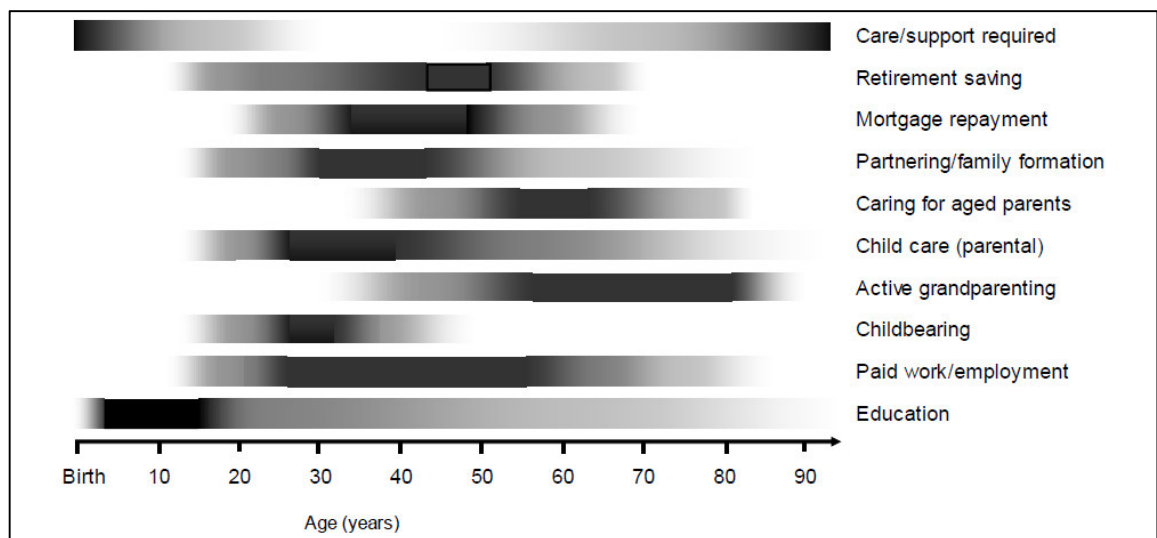
Jackson (2005a, p. 131) identifies a range of attributes associated with life transitions that influence leisure constraints. Transitions can be effectively universal or confined to individuals. They may be based on a single event or a whole series of events, which is called a multi-stage process. Life events are subject to personal and situational characteristics and experienced in a socio-historical context. Transitions can be received indirectly through life changes of others since individuals are embedded in social systems. Lastly, behavioural shifts are not isolated and multiple transitions may occur simultaneously.

This point is adopted by Scheiner and Holz-Rau (2013, p. 169) who note that life events may affect specific domains in life but often have further consequences and therefore

should not be considered in isolation. For instance, a serious health incident may affect a senior's physical condition and mobility. This, in turn, could require moving closer to supporting relatives. The health incident induced a further action (which under other circumstances could be considered a singular life event) and all of these events can have distinct consequences for the individual's travel behaviour.

Figure 2.6 gives an overview of the timing of selected expectable life stages in New Zealand (dark = high probability of life stage, light = low probability of life stage). The diagram shows that older senior age, in particular, is relatively free from structural constraints, something which is also reported in other studies (Fleischer & Pizam, 2002). Most life events relate to inter-familial relationships, a phenomenon also found by Martin, Deshpande-Kamat, Poon, and Johnson (2011).

Figure 2.6: Timing of selected life stages



Source: Statistics New Zealand (2009, p. 6). Key: dark = predominance of life stages

Application of behaviour development approaches in tourism studies

The life course perspective is adopted in several research areas including medical and health studies (Ben-Shlomo & Kuh, 2002; Kuh & Ben-Shlomo, 2004; Lynch & Smith, 2005), transport (Scheiner & Holz-Rau, 2013) and social science (Han & Moen, 1999; Pittman & Blanchard, 1996). The tourism domain pays only limited attention to life events and the life course of potential visitors and tourists and how related factors influence tourism behaviour. In senior tourism studies, life events are mostly investigated as a static phenomenon and not as a process that is entered and exited. From this perspective, seniors' tourism behaviours are analysed mostly in a retirement context (Gustafson, 2002; Nimrod, 2008b; Nimrod & Rotem, 2009; Tomljenovic & Faulkner, 2000; Viallon, 2012).

Ladkin (1999) employed work-history data and researched career patterns of hotel managers in the UK. Another study was undertaken by Blichfeldt (2007) who researched the complete 'travel career' from a family life cycle perspective and investigated how changes in the everyday context influence travel behaviour and travel experiences. The qualitative study examined travel experience aspirations and actual 'lived' experiences in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. A posteriori the author categorised the informants into the individual family life cycle model. Due to the small sampling, senior age was underrepresented in terms of quantity and diversity. Specific FLC transitions related to older age are the 'detachment from teenager', 'empty nesters flying around the world' and the 'loneliness of widowhood'.

Gibson (2002) examined different stages in older adults travel choices and experiences in retirement and Gibson and Yiannakis (2002) established linkages between psychological needs and tourist role preferences, analysing their relationships with the individual life course. Their study, which involves time series analysis, found that preferences in certain roles increase, decrease or show variability over the life span. Some role types, such as action and thrill seekers, active sport tourists or sun lovers, decrease in preference over the life course while other role types (such as the anthropologist, archaeologist, the high-class tourist or the organised mass tourist) gain more importance. Some other types, including the jetsetter, the escapist or the independent mass tourist, show an inconsistent pattern across the life span.

Small (2005) adopted four different angles of temporal analysis to compare the holiday experiences of women at different ages across the life span. Her study combines cross-sectional and longitudinal analysis to compare holiday experiences of girls aged 12, young single women in their early 20s, middle-aged women (in their 40s), and older women aged 65+.

2.3.4 A gerontological perspective

To gain a comprehensive understanding of senior tourism it is necessary to consider the perspective of the science that actually encompasses the essences of aging. Gerontologists provide a more finely graded perspective on the elderly and studies subdivide seniors into 'young old' (aged 60 to 75 years), 'old old' (75 to 85), and the 'oldest old' (85 years and older) (Boyd & Bee, 2009, p. 485). Scholars of gerontology

distinguish between physical, psychological, social (Brünner, 1997; Lehr, 2000) and also spiritual dimensions (Moschis, 1993).

As a matter of fact, older adults have to cope with declining body functions such as vision, hearing or mobility in their everyday life routine (Boyd & Bee, 2009). The most recognisable behavioural effect of aging is the slowing down of body functions. Furthermore, growing older is accompanied by potential heart disease and dysfunctions of the cardiovascular system and also the deterioration of the musculoskeletal system, such as joint and bones (Motel-Klingbeil, Wurm, & Tesch-Roemer, 2010). Other diseases, including metabolic dysfunctions and neurological disorders such as dementia, can become part of a senior's daily life. Being confronted with deteriorating health not only requires time-consuming doctors appointments but can also create financial burdens.

Aging also has a mental and cognitive dimension. Most seniors do not show signs of dementia or other memory defects and can cope effectively with everyday tasks. Moody (2009) states that about 20% of seniors 65 years and older only have mild or moderate mental impairments even though thinking processes decline with age as well as cognitive skills such as remembering, solving complex problems or paying attention. The changes in cognitive functioning also affect the properties of human decision making. Seniors, for example, show inconsistency in their decision making and a decline in their choice rationality (Tymula, Belmaker, Ruderman, Glimcher, & Levy, 2013).

Martin, Deshpande-Kamat, Poon, and Johnson (2011) note that coping with deteriorating health and a diminishing social environment may become a prominent life concern and the focus of much activity in very old age. This provides the background for Nimrod's (2008a) summary on leisure characteristics in older age, which includes declining participation due to age and health deterioration, the focus on less physically demanding leisure, and a shift from outdoor to indoor activities. Strain et al. (2002) suggest that those showing declining leisure participation review their situation (for example, by a leisure education intervention) due to the positive effects of leisure activities.

A number of theories attempt to explain the social dimensions of growing older and how people cope with the transitions to old age. Baum and Baum (1980) use the terms 'abandonment', 'liberation' and 'diachronic solidarity' in their discussion of the social dimensions of aging. Liberation falls in the successful aging paradigm (Moody, 2009) which is the focus of contemporary gerontological studies. The concept of diachronic solidarity addresses intergenerational conflicts and related issues such as financing the social security system in industrialised countries. In socially oriented democracies, intergenerational solidarity is the foundation of social welfare states, which is an ongoing and increasingly challenging political issue.

Abandonment and disengagement

Abandonment is described as a 'condition of generalised uselessness', which draws quite a negative picture of older adults in modern societies (Baum & Baum, 1980, p. 4). This argument is based on the presumption that older adults suffer some deprivation

compared with their earlier life stages and compared with younger age groups due to the relative status of their economic, social and psychological circumstances.

Accordingly, 'disengagement theory' explains the phenomenon of aging as social decline. The theory was developed by Cumming and Henry in the 1950s and is one of the earliest attempts to explain aging in a social context (Moody, 2009; Phillipson, 1998). The original focus of the theory concentrated on the role of death, dying and bereavement in the elderlies' life, and the resulting tendency of disengagement between older adults and others (Baum & Baum, 1980). The theory was also adopted to explain changes in the social environment of the elderly due to retirement from work, the moving out of children, and the seniors' dropping out of organisations and clubs.

Boyd and Bee (2009, p. 515) summarise the main characteristics of disengagement as the shrinkage of life space (decrease of social interaction), the increase of individuality, and the acceptance of these changes (active disengagement). The implied personality change of the elderly person due to their active disengagement from society is controversial and has led to in-depth discussions in literature.

Modernisation theories also fall under the abandonment category and explain the decline of status amongst the elderly due to developments in technology and its social implications. The theory follows the assumption that modern societies are shaped by transformations such as social and geographical mobility and discretionary knowledge through technological development and ITC. The first aspect leads towards geographically dispersed families and loose family ties, while the latter addresses the

devaluation of intelligence and life experience of older adults through ITC appliances, which provide omnipresent information (Moody, 2009).

The successful aging paradigm

The perspective of 'relative liberation' offers a contrasting approach to understanding aging; it considers retirement to be a gift from society to aged people (Baum & Baum, 1980). Retirement in the wealthier countries solely based on age rather than on physical conditions attributes a privileged status to the elderly that requires financial effort and social solidarity on the part of modern societies. This liberation results in additional discretionary time and gives the retirees the opportunity to do what they want and when they want (Patterson, 2006). From this angle, old age is viewed as a period in life associated with growth and opportunities (Liechty, Yarnal, & Kerstetter, 2012).

The contemporary discourse on aging revolves around the positive aspects of senior age, such as productivity, potentials and freedom, which is in contrast to traditional deficit models (Walter, 2006). The successful aging paradigm is emphasised in well-accepted theories such as 'activity and continuity theory', 'selective optimisation with compensation' (SOC) and, more recently, 'innovative theory on successful aging' (Nimrod & Kleiber, 2007). A small number of studies support the theory that pets can buffer some of the negative effects of a deteriorating social system (Rogers, Hart, & Boltz, 1993) which can, in turn, have implications for tourism behaviour (K.-P. Hung, Chen, & Peng, 2011; K. Hung & Petrick, 2010).

The perspective of continuation adopts the position that activities and personalities are independent of age and earlier lifetime behaviour of older adults is maintained as long as possible (Atchley, 1989). Seniors seek to maintain stable and familiar roles, suggesting that participation of the elderly in travel activities is pursued by habit. As a consequence, travel behaviour changes due to factors other than increasing age *per se*.

Related to this, activity theory concentrates also on the continuation of social involvement (Moody, 2009) by compensating for deficiencies with activities that can balance age-related social exclusion (for example, through retirement or illness) and the loss of functions. Activity as well as continuity theory rejects that biological changes and health deterioration result in elderlies having differing psychological and social needs compared with younger age groups, and therefore adopts an 'anti-aging perspective' (Baum & Baum, 1980, p. 23). Activity theory was developed in the 1950s by Havighurst, Neugarten and Tobin and shows strong linkages to leisure. The underpinning assumption here is that engagement in (leisure) activities is correlated with life satisfaction (Moody, 2009).

Selective optimisation with compensation (SOC) theory was developed by Baltes and Baltes, and also attempts to explain how seniors cope with age limitations and restrictions in order to maintain a mentally and physically healthy lifestyle (Boyd & Bee, 2009). Older adults compensate declining functions by optimising their skills, focusing on beneficial activities while abandoning ineffective and less meaningful tasks.

Nimrod and Kleiber (2007) build on the continuation theory and SOC approach with their innovation theory on successful aging. The theory can be used to explain the development of seniors' tourism experiences (Nimrod & Rotem, 2012). The theory suggests that elderly adopt new activities and experiences that facilitate life-satisfaction in terms of personal renewal and growth or the re-invention of self (Liechty et al., 2012; Nimrod, 2008a). According to (Nimrod, 2008a), innovation has an internal and external dimension with most new activities being triggered by the former (Nimrod, 2008a). Internal factors are associated with intrapersonal processes such as learning something new about someone's relationships, oneself and life in general (Nimrod & Rotem, 2012). External innovation is related with the environment visited in terms of seeing and experiencing something new.

According to Nimrod (2008a), strategies to manage social deprivation and the loss of functions and roles are the reinterpretation and substitution of activities. Reinterpretation processes shift the relevance and importance from lost activities to those that can be still pursued. The substitution strategy focuses on comparable new activities, which contributes to well-being in old age and shows strong linkages to leisure participation.

Social roles

The discourse on social role transitions takes a more sociological perspective. Roles are dynamic across the life course and constitute a significant characteristic for social behaviour (Biddle, 1986). Roles in the sociological context are defined as behaviour that is meaningful, structured and follows a predictable pattern (Allen & van de Vliert,

1984). The understanding of roles (for example, age, motherhood/fatherhood or occupational positions) is based on temporally locatable 'expectations', which are culturally and socially generated.

Transitions, which are triggered by life events, result in an exit/entry process from one role to another. The exit process is accompanied by a phase of doubts and the evaluation of alternatives. Role exits are managed more successfully if the transition is voluntary and potentially reversible (George, 1993). Late adulthood and senior age is associated with significant role transitions, which may be compensated by new role developments. Grandparenthood, for example, can replace other roles that have been lost in the course of later life. From the grandparent's perspective, a supportive relationship can bring pride for the old as a meaningful activity (Crosnoe & Elder, 2002). The grandchild involvement changes with time and studies suggest a decrease with age of the grandparent (Novak, 1997).

Social role allocations have fundamentally changed over the last few decades. In particular, women have taken on new roles regarding gender attitudes, employment, education and fertility (Lips, 2014). At the same time, the division of household and childcare tasks have increasingly become a shared responsibility, even though women still take on the major part (Barnett, 2004).

Application of gerontology theories in leisure studies

Silverstein and Parker (2002) researched the effect of leisure activities on the well-being and quality of life of elderly Swedes aged between 77 and 98 years. The research was underpinned by the assumption that meaningful activities compensate for social

and physical deficits in old age. Findings suggest that the transition from middle old age to older old age into the high 80s is not necessarily associated with withdrawal from leisure activities because a fair proportion of those in the study remained at the same level or even increased their activities. In particular, easy physical activities such as walking gain importance in old age. The increase of leisure activities has a positive influence on well-being, especially for those seniors who have minor family contact, are widowed or whose health is deteriorating.

Some researchers focus on negative life events and how leisure behaviour interrelates with managing traumas and losses (Hutchinson & Kleiber, 2005; Janke, Nimrod, & Kleiber, 2008a, 2008b; Kleiber, Hutchinson, & Williams, 2002). According to Nimrod (2008a) and Janke et al. (2008a), the main body of knowledge provides evidence that with increased age and deteriorating health, leisure participation declines, is pursued with less effort, and focuses on indoor activities. On the other hand, they also stress that these transitions in leisure behaviour are not found across the whole senior population and note that elderlies may also remain in their old structures or even enhance their leisure activities.

2.4 Summary

This chapter provided an overview of existing theories in the field of tourism behaviour with the focus on seniors. The overview identified gaps in literature, which encompasses relationships between life events and seniors' travel behaviour. There is currently limited tourism research attempting to conceptualise real-life conditions and contextual socio-historical circumstances of seniors. In fact, only a few studies have

been conducted focusing specifically on seniors and going beyond a descriptive examination of travel motivations and other behavioural aspects. Research approaches remain largely confirmatory and reproductive and little attention is paid on qualitative enquiries (Sedgley et al., 2011).

The theoretical framework of the thesis builds on tourism constraints and facilitators, ecological systems theory, human development and life course approaches and, lastly, gerontological concepts. In doing so, the thesis adopts an interdisciplinary perspective by reflecting and integrating contextualised real-life conditions. The main body of knowledge informing the thesis is drawn from Sedgley (2007), Sedgley et al. (2006, 2011), Nimrod (2008b) and Blichfeldt (2007) who examined travel behaviours of older adults by adopting qualitative inquiries. The thesis is also inspired by qualitative studies from Woodside et al. (2006), Woodside et al. (2007) and Woodside and Martin (2008) who suggest an ecological and constraints perspective on tourism behaviour.

The literature review had significant influence in the development of the research questions of the thesis. The evaluation of previous research and identified gaps suggests a methodological framework (see Chapter 4) which encompasses the individual life stories of older adults in order to understand the development of travel behaviour over the life course and to gain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of life events on seniors' tourism behaviour.

Chapter 3. The research context: Senior tourism in Germany

To understand the individual life course and travel history of the interviewees, it is useful to enrich their biographical data with information relating to the cultural-historical context of their lives (George, 2009; Saldaña, 2008). Theories on cohort or generational effects address the significance of the existing cultural and social environment in the broader context as an underlying temporal-related factor of travel behaviour (Lohmann & Danielsson, 2001; Sund & Boksberger, 2007). The first section of this chapter outlines the development of German tourism with a focus on the 20th century until the present time. The second section describes the current social and political conditions of seniors in Germany.

3.1 The socio-historic context of the German tourism development

3.1.1 The tourism development until World War II

In the beginning of the 20th century, most travels in Germany were individually organised and focused on sea, health or summer resorts, the so-called 'Sommerfrische'. At that time, only the wealthy social classes and aristocrats could afford leisure travels. Destinations were mostly within Germany to places near the traveller's residence, but there was also travel to neighbouring countries such as Switzerland or Italy (Spode, 2013). Alpine and hiking clubs became very popular among the German population. Club trips focused on mountain destinations in the European Alps and on regions in Central Germany such as Harz or Eifel.

World War I brought an end to leisure travels, and in its aftermath domestic destinations dominated the German tourism market (Freyer, 2001). For those who could still afford tourism, it was almost a national obligation to spend holidays within Germany and not to travel to other European countries. Societal developments brought paid holidays for the first time to the lower classes. Workers were entitled to take up to seven days off (Spode, 2013), but due to the low wages, this development had no meaningful impact on tourism activities.

Inflation and the Great Depression at the end of the 1920s resulted in financial crisis and mass unemployment. It was the wealthy part of the middle class, consisting of teachers, state employees and freelancers, who were the dominant tourism market segments at that time.

3.1.2 Travelling under National Socialism: Strength through Joy

With the rise of National Socialism in Germany, holidays were politically used to control the working class (Spode, 2013). From 1933 the organisation 'Kraft durch Freude' (KdF, Strength through Joy), which was part of the German Labour Front, arranged holiday packages for the working population on a national level to strengthen the German population for 'higher' political objectives (Freyer, 2001) and to increase loyalty to the home country (Spode, 2003). KdF programmes made travelling affordable and therefore accessible for the broader population, which was part of the social policy of the National Socialists. Initially the focus was on weekend and day trips or theatre and sport events. Later, the KdF extended their activities and became the world's largest travel operator at that time – they organised more than 37 million short

holidays between 1934 and 1939. With the beginning of World War II, KdF travels were abandoned and holidays were temporarily banned. In that period, the transportation system in Germany was reserved for military purposes.

3.1.3 The post-war period: A restart of the tourism development

In the aftermath of World War II, not many people travelled for leisure purposes in 1945 (Schildt, 1996). The German infrastructure and transportation system had been largely destroyed and the energy supply was restricted (Keitz, 1997). Travels at that time were often limited to the search for family members or the provision of food. The remaining functioning transport system was overused in the post-war period (Schildt, 1996) partly because the German population who had settled east of the rivers Oder and Neisse were forced to migrate to the remaining German part. The division of Germany into zones contributed to travel constraints, which eventually climaxed in a divided East and West Germany.

Hotels and accommodation infrastructure, especially in the larger cities such as Cologne and Berlin, were also largely destroyed during the war. The tourism infrastructure in Germany's northern sea resorts suffered terribly from the wartime destruction and recovered only slowly. Other tourism destinations such as Bavaria also experienced great damage to their hotels and private accommodations. The bed capacity in Bavaria, for example, dropped from 290,000 in 1936 to just 30,000 beds in 1946 (Dyck, 1986 in Keitz, 1997, p. 337), and it took the region more than 20 years to regain its pre-war bed capacity.

After the war, existing accommodation was often used by forced migrants and staff of the occupying forces. Not many Germans could afford the expensive remaining rooms and it was very common to stay with relatives. This changed with the positive economic development in the late 1950s and rooms and guesthouses became affordable again for the broader population. Overnight stays doubled between 1952 and 1960 (Schildt, 1996, p. 73), returning to pre-war levels. In the 1950s labour organisations began to offer affordable holidays for lower classes and the working population, with the aim of pushing forward the 'democratisation of travelling' (Keitz, 1997, p. 273). Similar models of 'social travels' were found all over Europe and partly exist even today.

In the early 1960s, the majority of the German population still did not travel for holiday purposes (Schildt, 1996). The main reasons for non-travelling during this actually prosperous period were, in particular, the individual economic situation and a lack of time (Schildt, 1996, p. 76). Many Germans prioritised purchasing their own home, modern consumer goods or a car over holiday travel. Those who had the opportunity to travel visited the Bavarian Alps, the Black Forest or the coast line of the North Sea. Outbound tourists centred on neighbouring German-speaking countries such as Austria and Switzerland but also Italy with its access to the Mediterranean Sea. Recreational travel was still dominated by the higher middle class, such as state employees and civil servants, and in general by the higher-educated population. At that time, pension reforms improved the financial situation of seniors, which increased their opportunities to travel.

Later in the 1960s a tourism boom emerged in Germany, the result of increased incomes, urbanism, the development and modernisation of transport, expanded telecommunications and tourism infrastructure, and increased holiday and leisure time (Freyer, 2001). The increasing prosperity (the so-called 'economic miracle') in Germany was accompanied by social developments such as the introduction of the Federal Holiday Benefits Act (BUrlG), which became effective in 1963 (Schildt, 1996, p. 79). The law defines the minimum annual leave and improved the opportunities for the broader population to go on holidays.

These economic and social trends were reflected in the change in means of transport (Schildt, 1996, p. 73). In 1954 about every second tourist (54%) used the train and every fifth the car to travel, but by 1970 two thirds of the German population used their own car to go on holidays, a trend facilitated by the increase in car ownership (Schildt, 1996, p. 74). Likewise, the number of train travellers dropped significantly (to 24%), but at the same time air traffic began to play a stronger role as a means of transport (8%). The expanded use of wide-bodied jets in the 1970s contributed in the following years to the further growth of outbound travels and opened destinations around the globe for the broader German population.

The increase in car traffic was linked with the development of caravan tourism. Numbers of campsites and caravans increased significantly in the late 1950s, driven by the family tourism movement at that time. Between 1958 and 1961 overnight stays at campsites doubled (Schildt, 1996).

Outbound destinations profited from this development, especially Spain, Scandinavia and Great Britain (Schildt, 1996). In 1968, for the first time, tourist numbers to outbound destinations surpassed those in the domestic market. Improved transport infrastructure in Europe, better opportunities to exchange currencies within European countries, and a global policy of détente, which enhanced the sense of security, contributed to this development.

The travel behaviour at this time was also a reflection of intergenerational conflicts that come to a head in the late 1960s (Spode, 2003). The younger generation developed new hedonistic travel motives and focused more strongly on self-realisation and enjoyment. This was accompanied by a travel paradigm that is best described by 'sun, sand and sex' and conflicted with conservative traditional travel images. The Mediterranean coastline became the predominant destination for younger Germans and accounted in the 1980s for about two thirds of the German beach holidays (Spode, 2003, p. 148).

3.1.4 Tourism in the German Democratic Republic

With the division of Germany, tourism development followed different paths in the two zones. The government of the Soviet-occupied zone introduced statutory holiday entitlements in 1946 (Spode, 2003). The association 'Feriendienst' (holiday services), as part of the 'Freier Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund' (Free German Trade Union Federation or FDGB), was the political body assigned to organise state-subsidised holidays of one to two weeks' duration. Holidays were arranged to increase the performance of the population and as a reward for merited socialists (Spode, 2013, p.

133). The Feriendienst held the monopoly on travel packages, which were affordable for the average East German worker. Like other consumer goods in East Germany, the availability of these travel experiences was very limited and it was not unusual to wait several years for a holiday.

Compared with their West German neighbours, car ownership in East Germany lagged by several years. Nevertheless, this development also resulted in a significant increase in travel by individuals. In 1989 about every second holiday in East Germany was individually organised (Spode, 2003). Camping represented an affordable type of holiday and became very popular among the East German population.

Due to the Iron Curtain, travelling abroad was only possible within countries of the Eastern bloc. In the 1970s about every fourth holiday was made abroad, mainly to the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland or Bulgaria (Spode, 2013, p. 11). During the late 1980s before reunification, East and West Germany showed largely similar travel propensities, with around 75% of each zone's population travelling each year.

3.1.5 The consolidation of the German mass tourism market

By 1995 the travel propensity in Germany had peaked at 78% (FUR, 2012) and it has shown only minor variations ever since. Relevant factors for this development were the increased travel experiences of Germans, the professionalisation of the tourism industry, and the systematisation of price policies.

Within the last few decades, the German population has transformed from a working- to a leisure-orientated society. Paid leave has increased from an average of 12 days in 1950 to 31 days in the 2000s (Freyer, 2001, p. 17). Changed working conditions (for

example, the automation of industrial production, and open offices) have resulted in a shift of priorities, with leisure time becoming a more dominant feature in many people's lives.

Currently, German travellers spend more money on travelling than tourists from any other country in the world. According to Yeoman (2012), Germans spend four times more per capita than US citizens and 40 times more than Chinese people. Recent trends in the German tourism market are associated with demographic changes and an increased consumer orientation as the industry recognises that travellers are price sensitive, experienced and increasingly demanding (FUR, 2009).

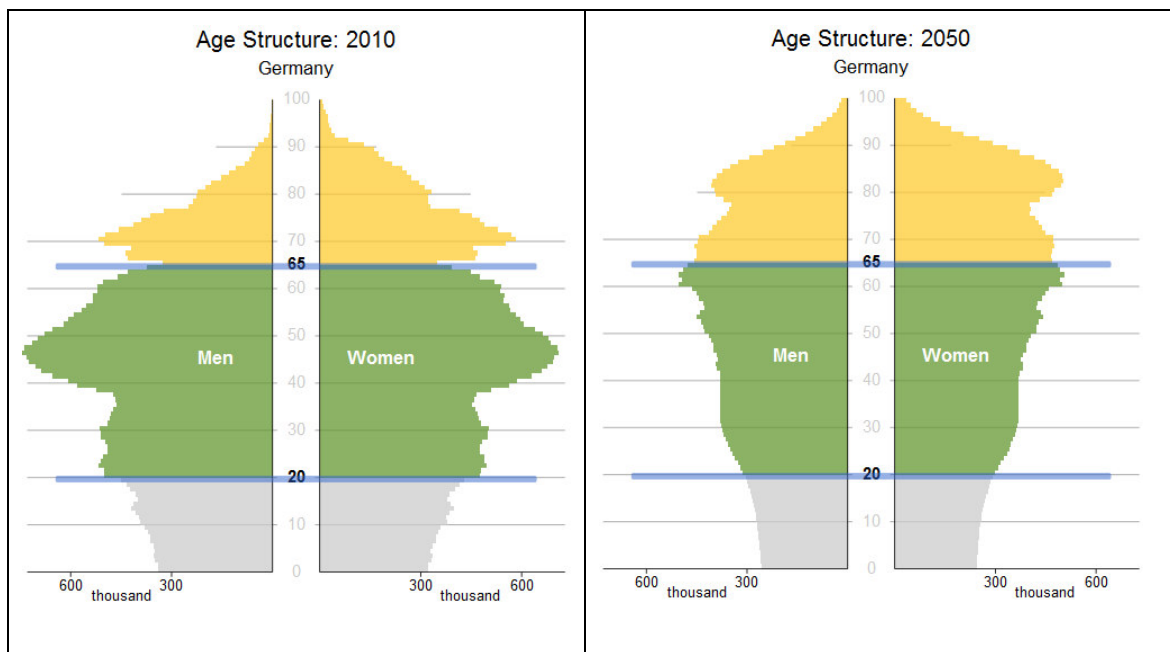
3.2 The aging population in Germany

After having provided the socio-historic context of the German tourism development the following section gives an outline of the socioeconomic conditions of seniors in Germany. In terms of demographic changes and an aging and shrinking society, Germany faces similar difficulties to other developed world societies. The German population pyramid between 2010 and 2050 shows a shrinking base leading towards a broader peak (Figure 3.1). Currently seniors aged more than 65 years represent 21% of the total population, but this proportion is forecast to increase to 35.9% by the year 2050 (Federal Statistic Office Germany, 2009b). Most remarkable is the forecast growth of those older than 75, which will reshape the demographic structure in Germany significantly.

Figure 3.1: Age distribution of the German population in 2010 and forecast for 2050

2010

2050



Source: Federal Statistic Office Germany (2009a).

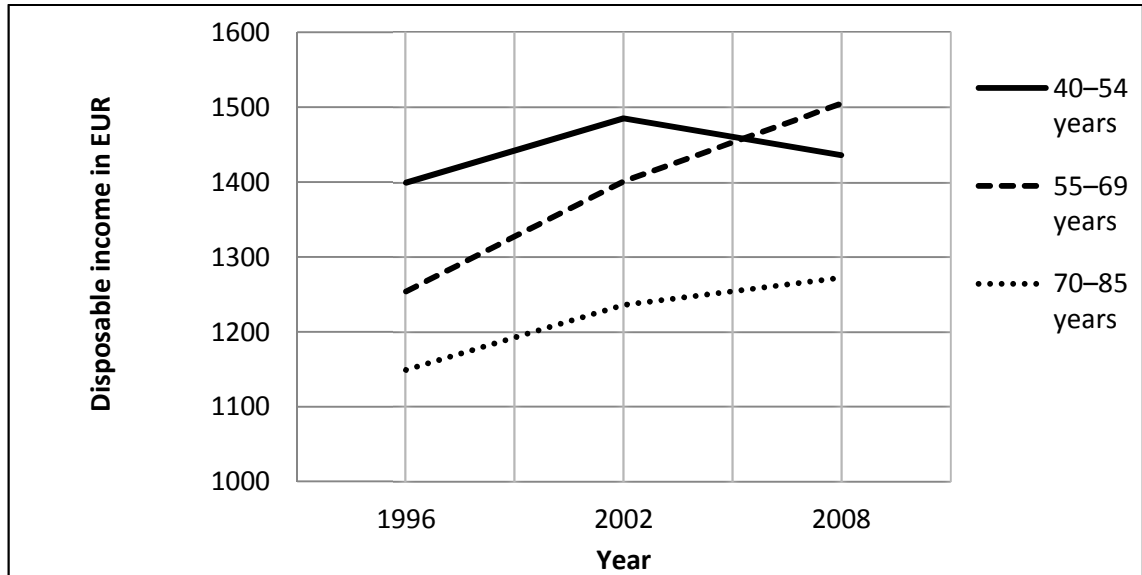
Between 1993 and 2009 the life expectancy at age 65 in Germany increased from 14.5 to 17.6 years for men and from 18.3 to 20.8 years for women (European Commission, 2011, p. 35). Forecasts suggest that German women will have a life expectancy in the year 2060 of 89.2 years and men of 85 years (Federal Statistic Office Germany, 2009b). Given that the average retirement age in Germany is 64 years (Rentenversicherung, 2013a), many seniors will have two decades without any work-related obligations.

3.2.1 Senior income and the social security system in Germany

Within the last 15 years the adjusted disposable income of German seniors has increased constantly (Motel-Klingbeil et al., 2010, p. 3). In 2008, the average monthly income of those aged between 55 and 69 years was EUR 1505, which represents the

highest income group in Germany. The income of those aged between 70 and 85 years old, however, was significantly less, by about EUR 230 (Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2: Disposable income in Germany by age groups



Source: Adapted from Motel-Klingbeil et al. (2010).

The main financial resource for German seniors is their retirement pension. Additionally, capital assets (e.g. disbursed life assurance), income from rental properties and inheritance contribute to average earnings among the older age groups. The average age of the German inheritor is about 55 years (Lilienthal, 2002).

The statutory pension insurance is subject to ongoing revisions regarding the legal retirement age, amount of pension, and contribution rate for the pension funds (Bundesministerium für Familie, 2013, p. 10). The statutory retirement age, which qualifies for the full pension pay, is aimed to be 67 years in the year 2031. Currently, the effective retirement age in Germany is about 61. The gradual raising of the age limit is justified by the demographic changes of the German population and resulting

pressures on the pension funds. For the same reasons, future generations will depend largely on private pension provision.

Despite the generally positive financial situation of the elderly in Germany, the gap between poor and rich is becoming increasingly evident (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2013). There exists a social security system which is financed by employers and employees and partly publicly subsidised (Bundesministerium für Gesundheit, 2013, p. 18). One of the main pillars of the German social security system is a guaranteed basic monthly income (EUR 382 for singles in 2013) and state-covered housing costs. Women in particular are affected by poverty in old age and often remain dependent on the male partner. In 2010, 4% of the German population aged older than 65 participated in employment, mostly in low-paid part-time work (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2013).

In 1995, the German statutory long-care insurance system was established and provides security in case of the need for long-term care (Bundesministerium für Gesundheit, 2013, p. 9). The benefits of the insurance are various, including professional care in nursing homes, mobile care services, or financial support for private care provided by relatives. A compensation scheme also exists, which enables holiday replacements for a nursing relative (Bundesministerium für Gesundheit, 2013, p. 46). Statutory insurance provides security only for basic care services and companies offer additional private care insurances to mitigate possible private additional payments (Bundesministerium für Gesundheit, 2013, p. 12). In 2012 approximately 2.46 million people received support from the long-care insurance.

The long-term care and health insurances are linked and both (as well as the other components of the German social security system) are compulsory. There are two health insurance schemes in Germany: public and private. The working population as well as retired people contribute to the statutory health and long-term care system. In 2013 the contribution rate for statutory health insurance amounted to 15.5% of individual income, and for retired Germans, 7.3% is paid by their pension insurance company into the scheme (Rentenversicherung, 2013b, p. 9). Additional contributions to health expenses are regulated by law, to a maximum of 2% of the gross income.

3.2.2 Health and social living conditions of German seniors

Seniors inevitably face the serious health issues that come with older age and which have implications for their travel behaviour. In 2008 more than 52% of Germans aged between 70 and 85 years suffered from high blood pressure and more than 46% from osteoarthritis, while nearly 29% of Germans aged between 55 and 69 are afflicted with high cholesterol levels and almost one sixth with rheumatoid arthritis (Motel-Klingbeil et al., 2010).

Deterioration of health affects the living conditions of the elderly. Particularly constraining are mobility problems, which may require walking frames, wheelchairs or even senior-friendly apartments. Moving into a retirement home is often the last stage of declining physical abilities and is associated with an abandonment of independency.

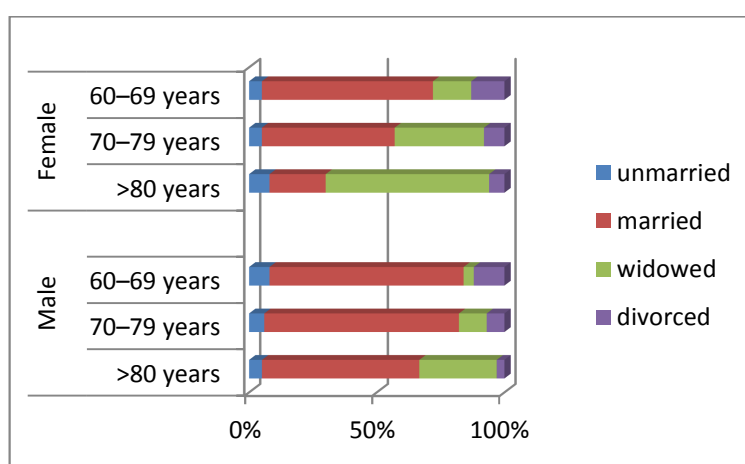
In 2009, of the 2.3 million Germans dependent on care, either at home or in nursing homes, five out of six were older than 65 years (Federal Statistics Office Germany, 2011, p. 82). Half a million Germans receive care from mobile care nursing services and

another million German seniors are nursed at home by relatives, such as their husband or wife, who may be a senior themselves. That means not only seniors with diseases are affected by health deterioration but also their spouses, who overtake responsibilities and caregiving duties (Moody, 2009).

With increased age, single households become a prominent lifestyle for the older seniors (Motel-Klingbeil et al., 2010). A deeper look at the German senior population reveals differences in older age groups and gender in terms of marital status and household compositions (Figure 3.3).

The proportion of those widowed increases with advanced age, which is particularly the case for the oldest old women due to higher male mortality rates (Motel-Klingbeil et al., 2010). Thirty-five per cent of female seniors in their 70s are widowed compared with only 11% of males in that age group. Divorce mainly occurs at a younger age and seniors over 60 years account for only about 5% of the divorces in Germany (Nowossadeck & Engstler, 2013).

Figure 3.3: Marital status of German women and men in 2011

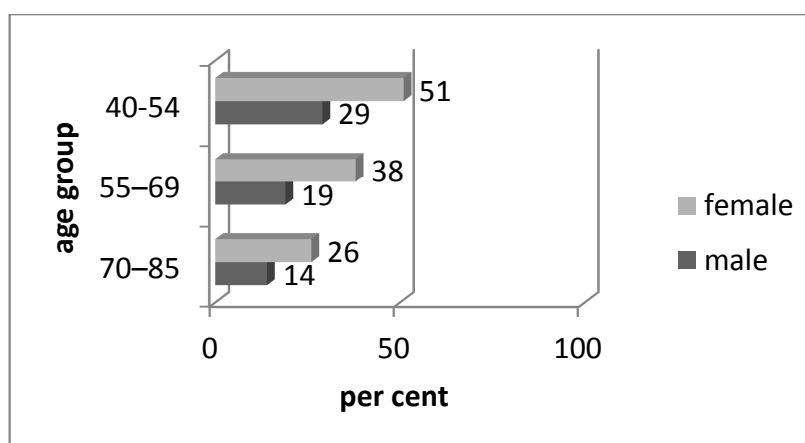


Source: Adapted from Nowossadeck and Engstler (2013, p. 4).

Coping with negative life events and difficult living conditions requires either external or internal support from family. About four out of five persons between 40 and 85 years old have positive relationships with their family members who can give potential support. Even though distances between the homes of seniors and their children have increased within recent years, the overall frequency of personal contact remains consistent.

Emotional support from outside the family declines with age and differs by gender since women experience a stronger social system than men (Figure 3.4). In 2008 only 26% of females and 14% of males aged between 70 and 85 years had at least one contact person outside the family to give comfort (Motel-Klingbeil et al., 2010). Within the last decade emotional support from outside the family has increased for younger seniors, in particularly women, and those who do not have spouses or children.

Figure 3.4: Emotional support outside the family



Source: Adapted from Motel-Klingbeil et al. (2010).

3.3 Summary

This chapter provided background information on the development of tourism in Germany in the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century. German tourism behaviour in this period has been largely shaped by the circumstances of World War II and the so-called economic miracle in the 1950s and 1960s. For the East German population, reunification with West Germany was a milestone in tourism development. In fact, it was the desire for mobility and travel that caused both the division of Germany and its reunification more than 40 years later. Since the mid-1990s travelling has become an integral part of German society and travel participation by the German population remains at a high level.

The second section of this chapter completes the contextual background which is necessary for a comprehensive understanding of the research objects of the study, which are seniors in Freising, Germany. This section presented an overview of how Germany is an aging society. German seniors are relatively wealthy which gives them the opportunity to travel. On the other hand, income disparities between German seniors are increasing. The German welfare state provides a relatively strong social security system, giving financial and medical support for those seniors who have insufficient income or suffer from illness.

Chapter 4. Research methodology and methods

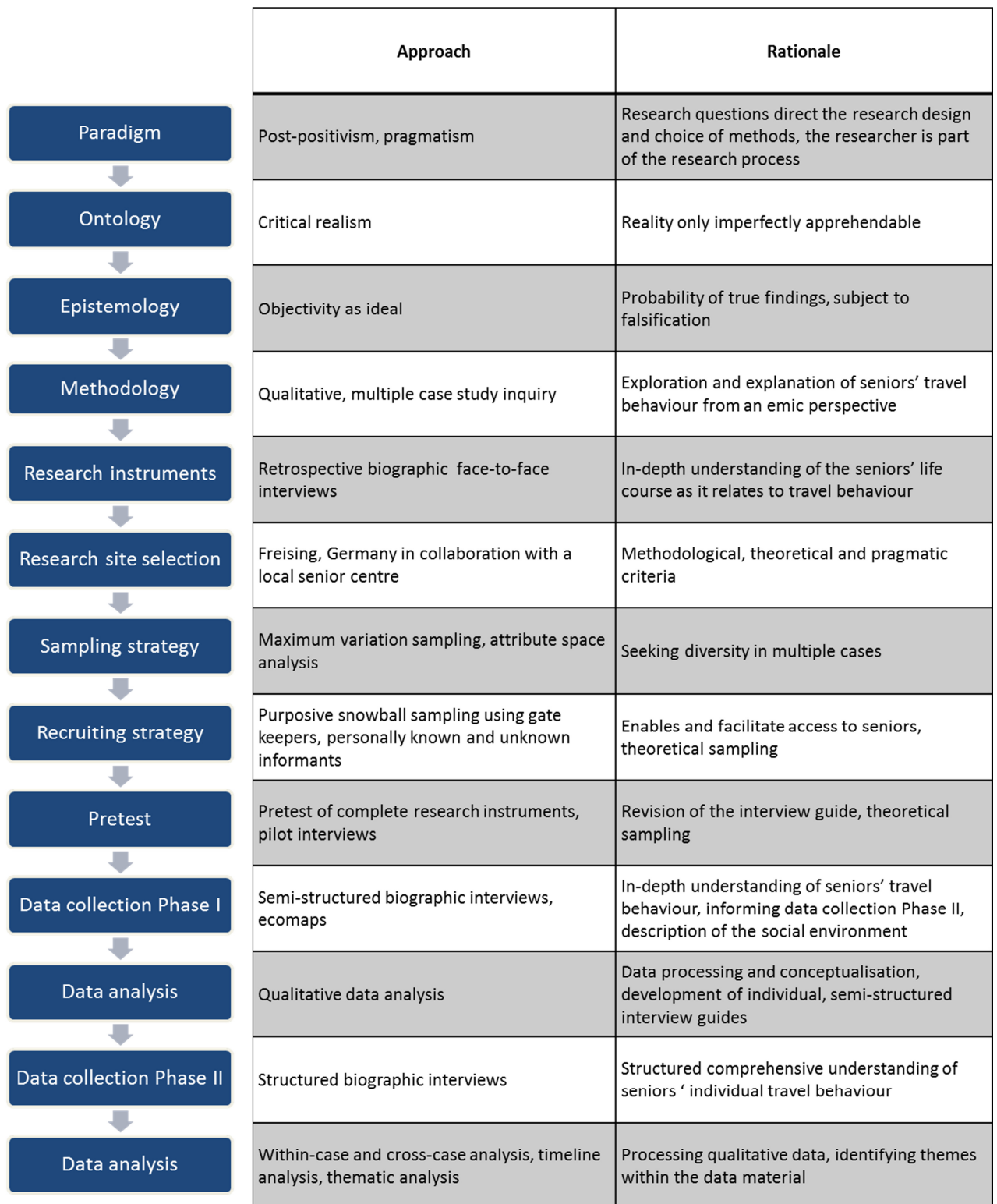
This chapter describes the methodological and analytical framework employed in the thesis and provides information on how the research was conducted. The first section of the chapter introduces the research design and gives an overview of the methodology and the methods used. The second section discusses critical realism and pragmatism as the underpinning research philosophies, which guide the consequent research process.

This is followed by a description of the qualitative research approach that is based on a case study inquiry. The section includes a number of strategies used in the thesis such as the sampling technique and participant recruitment, biographic research, the application of ecomaps and follow-up interviews. The final sections describe the methods applied to analyse temporal qualitative data.

4.1 Research design of the thesis

The research design outlines the scientific logic behind the investigative process, which is based on the underpinning paradigm, ontology and epistemology. Figure 4.1 illustrates the research design, also described as the 'chain of evidence' (Yin, 2009), and the rationale behind the research strategies used in the thesis. The methodological steps outlined in the research design are described in detail in the following sections of the chapter.

Figure 4.1: Research design



4.2 A post-positivist, pragmatist research paradigm

All research follows elementary assumptions and principles that constitute a paradigm. Guba and Lincoln (1994, p. 107) describe the research paradigm as a set of basic beliefs based on ontological, epistemological and methodological deliberations. The ontology of a scientific inquiry comprises the philosophical and metaphysical questions about the nature of reality. Reflecting the epistemological characteristic of an investigation demands an understanding of the relationship between the inquirer and the “what can be known” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 108). The investigator can be considered either a part of the research or an independent entity seeking to minimise influence on the investigation. The methodological framework determines how knowledge of the world is acquired.

This research adopts a critical realist and pragmatic ontology that is informed by the post-positivist research tradition (Jennings, 2010). Post-positivism is a response to the positivist paradigm and breaks with the assumptions that reality can be completely comprehended and contradicts the logic of natural regularities (Gale & Botterill, 2005). As opposed to positivism, the researcher is not detached from the research process. Critical realism emphasises the fact that knowledge is propositional and reality can be only imperfectly and incompletely apprehended (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 108).

The present study aims to research the objective reality of life events. The aim of the investigation is to capture reality as closely as possible through the use of multiple research methods and multiple data collection phases. Knowledge is generated by generated from qualitative data, as the study aims to generate in-depth understanding

of the travel behaviour of seniors. Apart from in-depth interviews, additional data such as personal reports from the past and travel records are used to increase the degree of objectivity in the research.

The study's underpinnings follow Decrop's (2004, p. 156) pragmatic proposition that methodological eclecticism is desirable and that "research questions must direct the choice of appropriate methods and research design rather than the other way round". In this respect, a pragmatic stance results in a dynamic research design. A pragmatic and problem-centred methodology in qualitative research is also supported by Denzin and Lincoln (1998, p. 4).

Following a critical realist and pragmatic research strategy, the study employs multiple methods to address the research questions. Researching a phenomenon from different angles in terms of investigators, theories, methodologies, time and locations falls under 'triangulation' approaches (Denzin, 1978; Patton, 1990). Creswell (2007) suggests the investigation of multiple cases if a perspective from different angles on the phenomenon in question is required.

The research combines two sets of semi-structured biographic interviews. This strategy is used in qualitative research as an equivalent to seeking validity in quantitative research in order to establish valid propositions. The first set was data collection Phase I, which used a life-history guide in order to identify life events affecting the travel behaviour of seniors. The second set, Interview Phase II, was informed by the first data collection. The second set of interviews aimed to increase data accuracy and to investigate travel periods in greater detail.

Darbellay and Stock (2012, p. 449) identify the field of tourism social science as a fragmented discipline. They call for interdisciplinary research that provides multiple perspectives on issues and improves the trustworthiness of research (Decrop, 2004). Researching the travel behaviour of seniors invites the inclusion not only of traditional tourism disciplines such as geography, sociology and psychology but also disciplines with closer connecting points to the research questions such as gerontology and nursing and caregiving. The present study is interdisciplinary in nature, not only because the research instruments are borrowed from elsewhere but also because of the integration of theories from different disciplines. Denzin and Lincoln (1994, p. 2) advocate this approach and suggest that the researcher “uses the tools of his or her methodological trade, deploying whatever strategies, methods, or empirical material are at hand.”

4.3 A qualitative research approach

Within the last 15 years several qualitative research designs have been developed in order to acquire an in-depth understanding of travel behaviour in the older life phase. To the knowledge of the researcher, only a few studies exist that embrace the whole life course in order to investigate the relationships between life events and senior travel behaviour.

The main objective of this study is not to generalise and to test hypotheses, but to gain a better understanding of specific human behaviours relating to travel and distinct life phases. The origin of categories constitutes the main difference between qualitative and quantitative research: quantitative research determines precise categories before

the data collection phase whereas qualitative inquiries build their categories based on the data collected (McCracken, 1988). Concentrating on qualitative methods is advantageous if the investigation aims to describe phenomena in rich detail when only little is known (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 20).

The thesis focuses on qualitative research approaches in order to advance the theoretical and empirical understanding of travel behaviour among seniors. An inductive approach to research is applied with the aim to develop general conclusions or theories on the research topic. Developing theory means to delve “into underlying processes so as to understand the systematic reasons for a particular occurrence or nonoccurrence” (Sutton & Staw, 1995, p. 378).

4.3.1 A case study inquiry

The thesis adopts a case study approach. Case studies are defined as a “functioning specific” within a bounded system (Stake, 1998, p. 87). Stake (1995) identifies three types of case studies: the ‘intrinsic case study’ is only interested in a particular case and does not aim to represent other cases; the ‘instrumental case study’ enables the drawing of conclusions that go beyond a specific case and advances the theoretical understanding of the subject under investigation; and the ‘collective case study’ involves multiple case studies and has only limited interest in the specifics of each individual case, focusing instead on the inquiry into a phenomenon.

This research adopts a multiple case study approach, with analytical findings compared between the different cases. The multiple case study design falls into Yin’s (2009) ‘holistic’ analyses of single units where each case is investigated in rich detail as a

‘whole study’. In this way a complete picture of seniors’ travel behaviour can be drawn on in order to understand the specific travel patterns of each case. Researching multiple cases in depth increases the robustness of investigation and can enable the exploration of real-life events over time (Creswell, 2007). Yin (2009) proposes case studies as a way to explore individual life cycles in their complexity and if a rich description of a phenomenon is desired. In case studies “the researcher is a tool of the research, and the expertise, perspicacity, empathy and experience of the researcher are just as important as any technical skill in textual or statistical analysis” (C. Ryan, 2012, p. 550).

The application of case studies raises the issue of generalisation (Hyde, Ryan, & Woodside, 2012) and transferability of research results. Payne and Williams (2005, p. 296) explain the logic of generalisation in qualitative studies: “To generalize is to claim that what is the case in one place or time, will be so elsewhere or in another time.” Peräkyläs (2004) overcomes the difficulties associated with the cross-cultural transferability of research findings by applying the logic of ‘possibility’ where observations may be possibly replicated in different settings. Decrop (1999b) states that a systematic case selection strategy enables the adaptation of results to other geographical or social settings. Hyde et al. (2012) suggest that generalising from few or even single cases is possible following the principles of ‘context generalisation’ (observations over multiple contexts and time periods), ‘generalising from single cases to alternative theories’ and ‘generalising across cases’ (finding patterns across multiple cases).

Yin (2009) contrasts 'statistical generalisation' (obtained by statistical sampling techniques in quantitative analyses) with 'analytical generalisation', which follows the replication logic of multiple experiments where findings and theories are aimed to be replicated in the research process. Case study investigations seek thematic repetitions within the body of cases. Replications can be either similar (literal replication) or contrasting (theoretical replication).

The study focuses on 23 cases. Stake (2000) states that the selection of participants in qualitative studies is not about the number of participants but about the complexity of the cases. The sample size of cases in qualitative research depends on the purpose of the research question (Patton, 2002) and thus may vary from study to study. The study follows McCracken's (1988, p. 17) proposition 'less is more' and prioritises a deeper understanding of a few cases than the superficial study of many cases.

In order to respect the meanings of time and space in tourism research, the multiple case study approach is temporally and geographically bounded. Travel behaviour reveals cultural differences (Kozak, 2002; Page & Connell, 2009; Pizam & Sussman, 1995) that are geographically manifested in the tourist's area of origin. Geographical differences matter (Massey, 1984) and research related to travel behaviour needs to control and consider spatial and cultural variations (see for example C. Kim & Lee, 2000; Page & Connell, 2009). Zimmer et al. (1995) found that the place of residency (rural or urban) has a substantial influence on the choice of tourism destination.

Controlling geographical variations in biographical research brings methodological challenges. People change places of residence, especially in a globalised world. In this

respect, living in a specific research area at the specific time of the research may have only limited explanatory power. Theoretically, participants of the study could have moved to the location of interest just shortly before the data collection, a move that qualified them to be part of the study. Only three participants of the study were born in Freising, where the interviews were conducted, while a further eight were from Bavaria, the federal state where Freising is located. Another eight seniors originated from other parts of Germany, one was born in Spain, and three participants were expelled during World War II from former German areas in Eastern Europe.

The choice of research site was driven by theoretical, methodological, and pragmatic considerations. Germany is assumed to exemplify the aging societies found in other industrialised countries. The thesis seeks a certain degree of transferability of results to other spatial settings (theoretical site-selection criteria). The research location is familiar to the researcher, which eases contact with participants of the study and with potential gatekeepers (Creswell, 2003) who can help with access to potential research participants. Language and listening skills are fundamental to the interview process (Gillham, 2000), which is also considered in this site selection. The same language background creates trustfulness and confidence in the researcher from the participants. The listening and answering skills of the interviewer are the keys for a successful interview (Helfferich, 2011).

Freising is a town and administrative district situated approximately 25 minutes' drive from Munich. It has a population of approximately 45,000, of which about 15% are seniors aged 65 and older (Bayerisches Landesamt für Statistik und Datenverarbeitung, 2013). Freising and its hinterland are rural and considerably wealthy. The city is ranked

14th in Germany regarding the average annual purchasing power per capita (EUR 22,581). In June 2014 the unemployment rate in Freising was only 2.2% compared with 6.5% for all of Germany (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2014). Freising lies in Bavaria, which is one of the most popular travel destinations within Germany. The region's main attractions are the Bavarian Alps, which can be reached from Freising by car within about one and a half hours.

4.3.2 Sampling strategies: Purposive snowball sampling

An important part of the individual case studies is their selection and related recruitment strategies. Silverman and Marvasti (2008) suggest theoretical sampling, where cases are purposively selected, contributing to a better foundation of generalisability in case studies. Purposive sampling is a method that enables the researcher to make contact with possible participants in instances where statistical generalisation is not desired (Creswell, 2003). Purposive sampling is a common technique in qualitative tourism studies and has been employed in a number of studies; for example, Nimrod (2008b), Sedgley, Pritchard & Morgan (2006) and Shani & Uriely (2012).

According to Yin (2009), sampling strategies differ in their analytical meanings (the case selection is based on analytical content) and their attributive meanings (the choice of cases depends on attributive content). This means that the sampling is either based on the case interpretation or characteristics of the case such as age or gender.

Purposive maximum variation sampling

The thesis applies maximum variation sampling (based on the attributive meaning of cases) and theoretical purposive sampling to find diversity in the cases and to add depth to the study. Of special interest are ‘information-rich cases’ (Coyne, 1997). Maximum variation sampling is a purposive sampling strategy that aims “to find common patterns that emerge from great variation” (Patton, 2002, p. 235). To reflect the great heterogeneity of seniors, the choice of cases is based on diverse and contrasting characteristics of the participants. The case selection is not statistically representative and does not serve as a generalisable sample.

The case selection strategy follows Lazarsfeld’s (1993) concept of ‘attribute space’, which provides a framework for typological sampling procedures. The attribute space consists of the combination of attributes or dimensions with theoretical relevance to the research (Schnell, Hill, & Esser, 2008). Table 4.1 shows the sampling framework, based on findings of the literature, to characterise seniors by contrasting attributes. It contains 11 variables that can be combined in multiple ways. A matrix of 49,152 unique combinations of these attributes is possible. Though it is not realistic to interview 49,152 individuals, diversity is sought in the 11 attributes of the sample to display the heterogeneity of seniors.

Table 4.1: Attribute space of study participants

Categories	Variations	Rationale
Gender	Male, female	Gender differences
Age group	Seniors aged 60 to 75 years, and older than 75 years	Probability of critical life event
Independent lifestyle	Lifestyle dependent or not dependent on external assistance	Degree of dependency
Place of birth	Freising, Bavaria, Germany, not Germany	Cultural differences, migration background
Parental status	No children, parent, grandparent (including grand-grandparent)	Family obligations, social integration, family life cycle
Marital status	Single, married, divorced, widowed	Phase of family life cycle, social integration
Relationship status	Single, not-single	Type of social interaction
Housing situation	Single household, family household with children, family household without children, assisted living	Degree of dependency, type of social integration
Employment status	Retired, part-time working, full-time working, voluntary work	Degree of discretionary time, potential income, self-perception of age
Property situation	Rented flat, privately owned home	Financial situation
Future travel intention (travel \geq 5 days)	Traveller, non-traveller	Travel status

Gender and age are common socio-demographic variables in social sciences. Seniors, particularly older seniors, may show greater gender variations in experiencing later life (Chambers, 2002). Thus it is assumed that gender differences do have behavioural

relevance to travel activities for seniors. Age differences are closely related to the probability of critical life and health events. Literature suggests that travel participation begins to decrease from 75 years of age (Lilienthal, 2002). For this reason the cases are divided into the age groups 60 to 75 years and older than 75 years.

Another factor that applies to seniors and, in particular, to their health status is their degree of dependency on others. Lifestyles that are dependent on external assistance (supporting relatives, mobile care services, nursing homes) are a reality for many seniors and are included as an attribute in the matrix (dependent or not dependent on external assistance). During an informal interview with the director of a nursing home, it became clear that not all living circumstances of seniors can (or have to) be reflected within the study; for example, seniors living in nursing homes. Studies suggest that seniors dependent on nursing support either from relatives or professionals still have the need to travel (see for example Born et al., 2000). However, this dimension was discarded because no clients of nursing homes were expected to travel.

The place of birth is included in the attribute space in order to consider geographical meanings regarding cultural differences and migration effects. Parental status (children, grandchildren), marital status (single, married, divorced, widowed), relationship status, and housing situation indicate levels and types of social interaction and living circumstances.

Employment status (Retired, part-time working, full-time working, voluntary work) has a clear influence on the level of discretionary time and income available. After officially retiring from paid employment, voluntary work may become more important in senior

years. For this reason, employment status in the study refers not only to waged labour but also to voluntary work. Seniors may be officially retired but still engaged in unremunerated work activities or other informal occupations such as caregiving.

Financial resources clearly have an impact on travel behaviour and travel participation (see for example L. Huang & Tsai, 2003; McGuire et al., 1986). Personal income is intimate information and 12 participants were either not able to specify their income, felt uncomfortable talking about their financial situation to the researcher or refused to answer this question. Because fewer than half of the sample answered the income question sufficiently, the interviewees' personal financial situation was evaluated in other ways. The interviews were conducted in the participants' private homes and the interviewer gained a personal impression of their economic situation by observation. The matrix also includes the future travel intention of participants to involve both travellers and non-travellers.

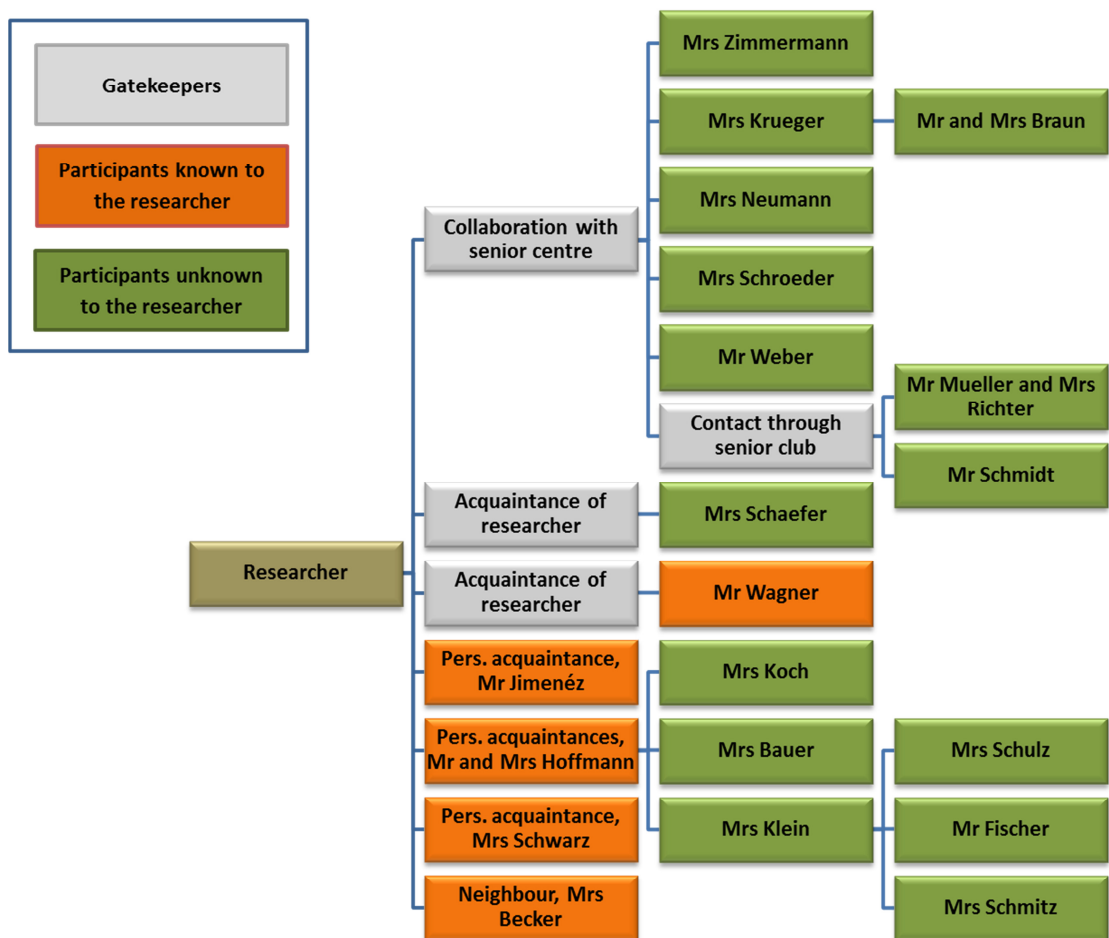
All attributes were included in screening questions that were provided to the participants before the qualitative interview took place. Recruitment of participants was not finished until the attribute space showed great diversity among the cases (see Table 4.2) and the selected participants met the theoretical criteria of the sampling strategy.

Snowball sampling

To ensure the desired variation in, and number of, cases, participants were recruited using snowball sampling. Snowball sampling, as one purposive sampling strategy, allows the researcher to recruit future subjects from among someone's circle of acquaintances (Merkens, 2000). Snowball sampling as a sequential sampling strategy is applied when difficulties in recruitment are expected (Liamputtong, 2009). The adoption of this technique is advantageous because the personal contact involved in the sampling process can create trust in the research. Starting points for the snowball sampling in this thesis were gatekeepers and acquaintances personally known to the researcher (see section 4.3.3). Figure 4.2 shows the relationship between the actors in this recruiting strategy. To guarantee confidentiality and anonymity, pseudonyms are used in the study.

The snowball sampling reached a maximum depth of three levels; for example, researcher → senior centre (level I) → participant 1 (level II) → participant 2 (level III). The orange and green boxes in Figure 4.2 show participants who were either known or unknown to the researcher. In the grey colour are gatekeepers who provided contact but did not participate in the interviews directly. The collaboration with the senior centre and senior club resulted in the participation of ten seniors. One person among those participants enabled access to another senior couple. Six seniors known personally by the researcher showed interest in the project and made themselves available. An additional six seniors were recruited by participating people. One additional senior was contacted by a supportive acquaintance of the researcher.

Figure 4.2: Snowball sampling



Although the snowball sampling was a successful recruiting method, the technique also entailed difficulties. Contacting participants through interviewees potentially limits the breadth of the sampling. Participants of the study showed great variety in the attribute space but they also had a tendency to share common travel experiences; for example, Mr and Mrs Hoffmann recruited three participants, all of whom used to travel together regularly. On the other hand, this approach gave multiple perspectives on joint travel activities.

4.3.3 Accessing research participants

The implementation of sampling strategies raises questions of accessibility of research participants. The sample included interviewees who were not always easy to access; for example, seniors living in a retirement home. In fact, during the research process it proved generally difficult to contact seniors. For this reason the thesis employed gatekeepers, persons or organisations who control access to the research population, not only to enable or ease the access to participants (Russell, 2000) but also to inform the researcher about the research site and the research population.

The director of the senior centre Heiliggeistspital-Stiftung Freising was contacted to support the research process. The senior centre is a foundation under public law and provides multiple services to the elderly, such as 'meals on wheels' and mobile care nursing services. It also operates as a nursing home with 277 places, and senior citizen residences with 105 apartments (Heiliggeistspital-Stiftung Freising, 2014). In the course of the data collection, a manager of the senior centre also provided access to seniors who worked voluntarily in the senior centre. Other agents operating as gatekeepers were the head of a senior club and two acquaintances of the researcher (Figure 4.2). To motivate both gatekeepers and participants, the researcher offered to provide an abstract of the results after completion of the thesis.

Involving participants personally known to the researcher is a common strategy in qualitative tourism studies (see for example Blichfeldt, 2007; Hirschman, 1994; Hsu et al., 2007; Roberson, 2003). Blichfeldt (2007) suggests that interpersonal relationships in the research process are advantageous because they create trust, openness and

supportiveness. Previous knowledge can be used to select potential participants with respect to relevant sampling criteria (Blichfeldt, 2007; Roberson, 2003). Researching participants from a similar cultural background is also advantageous because it enables an advanced understanding of cultural meanings, beliefs and values within the research process (Chock, 1986).

On the other hand, Interviewing known people can also create challenges. Some literature considers a familiar site selection as 'backyard research', which is easy to access but lacks 'critical distance' (Glesne, 1999). McCracken (1988) argues that research needs to address difficulties caused by existing previous and preconditioned knowledge in the researcher–researched relationship. To mitigate these difficulties, McCracken suggests manufacturing critical distance to minimise bias effects by previous cultural knowledge.

As the researcher was relatively new to conducting qualitative interviews, it was useful to begin with personally known interviewees because this approach created a relaxed and supportive interview setting. The familiarity enabled a flow of conversation facilitated by the natural setting of the interview situation. The previous personal relationship was essential for the interview with Mrs Hoffmann:

Interviewer: "Here, you need to sign the consent form, please. It says, for example, that data will be used confidentially..."

Mrs Hoffmann: "That's what I am expecting. Somebody who I don't know or somebody else, I would never... But you, I mean we have known you for 30 years now."

Interviewer: "Otherwise you wouldn't do this interview?"

Mrs Hoffmann: "No. Not if it's about things like education, finances. These are things I wouldn't tell, just like that, to somebody I don't know."

Contact with potential participants of the study was made via research invitation letters which were delivered by the gatekeepers, personally known seniors and participants of the study in order to let them circulate among clients or acquaintances. The personal delivery of invitation letters by trustworthy or friendly acquaintances and some further word-of-mouth information helped create interest and trust in the research project and target potential participants with the required characteristics.

The invitation letters included participant information sheets, screening questions, consent forms (see Appendix A and B) and a stamped and self-addressed envelope to return the completed documents. One hundred and five research invitation letters were delivered.

Later in the data collection process, a senior club in Freising was contacted to facilitate the recruiting process. The researcher was allowed to present his study at a senior event and to ask for participation in front of about 50 members of the senior club. After the presentation the researcher handed out invitation letters to the seniors, which resulted in three additional interviews.

4.3.4 Retrospective biographic research

Ladkin (1999) states that travel behaviour entails historical components. The analysis of key life events as turning points in an individual's life course demands a retrospective perspective because such watersheds can only be identified from a temporal distance (George, 2009). Studies of individual life histories fall into the category of longitudinal research techniques (Solga, 2001). Longitudinal research methods are employed to describe patterns of change over time and the quality

(direction and magnitude) of those changes (Menard, 2002), and enable the researcher to understand temporal cause-and-effect relationships (Taylor, Carlsen, & Charters, 2006). The longitudinal approach refers to different time periods and compares similar subjects over time (Ritchie, 2005).

The thesis employed retrospective interviews where data of multiple periods in the past are retrieved in one interview session. This procedure is advantageous when compared with other longitudinal methods because it is relatively cost effective and time efficient (Beckett, Da Vanzo, Sastry, Panis, & Peterson, 2001; Mayer, 2008; Menard, 2008).

Biographic methods have gained popularity among social science researchers in recent years with a growth in qualitative study designs such as oral history, life history, life story, narrative biography or oral biography (Liamputtong, 2009). Cornwall and Gearing (1989) categorise biographic research into oral and life history. Oral history emphasises the documentation of the past and past living circumstances while the life history focuses on the lived life and its influencing factors, which is the focus of the present thesis.

Denzin (2009) identifies three types of life histories: complete, topical and edited. The complete life history embraces the entire life of the informant; the informant's past is reconstructed in all of its complexity, based on the personal story of the individual. The topical life history focuses on specific thematic periods in someone's life; for example, the period of family travels. The third type is the edited life history, which refers to the way the data are analysed and the impact of the researcher (as editor) on the retrieved

data. This thesis falls into the complete and topical life history categories. The interviewee's biography is only of interest as it relates to travel history and focuses on distinct travel periods. This includes underlying contextual information about the individual's life course, which is built on a sequence of life events (for example, migration, family development).

The thesis applies the biographic interview method because it allows the researcher to "reconstruct the social phenomena in the process of becoming" (Rosenthal, 2004, p. 50) which enables a better understanding of the complexity of social reality (Fuchs-Heinritz, 2009). Both the individual history and past travel experiences of seniors are assumed to play an important role in contextualising travel behaviour. Levinson (1986) advocates the biographic research approach:

For the study of life structure development, we have no other method of comparable value. The biographical method is the only one that enables us to obtain a complex picture of the life structure at a given time and to delineate the evolution of the life structure over a span of years. It is well suited for gaining a more concrete sense of the individual life course, for generating new concepts, and in time, for developing new variables, measures, and hypotheses that are rooted in theory and are relevant to life as it actually evolves (p. 12).

Biographic research methods are rarely used in tourism and leisure studies and the understanding of travel behaviour and travel experiences often lacks insights into the broader social and cultural context (Sedgley et al., 2011). Trapp-Fallon (2003) suggests the application of the oral history technique in tourism and leisure studies because it provides a participative approach in a "shared and reflexive research process". Sedgley et al. (2011, p. 430) note that the biographic interview "provides a life course

perspective that opens up complex, personalized and fine-grained understandings of a person's motivation for participating in tourism."

Literature emphasises not only the high value of biographic retrospective interviews but also points out limitations of the method. Biographic research can be time consuming and faces criticisms regarding the potential bias that can occur through the reinterpretation of the past, memory errors, and tolerance of the informant (McCracken, 1988; Riley, Ladkin, & Szivas, 2002; Rosenthal, 2004). Further limitations relate to the potential lack of objectivity and the low level of generalisability (Faraday & Plummer, 1979; Trapp-Fallon, 2007). Mayer (2008), on the other hand, argues that the reliability of data depends rather on the design of research instruments, the fieldwork itself, the success of which depends on the tenacity of the researcher and the data processing rather than the data quality of retrospective biographic interviews.

Life history (experiences, events and actions in the past) and life story (the remembered, processed and narrated history and its written account) are not necessarily identical, which can create a bias in the reinterpretation of the past. This difficulty of a temporal gap between the experience in the past and the recall of the experience and its ascribed meanings in the present (Fuchs-Heinritz, 2009; Rosenthal, 2004) is not only apparent in biographic research but exists also in any other retrospective research designs. Rosenthal (2004) outlined the analytical distinction between past and present perspectives on life events when he conducted narrative interviews focusing on National Socialism in Germany. He highlighted his concerns about denials and reinterpretations of the past, which created a "permanent methodological doubt" on the narratives.

Reinterpretation of the past may not only be a concern in sensitive terrain such as National Socialism but also to a certain degree in the individual travel history of seniors. Travel experiences of the past may be reinterpreted in the course of time. The perspective on a specific travel period with a spouse may, for example, change in the retrospective after divorce.

Memory errors are a major issue in autobiographic research designs, which entail a potentially demanding recall process (Hyman Jr & Loftus, 1998). This may be more significant for elderly people with declining cognitive functions (Boyd & Bee, 2009). Recall errors in retrospective biographic interviews refer to a malfunctioning retrieval process, which may occur for several reasons. Events can be forgotten because they never were stored in long-term memory, the event is missed due to retrieval failure and insufficient rehearsing, or the memory of an event is inaccurately reconstructed (Beckett et al., 2001; Grotzinger, 2007). According to Mayer (2008), differences exist in memory depending on the type of experiences being recalled. Autobiographical experiences (episodic memories) and personal important events are more easily recalled than public events (semantic memories). Tung and Ritchie researched the 'reminiscence bump' of seniors, suggesting that

Studies suggest that depending on age either older experiences are remembered more accurately than more recent life events (which is the case for older adults) or vice versa (Riley et al., 2002). Studies from the field of cognitive psychology also identified a "reminiscence bump" in autobiographical memory which occurs in a period of life between the ages of 10 and 30 when a larger number of life experiences are recalled than in other age periods (Tung and Ritchie, 2011). Memories are interconnected and

the recall process is chronologically ordered but literature shows discordance about the sequence of memory collection (see for example Howes & Katz, 1992; Riley et al., 2002). To gather accurate autobiographic data, the following two strategies are both applicable: working backwards in time as well as moving forward from remote time periods to the present (which was applied in this study).

Literature suggests different strategies to overcome the shortcomings of recall errors in the biographic interview technique. The 'life history calendar', for example, improves the recall abilities at thematic and temporal levels by using a structured interview guide (Axinn, Pearce, & Ghimire, 1999, p. 244). The guide consists of a matrix with visual cues (column headings marked with years or ages, and other life events), which facilitates recall of the timing of life events. The thesis adopted the less structured 'life history guide' (see section 4.4.1). This paper and pencil technique is suggested by Denzin and Lincoln (1998) and follows the life course as it develops. The paper shows a simple timeline, which allows the interviewer to make structured notes, following the timeline on the paper as the interview progresses.

4.4 Conducting qualitative interviews

The thesis employed two phases of interviews to improve the data accuracy and validity of the research. Woodside et al. (2007) advocate the use of second interviews to enable the interpretation process of the researcher to be validated. Cornwall and Gearing (1989) used a similar approach in their work on health biographies of seniors.

Adopting qualitative interviews with different levels of structure is often applied where both phases focus on a specific and distinct research purpose. Many researchers

suggest the use of unstructured in-depth interviews to research life history (Finn, Elliott-White, & Walton, 2000; Liamputtong, 2009). Denzin (2009) recommends a stronger structure for follow-up interviews that are guided by dimensions of interest.

The follow-up strategy enhances not only the data quality but also the trustworthiness of the study in terms of confirmability (Decrop, 1999b). On the other hand, multiple phased interviews with seniors can be a concern in terms of retention rates (Tennstedt, Dettling, & McKinlay, 1992). Negative retention rates of the older population in longitudinal studies are the result of deteriorating health, intellectual impairment, and lower economic status (Tennstedt et al., 1992).

4.4.1 Data collection Phase I

The objective of the interviews in Data collection Phase I was to elicit the interviewee's individual travel history in a social-cultural context. Twenty interviews were conducted (three interviews included couples as interview partners) in order to identify travel periods, that were shaped by life events. Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. The first two pilot interviews were semi-structured and used an interview guide that included sections on personal information, past travel history, current travel behaviour and future intentions to travel (Appendix C). These interviews followed, in part, McCracken's (1988) long-interview technique by using 'grand tour questions' and 'floating prompts'. Grand tour questions were open-ended to gain a narrative interview flow. Sub-questions on travel behaviour were more detailed and pointed to specific areas such as health conditions or retirement.

After the pilot interviews, questions on travel history and current travel behaviour were replaced by a 'life history guide'. This was because the complexity of the seniors' travel history was not sufficiently captured by the predefined interview guide. The life history guide consisted of a simple timeline where life events were noted on one side of the timeline and relevant periods regarding travel behaviour were captured on the other side. The life history guide was adopted in order to structure the interview while it was conducted and to avoid forgotten or overlooked aspects.

The life history guide was advantageous because it captured both the life and the travel history of the informant. This technique facilitated a more natural interview flow, which improved the narrative nature of the interview. One drawback was the loss of more detailed information on various dimensions of travel behaviour; for example, means of transportation, travel durations or size of travel party. For this reason, a second interview with the same participants was considered.

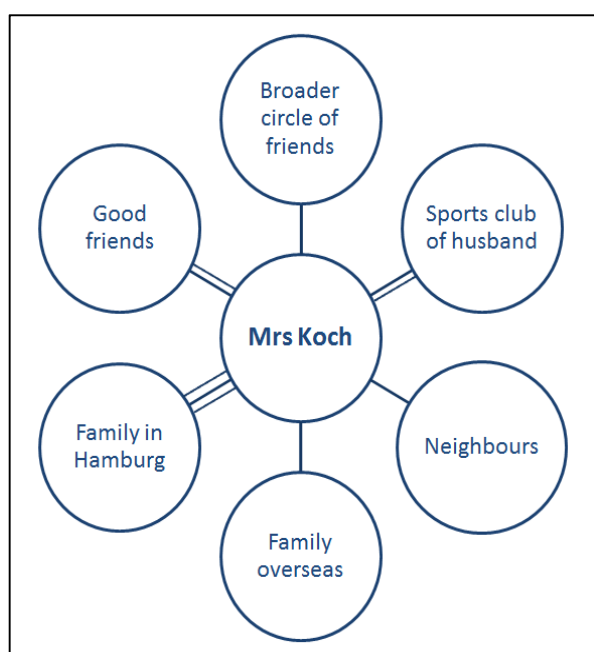
The initial question about the travel history was very open-ended: "Could you please tell me about your first travel experience?" The interviewer delved into interesting and relevant aspects by using 'floating prompts' (for example, by using gestures or repeating key terms), which kept the interview running in an unobtrusive way and helped to delve more deeply into specific aspects (Helfferich, 2011; McCracken, 1988).

The data collection method aimed to create, in part, a balanced power relationship between the researcher and the researched. In this sense, the interviewee was an equal participant who identified life events and travel periods; the researcher's role was only to give the impetus to reveal this information with a minimum of directions

offered. The collaborative research approach is suggested by Sedgley (2006), Sedgley, Pritchard and Morgan (2006) and Ray (2007) in order to reduce researcher bias.

A second part of the interviews in Phase I used ecomaps to gain a better understanding of the current social context of the 23 individuals. Ecomaps depict the social network or the ecological system of a person or a family (Ray & Street, 2005). The method is a graphic record and can be implemented using something as simple as paper and pencil (Figure 4.3). This technique has been found “to be highly adaptable for use with individuals or families in many different settings where it is important to understand the development of the family system through time” (Hartman, 1995, p. 112). Several studies highlight the value of using such approaches in conjunction with qualitative interviews to enrich the value of the data gathered (Ray & Street, 2005; Rempel, Neufeld, & Kushner, 2007).

Figure 4.3: Mrs Koch’s ecomap



Ecomaps are predominately rooted in family therapy and clinical family nursing, and also in family caregiving and social work (Hartman, 1995; Rempel et al., 2007). To the knowledge of the researcher, this method has been rarely applied within tourism studies. Rempel et al. (2007) noted that the use of visual images as prompts is of importance in the research process as data collection by conducting interviews alone would require many additional questions about the social environment.

After explaining the ecomap, interviewees were asked the following question: “Please indicate the strength of the relationship between you and other persons of importance in your social environment with either one (low), two (medium) or three (strong) lines.” Not all participants felt comfortable answering this question when they could show only a small number of social interactions.

4.4.2 Data collection Phase II

The researcher later contacted all participants of the first interviews by mailing a postcard from New Zealand to thank them for their participation in the project and to ask for a second interview. Sending a personal postcard supported the idea of a participatory research approach where a stronger connection between researcher and researched obtains better engagement in the research process.

Sixteen out of the 23 participants agreed to a second interview, the purpose of which was to uncover more detailed information on travel history and to increase the data accuracy. For three participants, the researcher considered the first interviews as being sufficient and no more additional information was expected to be revealed. Of the remaining 20 only three participants declined the request for a second interview. One

participant passed away in between the two data collection phases. A retention rate of 19 out of 23 (more than 80%) is a reflection of the good relationship between the researcher and the informants.

In preparation for the second interview, the researcher prepared a travel period/dimension matrix similar to a period-event matrix (see for example Elder & Giele, 2009; Richards, 2009) for each interviewee. The table was given to the interviewee several days before the interview for self-completion. However, only a few participants completed the matrix beforehand, and the tables were mostly filled in during the interviews of Data collection Phase II, with assistance from the researcher.

The cross-tabulation included identified travel periods from the Phase I interviews which guided the second interview (see Appendix D: Detail of Mrs Bauer's travel period/dimension matrix). The top row showed individual travel periods from childhood to the date of the interview. The left column represented a variety of dimensions of travel behaviour (retrieved from Freyer, 2001). These included temporal elements such as travel period, season, duration and change of travel period (why, when, and how). Other dimensions related directly to the travel product, including main destination, type of travel organisation, transport and accommodation. Further categories were the number of trips per year, travel companions, main activities during the trip, purpose, travel information collection, number of short trips (less than 5 days) per year, meaning of travelling (1 = not important up to 6 = very important), expenses (1 = little expenses up to 6 = high expenses) and the reasons for the ceasing of the travel period. Each cell refers to a behavioural dimension related to a specific travel period in the individual life course.

The second interview profited from the experience the interviewee had gained from the first session. The interview situation improved especially with those who were not initially known to the researcher; the interview sessions were more relaxed and interviewees more open minded towards the research.

4.4.3 Reflections on interviewing older people

Interview time and structure needed to be suited to the elderly. Splitting the data collection into two phases reduced the interview time to a reasonable length. The longest interview of the first phase lasted more than three hours (with an 88-year-old woman); the shortest only 17 minutes. The longest interview in the second interview phase lasted 2 hours and 22 minutes; the shortest 68 minutes. Some longer interviews were very demanding and some participants showed signs of fatigue.

The senior centre provided a room in which to conduct interviews; this room was used for two interviews. Apart from one other interview, which was conducted in a hospital, all other seniors were met in their private homes. Conducting the interviews in the interviewees' own homes was advantageous because the interviewees felt safe and comfortable in their private environment and also potential mobility issues were avoided (Fuchs-Heinritz, 2009). Moreover, when participants remembered during the interview additional material such as travel lists or photo albums, these were easy to reach.

Intergenerational language differences created some difficulties during the interviews (Rein & Scheffelman-Mayer, 1975; Sankoff & Blondeau, 2007). Even with the same linguistic background, some parts of the interviews and aligned meanings were hard to

follow due to the interviewees' use of old Bavarian words. In the transcription process the Bavarian dialect was translated into High German. Similar issues can arise when interviewing people with a migrant background. And indeed, the interview with Mr Jiménez from Spain (who has been living in Bavaria for 50 years) involved a number of translation processes including the cross-cultural translation of meanings.

Older adults are considered a vulnerable population in terms of late-life deficits (mentally and physically impairments) which has implications for the interview process (Russell, 2000). Mrs Schaefer, for example, was interviewed while she was in a hospital. The 87-year-old woman is a close friend of an acquaintance of the researcher, who suggested the interview would also be a good way of distracting Mrs Schaefer from her loneliness. The interview itself was complicated because it did not flow easily. Mrs Schaefer was still mentally fit and the data provided were valuable, but the researcher noticed memory errors, repetition of themes and displaced answers during the interview.

Another challenging situation occurred when the researcher met 83-year-old Mrs Neumann in her apartment for an interview session. On the very day of the interview, the woman had just been informed she had a fatal illness and that her life expectancy was only about another six months. Understandably, there were times during the interview when Mrs Neumann was melancholic – for example, she mentioned her social isolation and that she had not many persons in her life to talk with – but overall the interview was successful in terms of data collection and the interviewee did not show any difficulty participating in the interview under this challenging personal

circumstance. Mrs Neumann passed away shortly after the interview session and before a possible second interview.

During the data collection phase of the thesis, problems of reminiscing appeared in almost all of the interview sessions, with participants showing difficulties in remembering times, places, people and activities. Often interviewees then avoided giving a clear answer, switched subjects or repeated previous answers. These interruptions disturbed the interview flow and sometimes created confusion due to irrelevant storytelling and an overload of insignificant information. Difficulties in recalling information sometimes created frustration for the interviewee, which also had a negative influence on the interview flow. Eighty-eight-year-old Mrs Schroeder, for example, could not recall the name of an Iranian religious holiday, which frustrated her: "It is terrible, and I was told I don't have dementia. To me it seems I have [dementia]." During the interview it was important to communicate that accurate data are desired but also that no one can be expected to remember their whole life course in detail.

The researcher had to be careful during the interview session to uncover mistakes or confusion with dates. The life history guide used by the researcher during the interviews was helpful in improving the recall abilities of the interviewees and the accuracy of their self-reported travel history. Another approach used was prompting memories through photographs (Creswell, 2003), and in some cases the memory-enhancing effect of photographs was positive. However, there was also a downside to this strategy: Mr Mueller had prepared his photo albums with pictures he had

collected during his early 20s until his mid-thirties but the photo album distracted Mr Mueller from answering the questions as he indulged in reminiscences.

Some informants also enriched the data collection through the use of travel diaries and biographies. Mrs Schulz's husband, for example, provided a list of travel information for the couple dating back to the year 1952. Likewise, Mrs Klein provided a list of travel activities (including dates on a monthly basis, destinations, travel organisation, type of accommodation and transportation, and main travel activity) for the previous 53 years, which she had prepared for the interview. Travelling is very important to this group of interviewees and they enjoyed talking about their travel experiences.

Three interviews were conducted with couples. Interviewing a couple can improve the verification of memory (see for example Riley et al., 2002), but it may also cause bias (Fuchs-Heinritz, 2009, p. 251); for example, due to social desirability where reports in front of the partner may show the tendency to favoured responses. In the context of this study, simultaneous interviews proved to be advantageous.

4.5 Data analysis

The analysis of qualitative data revolves around identifying themes and categories within a given data corpus (see Boyatzis, 1998; Gibbs, 2007; G. Ryan & Bernard, 2003). A central role in this process is the coding procedure. Gibbs (2007, p. 38) defines coding as "how you define what the data you are analysing are about. ... Coding is a way of indexing or categorizing the text in order to establish a framework of thematic ideas about it."

A variety of strategies can be used to elicit themes from data. Ryan and Bernard (2003) list coding techniques including repetition in the data (re-occurring topics) and linguistic connectors (for example, time-oriented words). The coding process itself varies in its analytical rigor. In this respect, Gibbs (2007, p. 42 pp) categorises the coding process into three types. 'Descriptive coding' represents a basic way of analysing the data material by describing themes. A more analytical level of coding is the 'categorisation of themes', which involves a theoretical approach to the data. While the third type, 'analytical coding', implies a certain level of interpretation and brings theoretical meaning to the coding process.

Themes can be identified by employing thematic analysis, as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006). This flexible research tool with low theoretical and epistemological boundaries provides a stringent but flexible guideline for the process of qualitative analysis. The advantage of this analytical procedure lies in the strong scientific consistency and accuracy regarding the entire phase of data processing. Braun and Clarke's (2006) approach to thematic analysis contributes to this understanding with their definitional structure of processed data, stringency of methodological considerations, and six-step guideline of the data analysis process. Further details on the procedures used in thematic analysis are provided in the sections that follow.

4.5.1 Analysing temporal data

The analysis of temporal data can concentrate on different components of the life course such as turning points, the timing of life events and experiences (in individual or historical context), their sequential order, the location in space, and the duration of

periods (George, 2009; Moschis, 2007). The thesis examined turning points and life events as the temporal unit in order to research seniors' tourism behaviour across their life course.

The thesis considered both types of temporal data analysis: transitions as a continuous process (level-based) and as a sequence pattern (transition-based) (George, 2009). Transition-based categories indicate the simple sequence of transitions that give meaning to the shape of the life course (for example, marriage, building a family, retirement). In contrast, level-based trajectories (temporal changes) indicate transitions over time as a continuous measure, such as increase or decrease or stability of a certain phenomenon (for example, deterioration of mobility in advanced age).

The analysis of trajectories can involve either time-dependent or age-dependent categories (George, 2009) which means that the timing of periods and events can be examined either within the historical context or in the setting of the individual biography. Age-dependent analysis was adopted in the thesis to show how individual travel patterns evolve over time. In terms of travel behaviour, however, the analytical meaning of the age-dependent analysis is only relevant within the historical and social background at that time, which represents time-dependent categories. Historical events occur at a certain time which may affect not only the travel behaviour of the individual but that of an entire age cohort (Lohmann & Danielsson, 2001; Oppermann, 1995a).

4.5.2 Processing qualitative data material

Raw data were retrieved from both Data collection Phases I and II. Data consisted of the audio recording and written notes of the biographic interviews in Phase I and the audio recording and completed cross-tables from the interviews in Phase II. The analytical process was based on the raw data which were transformed to transcribed textual data material, coded data and eventually data extracts, ready for analysis. The recorded raw data of the first interview were transcribed verbatim in German using the transcription software F4. Each interview was re-read and cross-checked against the audio records. Processed data material was translated in the later stage of data presentation into English by the researcher to minimise the loss of meaning. The researcher is native German speaking and fluent in English.

The main focus of the Phase II interview was on the completed travel period/dimension matrix and not on the spoken word. Only relevant information from the audio-recorded interviews in Data collection Phase II was translated and transcribed. The timing of the relevant information within these audio records was then attached to the codes to ease the retrieval of the data. The complete data material was stored, organised and coded using the qualitative data analysis software Nvivo (version 9.2.81.0, 64 bit). Nvivo was not used for the actual analytical procedure to seek similarities and differences within the coded data. Qualitative data analysis software such as NVivo does not support the visualisation and analysis of temporal data (Bhowmick, 2006), which required a manual approach for an advanced analytical procedure. The analysis included a cross-tabulation of themes and different forms of timeline illustrations, supported by software such as Office Timeline 2012 Plus Edition.

4.5.3 The analytical framework of the thesis

The analytical framework, which structured the methodology of the data analysis (D. Pearce, 2012), guided the process of identifying and determining categories, relationships and assumptions towards broader conclusions on the research topic. This process included the data reduction from the data corpus (all data collected) to the data set (used data from the data corpus) from which data items were coded and extracted as categories.

The analytical framework of the thesis involved four phases (Figure 4.4); these are described in more detail in the following sections of this chapter. Analytical Phase I identified travel periods and life events by examining temporal data from the first interview phase. The researcher analysed each of the 23 cases in depth, which was the basis for the next phase of analysis. Analytical Phase II was the collaboration between the researcher and the participants from Phase I. These interviewees were included in the identification process of life events and related travel periods.

Analytical Phases III and IV were compiled by the researcher using data from both data collection phases. Phase III was a descriptive within-case (intra-individual) analysis and was conducted as an in-depth case description. Phase IV was a cross-case (inter-individual) analysis in order to seek similarities and differences across the 23 cases. This phase applied thematic analysis and focused largely on travel behaviour transitions caused by life events.

Categories of the thematic analysis were identified on a 'semantic level' where the analysis concentrated on the spoken word, without paying too much attention to the

meanings behind the linguistic surface (the latent level) (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The present research methodology did not favour an extremely deep analysis of the text segments as applied, for example, in hermeneutic research techniques or discursive analysis, and only little attention was paid to the meanings beyond what the informant actually said. Data were transcribed, analysed and interpreted as they were presented on the recording device (the audio record, written notes and completed cross-tables). The advantage of this strategy lies in its ‘representational simplicity’ (Silverman & Marvasti, 2008). Information from this phase was revealed directly from the narratives or through a broader examination of the respondent’s life and travel history.

Figure 4.4: Analytical framework

Analytical stage	Number of cases	Analytical performance	Analytical procedure	Analytical rationale
Phase I	23	Researcher	Analysis of linguistic time-oriented connectors	Exploring life events and travel periods
Phase II	16	Researcher and participant	Participatory analysis of identified life events and travel periods	Identifying and confirming life events and travel periods
Phase III	23	Researcher	Intra-individual (within-person) analysis	In-depth case description
Phase IV	23	Researcher	Inter-individual (between person) analysis	Cross-case comparison
			Systematic thematic analysis	Exploring themes and categories
			Transition-based analysis, considering level-based trajectories	Focusing on turning points and life events, quality of data material
			Age-dependent analysis, considering historical events	Exploring age-dependent turning points

4.5.4 Analytical Phases I and II: Identifying travel periods in biographic data

The first phase of data analysis included the identification of travel periods, which were retrieved from the Phase I semi-structured interviews. Identifying categories, which indicate changes over time, is the preliminary process before analysing longitudinal data (Saldaña, 2008). In the coding process of this phase (coding in categories), time-oriented relationships were sought within the empirical data such as 'before', 'after', 'then', 'later', or 'next' (see G. Ryan & Bernard, 2003). These linguistic connectors are words that indicate causal and conditional relations; in this case, the change in travel behaviour in the life course.

Periods from childhood to senior age were categorised by multiple aspects of travel behaviour and change of travel patterns, which included, for example, the type of travel activities (for example, skiing), composition of travel group (for example, with the family), type of destination (for example, Mediterranean islands), and life period (for example, visiting relatives in childhood). Travel phases were also defined by the absence of relevant travel activities; for example, due to financial difficulties or illness. Multiple travel periods could occur at the same time and could temporally overlap. Reported travel periods, however, were only an abstract generalisation of a sequence of single trips. The thesis adopted in this aspect Atchley's (1989) position that continuity can be dynamic. Travel patterns showed a coherent basic structure within which some aspects of tourism behaviours could have variations.

A travel period/dimension matrix was given to each of the research participants several days prior to the second interview. This enabled the participants to confirm or

correct relevant travel periods that had emerged in the first interview. The researcher also prepared a timeline illustrating the individual travel biography and life events of each interviewee to double-check the accuracy of the information from the first interview (see, for example, Mr Schmidt's travel history in Figure 5.1).

The identification and verification of travel periods in Phase II of the data analysis was a joint collaboration between the researcher and the interviewee. This technique is supported by contemporary tourism scholars; for example, Sedgley et al. (2011, p. 423) suggests a participatory research approach that includes informants as co-creators of tourism knowledge.

Presenting the interviewee with the results from Phase I enabled them to reflect on past travel periods and to confirm or correct the constructed categories; this review enhances the credibility of the study. This participatory process, guided by the researcher, enabled people to help shape their own stories by reviewing and verifying the analysis. Hence, the researched became, to a certain degree, a researcher into their own travel history.

4.5.5 Analytical Phase III: A descriptive within-case analysis

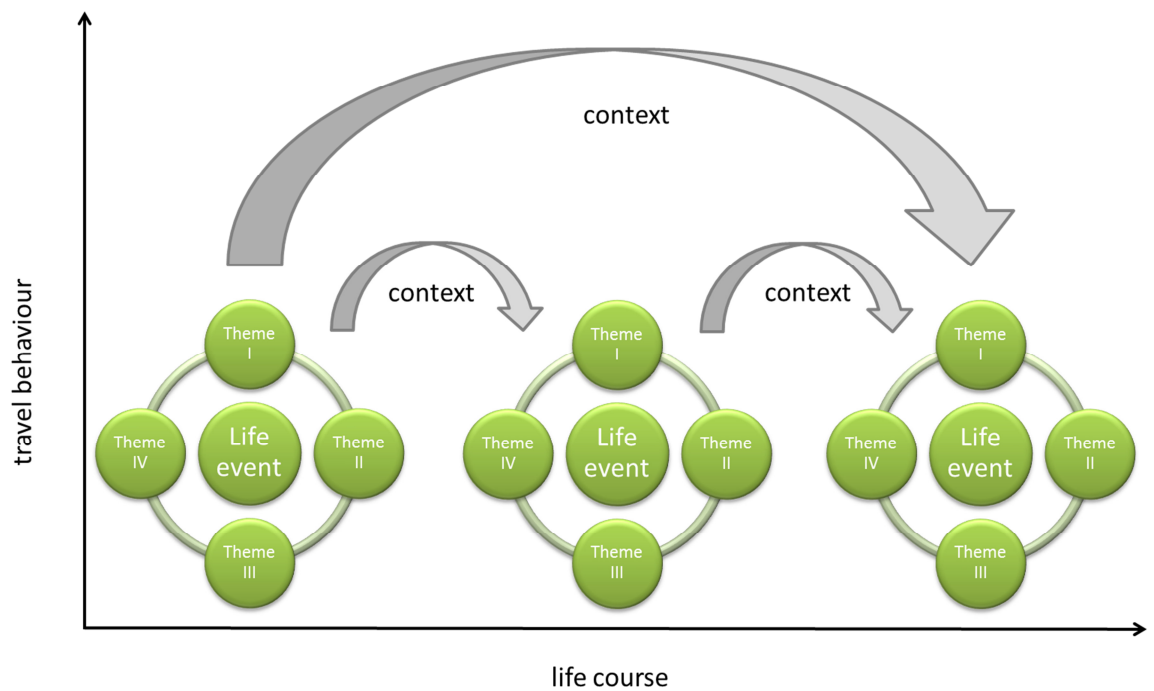
The within-case analysis of the individual travel histories in Phase III is largely descriptive in nature. Fuchs-Heinritz (2009, p. 300) classifies this approach as a 'journalistic' biographic research technique where the researcher reconstructs the unique experienced life course of each informant. The objective of this approach is for the researcher to become familiar with each case as a 'stand-alone entity' (see Eisenhardt, 1989). The theoretical contribution of descriptive analysis relates to the

criteria of what information is included in, or excluded from, the description (Yin, 1993). Yin (1993, p. 21) stated in this context: "The investigator without a descriptive theory will soon encounter enormous problems in limiting the scope of the study."

Applying intra-individual analysis raises the question as to what extent the researcher gives the researched a voice for further analysis and interpretation. The answer is that both the researcher and the researched are possible media through which to interpret biographic experiences and life events. Faraday and Plummer (1979, p. 787) distinguish five levels of 'analytical contamination', indicating to which degree the data analysis allows the researched a voice in the interpretation process. The degree of contamination ranges from the 'pure account of the investigator' to the 'pure account of the researched'. In the thesis, the level of analytical contamination of the written description refers to a large extent to 'systematic thematic analysis'. Systematic thematic analysis respects equally the researcher's and the researched's voices in the written report of the travel history.

The within-case analysis aimed to reconstruct the travel history of the informants (Figure 4.5). The descriptions concentrated on the sequence of individual life events, travel patterns and revolving themes across the personal history, which resulted in a complete picture of each single case. The term 'context' in Figure 4.5 relates to historical conditions and previous life events that impact on the subsequent travel behaviour. Travel behaviour, denoted by the y-axis, may change depending on life events in terms of quantity (for example, number of trips, number of nights spent) or quality (for example, change in means of transport, accommodation).

Figure 4.5: Within-case analysis



Describing all 23 cases would go beyond the scope of the analysis, and for this reason, seven cases were chosen for presentation in the thesis to exemplify the data set. The selected cases reflect the diversity of the sample (see Table 4.2). All seven cases have unique components. Only one attribute – full-time employment status – is not represented in the case selection for this chapter. However, Mrs Schwarz covers this dimension, being a senior who is still working full time, and a shorter description of her travel history, and that of the other remaining cases, is provided in the appendices. Other cases are also referred to in the cross-case analysis and the interpretation of the results.

Table 4.2: Characteristics of the intra-individual travel biographies

Category	Variations	Value total sample (n = 23)	Value sample descriptive analysis (n = 7)
Gender	Female	15	3
	Male	8	4
Age group	60–75 years	16	5
	>75 years	7	2
Travel intention	Traveller	17	6
	Non-traveller	6	1
Country of birth	Germany	22	6
	Not Germany	1	1
Employment status	Retired	15	5
	Part-time	7	2
	Full-time	1	0
Marital status	Married	9	3
	Widowed	8	2
	Divorced	5	1
	Never married	1	1
Relationship status	Single	12	4
	Not-single	11	3
Housing situation	Multi-person household	13	4
	Single household	7	2
	Assisted living	3	1
Parental status	Grandparent	12	3
	Parent	5	3
	No children	6	1
Property situation	Rented home	11	3
	Privately owned home	12	4

4.5.6 Analytical Phase IV: Thematic cross-case analysis

Inter-individual changes are based on aggregated trajectories illustrating life course variations across individuals. The thematic cross-case analysis sought to find ‘within

group similarities' or 'intergroup differences' in relevant dimensions (Eisenhardt, 1989). The analytical process followed, in part, the principles of thematic analysis described by Braun and Clarke (2006) and resulted in themes and patterns that had been identified from the data generated from the two biographic interviews of the informants. The thematic analysis embraced the following steps suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 87): familiarising with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, and defining and naming themes.

A limitation of cross-sectional data analysis is that this method lacks the ability to provide an historical and social contextualisation of themes (suggested by theories on cohort effects), which is a key strength of the biographic research approach. As a result of this shortcoming, valuable information may remain unexploited (Fuchs-Heinritz, 2009). In this context it is important to note that in the thesis, life events of the informants occurred at differing ages and stages in life. Cases of dissimilar age groups (interviewees were born between 1920 and 1946) and therefore differing historical backgrounds were analysed to identify similar life events.

The thematic data analysis was a procedure that started in the early stages of the data collection and continued during the processing of the data material. The first step of the structured data analysis was the coding of the data corpus as an integral part of the data analysis (Packer, 2011). This analytical coding process involved first theoretical interpretations. During the analysis process the researcher jumped between notes, transcripts and interpretations to generate categories and themes, which are linked to travel periods in the individual's life. This procedure refers to a

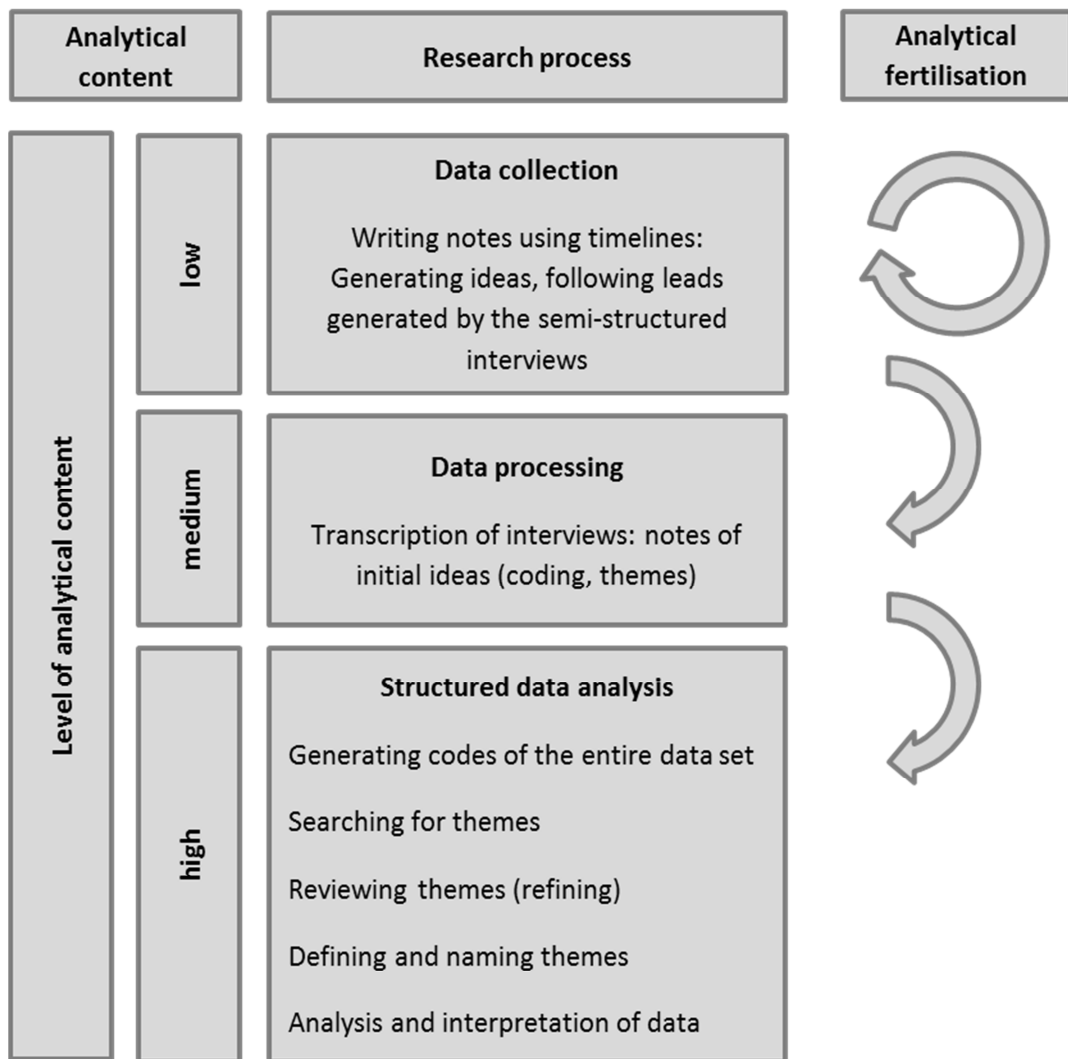
selective coding process where travel periods, which were identified in earlier research phases, build core categories (Gibbs, 2007).

The approach of the analysis also follows Ryan and Bernard's (2003) proposition that themes may be identified before, during and after the process of data collection. Due to a high level of theoretical awareness of the research subject (see Dann, Nash, & Pearce, 1988) categories were also identified a priori as well as from the data collection and data analysis. Life events as categories are identified within existing theories such as the theory of the family life cycle, e.g. empty nesters or retirement. In the methodological discourse of the interplay between theory and method Dann, Nash, and Pearce (1988, p. 4) state that theory "provides an interpretative basis for understanding phenomena."

Figure 4.6 indicates how analytical stages of the thesis were informed by previous phases of data collection and processing. During the data collection, first ideas and categories emerged as a result of initial reflection, an important process in the analytical procedure (Watt, 2007). Each interview informed the researcher as to what information needed to be sought in subsequent interviews, and contributed to completing a picture of emerging themes and categories. Emerging themes were supported often by multiple cases but sometimes only by one utterance of a single case.

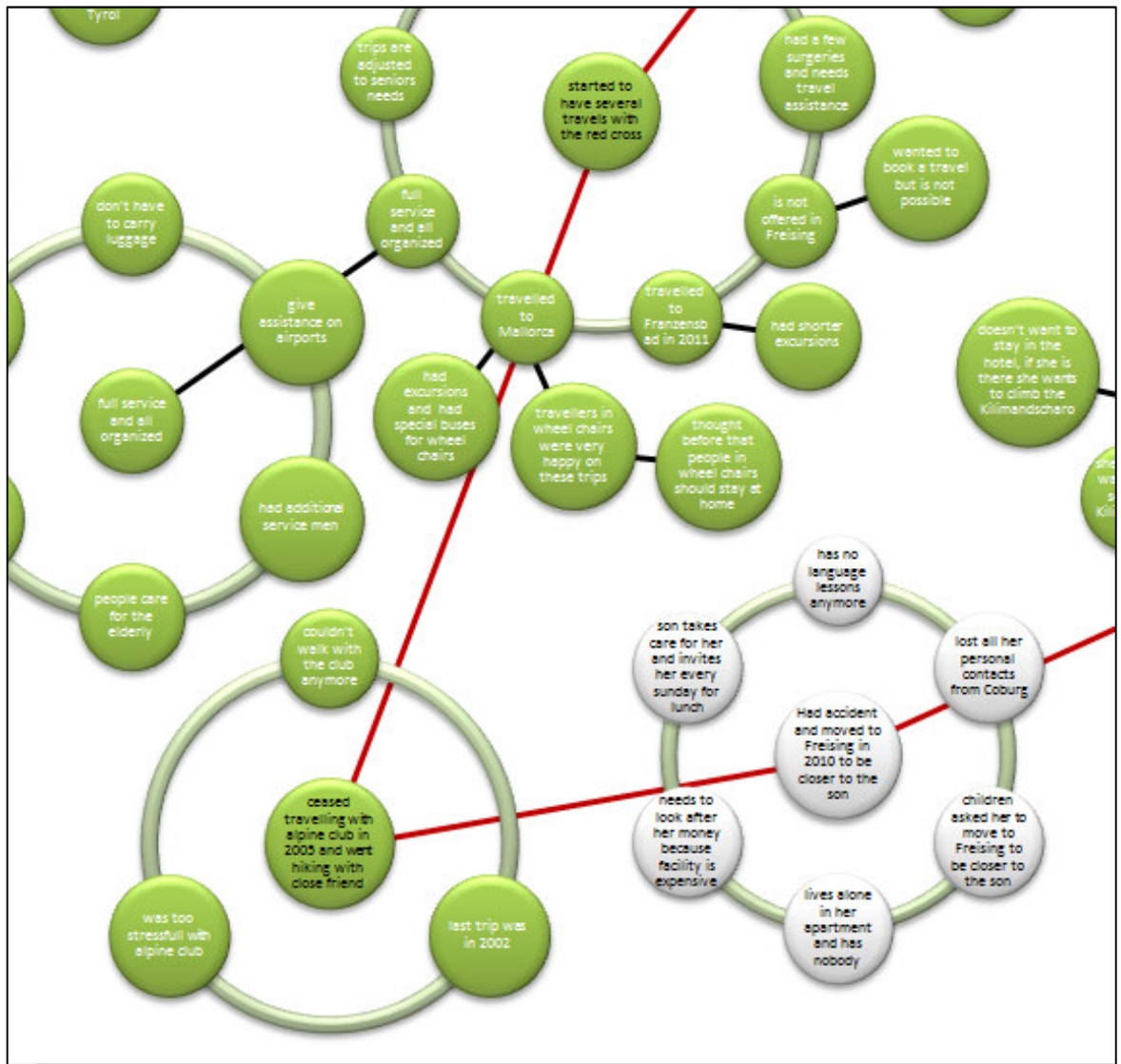
The analytical process continued with the transcription of the audio-recorded interviews. While listening to the recorded interview audios and during their transcription, the researcher jotted down ideas such as possible codes and themes.

Figure 4.6: Analytical fertilisation during the data processing



To support the data analysis another illustration technique was adopted, which went beyond the simple presentation of travel periods in the form of timelines. The researcher constructed comprehensive individual travel histories including surrounding identified themes. Figure 4.7 shows only a portion of Mrs Krueger’s ‘thematic timeline’ because the information spread beyond the physical constraints of the diagram. The red lines connect travel periods and revolving sub-themes (green circles), and life events and revolving sub-themes (white circles). In this case, the thematic timeline focuses on a period in Mrs Krueger’s later years when travel activities decreased.

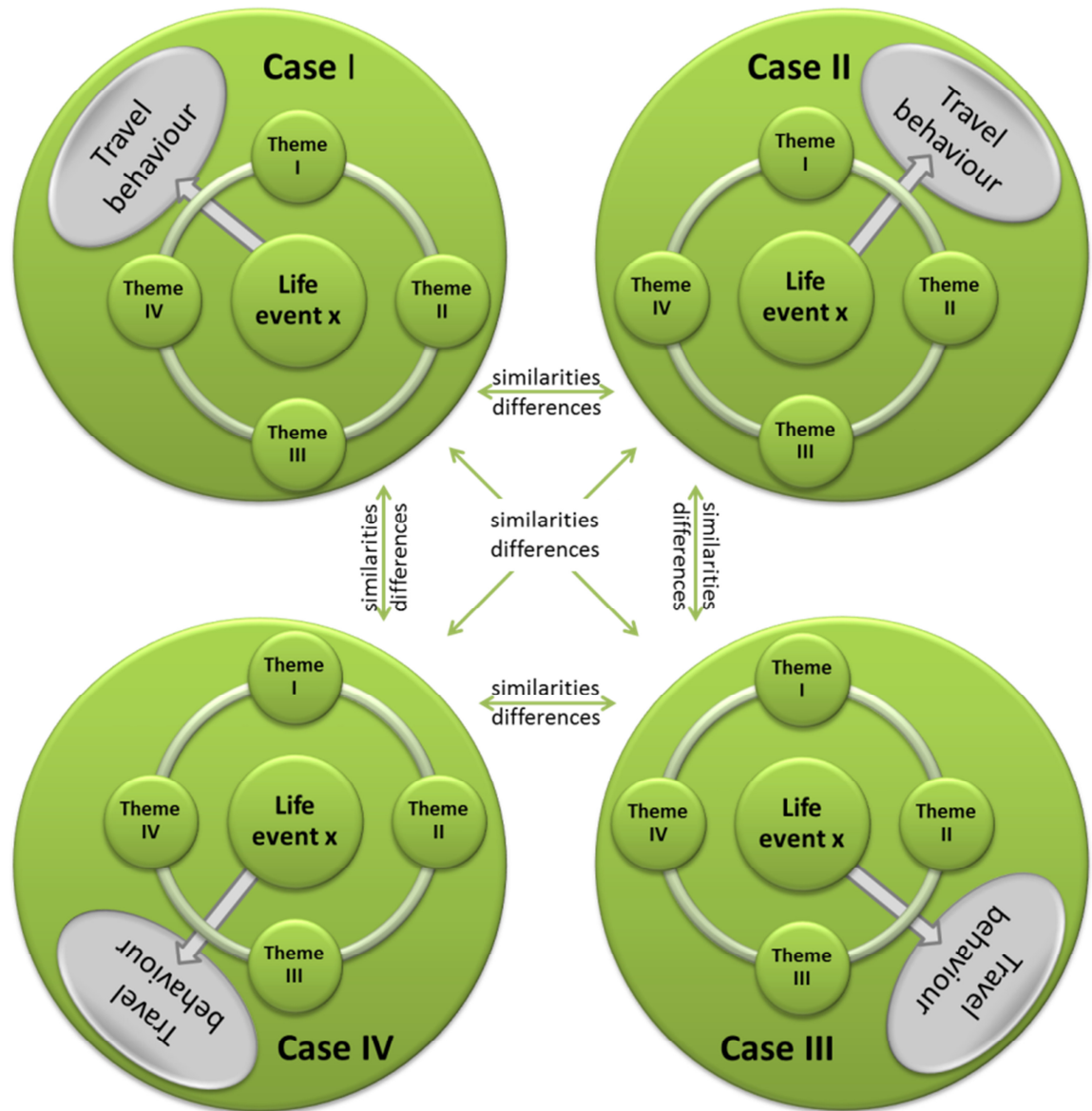
Figure 4.7: Detail of Mrs Krueger's thematic timeline



Thematic timelines were utilised in order to visualise each informant's complete travel history, enabling a better understanding of the connections and relations of the individual travel history. The illustration was advantageous because comparing and contrasting the individual life and travel histories enhanced the analytical identification of themes.

Figure 4.8 illustrates the thematic cross-case analysis applied in the thesis. Life events-related themes and travel behaviour represent the dimensions of analysis and in this illustration, four cases are compared against one another.

Figure 4.8: Dimensional cross-case analysis



4.6 Summary

This chapter provides information about the research methodology and methods used in the thesis. The thesis applies a post-positivist, pragmatist research paradigm and adopts a critical realist perspective. The study draws on a multiple case study design and used purposive snowball sampling and attributes space analysis in order to seek diversity in 23 cases. Data were collected in two phases and then analysed in four iterations. Analytical Phase III included a descriptive within-case analysis which builds the basis for the results Chapter 5. Analytical Phase IV builds on a cross-case analysis and generated themes revolving around identified life events. Results of this analytical procedure are presented in Chapter 6. Visualising the data in the form of timelines, individual travel histories and structured detailed information in the travel period/dimension matrix advanced the analytical procedure. These illustrations facilitated the understanding of the individual travel history of each of the informants and the identification and comparison of themes.

Chapter 5. Intra-individual travel biographies

One objective of this thesis is to gain a better understanding of the development of travel behaviour over the life course. This chapter provides a detailed description of seven cases that show how life events influence travel behaviour in the senior years. The presentation of the cases includes the description of the personal biography, current social network, travel biography and future travel intentions for each of the seven informants. Individual geographical maps indicate the informant's current travel destinations.

5.1 Mr Schmidt: Hiking as a main travel theme across the life course

Gender: male | Age: 78 years | Year of birth: 1933 | Place of birth: Bavaria | Future travel intention: yes | Employment status: retired | Marital status: single | Relationship status: single | Parental status: no children | Housing situation: single household | Property situation: rented apartment

5.1.1 Personal biography

Mr Schmidt was born in 1933 in the south-eastern part of Bavaria close to the Bavarian Alps. He is the oldest child of seven. The parental home was basic and family ties were strong. Mr Schmidt is still very close to his brothers.

“I had very simple parents; they didn't take any holidays, or just very rarely.”

After finishing secondary school he joined a theological seminary in Freising. Having finished his studies in 1957, Mr Schmidt worked as a pastor and teacher of religious education at several places in Bavaria. Mr Schmidt retired when he was 71 and

returned to Freising where he was ordained as a priest. Since then, he has worked part time in the parish and has also engaged in social projects. Mr Schmidt still enjoys his engagement in the parish in Freising.

“It’s not a full-time job anymore because I am retired and I can’t do that much anymore and I don’t need to. I would say I dedicate half of my time to my functions.

These are all very nice tasks. I don’t need to care for the administration and the organisation, these little things the pastor is confronted with if you work full time.”

5.1.2 Current social network

Mr Schmidt maintains a strong connection to his family, especially his siblings. Over the years the physical contact has decreased slightly.

“The frequency [of the physical contact] decreased a little bit, but not the intensity. We still have a connection just as before, even [if] we don’t meet that often anymore. I don’t like to travel that much anymore and you think twice before you go.”

Private and professional contact with other colleagues is still important to Mr Schmidt. Because he is still engaged in community work, he has regular contact with the people of the parish.

“There are people in the parish you enjoy working with, people you like and who you also meet privately to have conversations. Of course this happened more often in the past.”

5.1.3 Mr Schmidt’s travel biography

In his childhood Mr Schmidt spent the summer holidays with his mother and siblings at the home of relatives in the Bavarian Forest, the region where his mother grew up (Figure 5.1). At that time they used the train as their means of transport. When he was a teenager, Mr Schmidt and his brothers cycled the 140 kilometres to visit relatives.

The main activities during the holidays were hiking and cycling trips to the mountain regions in the Bavarian Forest. Together with his brothers, Mr Schmidt had regular day trips to the mountains in the nearby area.

Mr Schmidt, together with his mother, continued with frequent travels to visit relatives in the Bavarian Forest until he was about 40 years old. Over time the travels became shorter and the travel motivation changed as he joined the family trips mostly to please his mother. He now visits these relatives only rarely.

“We went there for a long time because it made my mother happy. Even when I was already working as a priest I went there together with her, by car of course.

Well, if you get older your goals change, of course and you travel differently. Well, when I was about 30, 40 years old I had new goals.”

When Mr Schmidt started studying he reduced his travel activities. His infrequent travels were mainly to his family. In 1956 he travelled abroad for the first time, on a week-long study trip to Rome which was organised by the theological seminary that he attended. During this period of his life, Mr Schmidt had to limit his favoured mountain trips. His studies allowed these trips only during the summer vacations when he went back home. When Mr Schmidt began to work as a pastor, he had to undertake shorter journeys and trips (up to several days), which were organised by the parish. Mr Schmidt considered these trips, which often related to religious themes, to be business, rather than leisure.

“Well, you consider it business travel because I wouldn’t have done these travels privately. I have other aims and other prospects, yes. But this is the business side, which was in the foreground.”

After finishing their theological studies, Mr Schmidt and his fellow students had a yearly reunion. When Mr Schmidt was about 40 years old, the reunion developed into a trip lasting up to seven days to different European destinations. The travel group used a coach as a means of transport to visit places in Italy, Austria and the Czech Republic. The tours were guided by a fellow student who was an art historian. For Mr Schmidt, these trips were mostly about maintaining contacts with his fellow students:

“Some people of the class had the idea to have a journey together. Well, they got involved in this to organise it; I didn’t [organise the trip] but I joined them.”

When Mr Schmidt was about 65 years old the bus trips ceased. The travel group broke up because of the deteriorating health conditions of many of its members.

“Eventually it discontinued. It became then quite arduous and many of my colleagues were in poor health. The bus drive was already stressful and they didn’t want it anymore.

They couldn’t do it anymore. And not all of them are still alive.”

After finishing his studies, Mr Schmidt started hiking again. Being in his early thirties, he and his brothers started to go on multiple-day hikes and expanded the range of their travel destinations to the European Alps. The travel groups consisted of two to six people and included Mr Schmidt and his brothers and also colleagues or the brothers’ family members. Mr Schmidt and some of his brothers worked as school teachers and for that reason the travel group was dependent on school holidays.

“There were mountain tours also in the Western Alps, in Switzerland, in Italy in the Dolomites, in the Mont Blanc area and the Monte Rosa area. We did all that, the Berniner Range... always a few days, sometimes a whole week, sometimes just a few days but also almost two weeks when we had planned a larger holiday. And we climbed quite nice mountains.”

In his fifties Mr Schmidt started hiking in overseas mountain destinations. Having travelled the European Alps, the travel group wanted to target other regions. Two of his brothers had the initial idea to undertake hiking tours in national parks in North America. Mr Schmidt joined the group and they continued with these trips for the next 15 years. Mr Schmidt attended ten of these long hiking tours, which each took about three weeks. Apart from the hiking activities, the travels, which were designed and organised by Mr Schmidt's brothers, also included days of regular sightseeing.

"Later on it expanded and by then I was about 50 years old. We wanted to tackle new aims and we started to traverse national parks in the United States. ... We went there more often, to the United States and also to Alaska and we stayed there for a three-week holiday to walk across a larger mountain region. There are no huts and you have to use tents and a backpack. There is nothing developed and there are only basic paths. We did that and it was beautiful and all of us really enjoyed it."

Once Mr Schmidt travelled to the Himalayas in a travel group with some other friends.

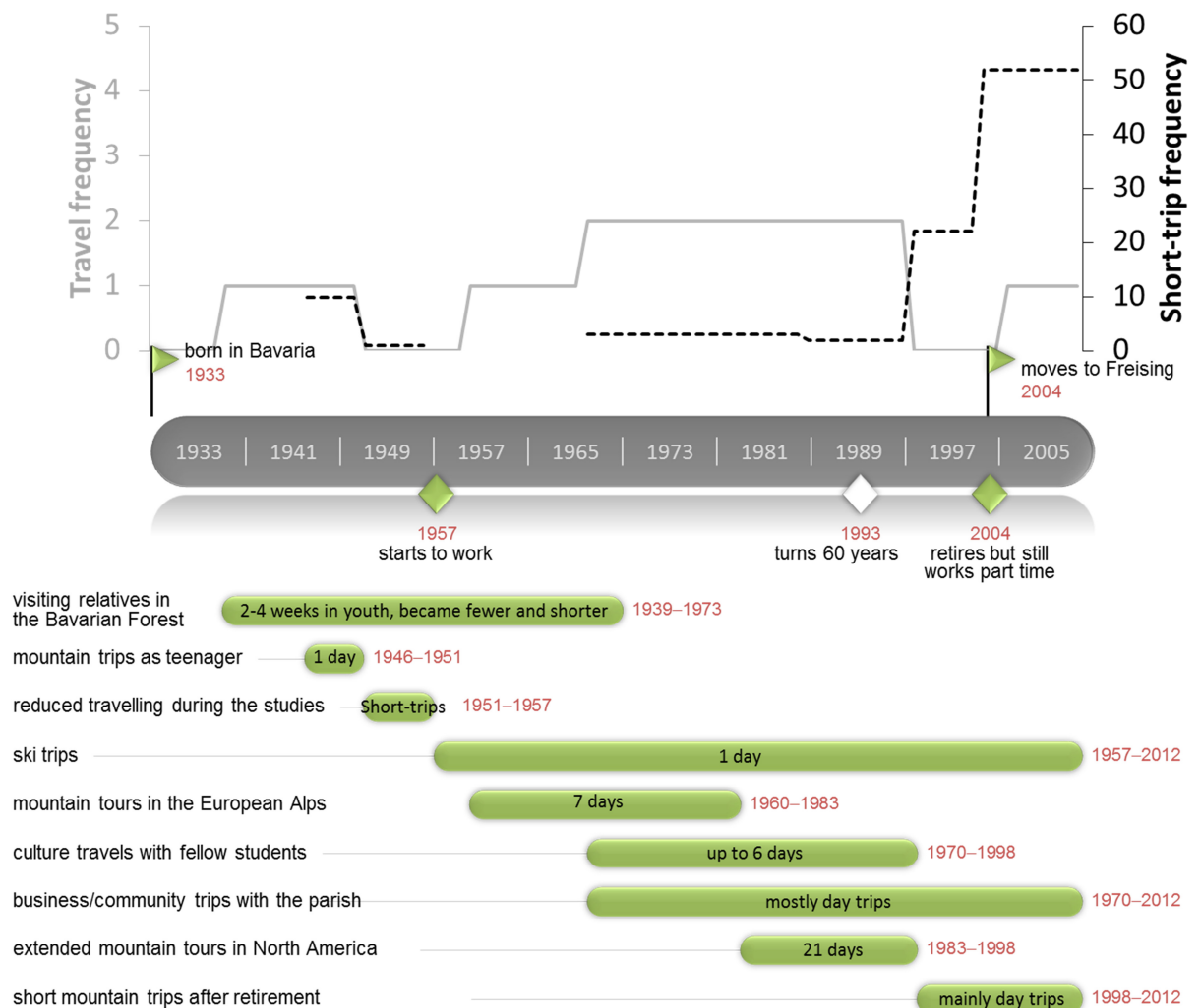
"Once, I did something special. It was a cycle tour in the Himalayas across the Karakorum, through Pakistan to the Chinese boarder. It was organised by the alpine club, the Summit Club. I travelled with them and some acquaintances from Schliersee [Bavaria] came with us. We were altogether a group of 16 people."

Mr Schmidt was 65 years old when he went to North America for the last time. He ceased traversing large mountain ranges because it became too exhausting, especially because of the need to carry the camping equipment. Mr Schmidt reports that there are some mountain travel operators who transport luggage but the travel group was not interested in this kind of travel. The motivation to do these trips was to reach a self-imposed goal without external help.

“Surely, there are offers of guided crossing of those mountain regions and national parks ... where they would also carry your backpack or luggage. It exists but we weren’t interested in this. We wanted to do it by ourselves.”

His last trip overseas was to Canada where the travel group undertook shorter hiking trips of only two to three days. Mr Schmidt then shifted his travel focus towards the European Alps.

Figure 5.1: Mr Schmidt's travel history



Current travel behaviour

The desire to go hiking still exists and Mr Schmidt wants to go into the mountains as often as possible. He counted more than 60 mountain trips, mostly to the Bavarian Alps but also in Austria or Italy, in 2011 alone.

Figure 5.2 shows a map of Mr Schmidt's current travel destination pattern. The travels include many day trips but also a few longer journeys; for example, a visit to the town of Inzell in the Bavarian Alps for about a week. Mr Schmidt keeps a diary where he records all his mountain tours. He also has a large number of travel and hiking guides which give him ideas for his trips.

Figure 5.2: Map of Mr Schmidt's current travel patterns



Key: red = extent of travels

“Since then [since he went hiking overseas] I undertake mainly mountain tours in our area. In our mountains, trips you can do within one day or maybe also in a couple of days.

And of course there are also some mountain hikes, which you did already and you want to do them once more because it was so nice and you want to experience it again. And there is also hiking literature ... which describes many tours. And that creates the desire to go there”

Mr Schmidt undertakes mountain trips either alone or within a group such as the mountain club ‘Friends of the Mountains’ in Freising, of which he is a member. The club organises a fortnightly bus tour with up to 50 members to the Bavarian Alps. Sometimes a group of club members organises mountain trips privately. They would also take the train or a car to the nearby mountains or the Bavarian Forest. For a few years Mr Schmidt has been regularly attending mountain tours that have a religious background. These trips are organised by a cleric, occur once a year and last for five days.

“It is a group who undertakes larger mountain hikes from hut to hut together with spiritual guidance. Last year there was a deacon who gave some spiritual stimuli. But mainly it is about the hikes and the ascent to the summit.”

Being a cleric, Mr Schmidt also still travels with members of his parish and with a senior club in Freising. His travel patterns have only slightly changed after his transition from full-time to part-time work. He feels freer as he is not dependent on school holidays anymore. His travel patterns are mainly shaped by his desire to go hiking. Other travel activities such as visiting cities or sightseeing have lost importance for him.

“It will be mainly day trips. Well, I am still engaged in Freising and there is the desire of the community or the senior club to have a trip once a year. ... Well, I will certainly continue this [the trips with the parish] for the next couple of years, at least as long as I am working for the parish.

Well, in the past I was also interested to travel to cities and to see one city or another. Even then it never played a very important role. Now, I don't have this desire anymore. There is only the desire to see some mountain regions or mountain tours."

5.1.4 The importance of travel and future intentions

Mr Schmidt does not spend a lot of money during his travel activities, and never has. Expensive hotels and comfort are not important to him and he prefers simple facilities.

"I would never travel somewhere and pay a lot of money for accommodation just because of the nice location close to the beach. This is not my style."

When Mr Schmidt was still working, travelling also provided the opportunity to leave his daily routine and work. Mr Schmidt never travelled for the purpose of rest and relaxation and to enjoy the beach, food or a walk. His travel motivations are shaped rather by seeing and experiencing something new in an active and engaged fashion and to fulfil his dreams. In the past, Mr Schmidt's travel desires were related to specific summits he wanted to reach but with increasing age this aspect lost importance.

"Recreation means to me seeing something new, to achieve something, also physically; for example, mountain tours. It is somehow adventurous.

I don't have any special dream. I benefit from the opportunities, which are offered. ... For example, last year we went to the Virgental [a valley in Austria] and it was intended to climb the [mountain] Großvenediger. But we couldn't because of the weather conditions. It would have been my goal, my dream. I never have been at the Großvenediger before but I could have made it. But it is not like I have to make the Venediger and to arrange my holidays accordingly. I don't need to ascend it. It is not like that anymore but it would have been nice."

Mr Schmidt wants to maintain his current travel patterns, which are shaped by his desire for mountain tours and infrequent trips with members of the parish and the community in Freising. He will continue with the trips as long as he is engaged with his part-time work and has the physical capability.

5.2 Mrs Koch: Merging tourism preferences after remarriage

Gender: female | Age: 68 years | Year of birth: 1943 | Place of birth: East Germany |
Future travel intention: yes | Employment status: part-time volunteering| Marital
status: remarried | Relationship status: not-single | Parental status: four children
(including two stepchildren), four grandchildren| Housing situation: family household
without children | Property situation: privately owned house

5.2.1 Personal biography

Mrs Koch was born in 1943 in Thuringia, eastern Germany. After World War II she moved, together with her family, to Bavaria, near Munich. At the age of 17 she started to work as a travel agent. Only a few years later, in 1963, she married her first husband and had two children: a son was born in 1963 and a daughter in 1968. She quit her job to take care of the young family. After six years of marriage the couple divorced and Mrs Koch moved, together with the children, to Freising.

During the following years the family's financial situation was tight and Mrs Koch started to work part time again in 1975, which changed three years later into full-time employment. Her children moved out in 1983 and 1986 and Mrs Koch lived alone until she married her second husband in 1993. Since 2000 Mrs Koch has been retired and relies on her pension income.

Mrs and Mr Koch live together in their own house in Freising. Once a week, Mrs Koch works voluntarily in the church. Her husband is still employed but will retire soon. Both of her children are married and live overseas, one in the US and the other in New

Zealand. Mrs Koch has four grandchildren (the first born in 1992) living in the US and New Zealand.

5.2.2 Current social network

The most important people in Mrs Koch's social system are her current husband, the wider family and close friends. She distinguishes between her own family and the large family of her second husband who live in Hamburg, northern Germany. Contact with her children reduced when they moved overseas but she has had regular visits to their homes in the US and New Zealand. Her own family is still very important to her and Mrs Koch maintains email and phone contact with her children and their families overseas. The contact with her husband's family is more intensive.

"I see the children [of Mr Koch] like my own children. They like it to visit us and they discuss everything with us. I almost have a closer connection to them than to my own children because we are limited to basic things. We are skyping and emailing, but my grandchildren only speak English and this is not easy for me. There is no contact and we are restricted to our holidays."

Mrs Koch has a circle of acquaintances, who are important to her. The couple travel to and with friends and relatives in Germany, Europe and overseas. Because the Koch family lives in quite a remote location within the region of Freising, contact with her few neighbours is also considered important.

5.2.3 Mrs Koch's travel biography

When Mrs Koch was a child her family did not travel a lot (Figure 5.3). Her parents travelled abroad from time to time but not with the children. The family could not afford expensive holidays and her father took his children only on trips to the nearby mountains. Mrs Koch hated those trips and would have preferred to stay at home with

friends. The children could not spend the holidays with relatives because they lived too far away. When Mrs Koch began working she could afford to travel. Her first trip abroad was to Paris, in the same year she started working.

Mrs Koch married her first husband but she still didn't travel a lot. The young family undertook their first family holiday to Bibione in Italy when her first child was two years old. They took their car and stayed in a hotel. Another summer holiday they went to Husum, northern Germany, for three weeks. Sometimes they visited relatives. Her husband's job in the advertising industry required many business trips, which lasted up to four weeks. For this reason, the whole family did not travel very often. Travelling alone with a young child was, for financial reasons, impossible. The husband was dominant in the relationship, and because he liked winter sports, the family went regularly once a year on a week-long skiing holiday.

"We always had only winter holidays ... because my husband liked skiing. Actually I enjoyed it as well and both of us had fun."

After the divorce, Mrs Koch and her children started to travel regularly in the summer. Mrs Koch joined a bowling club whose members went each year on camping holidays in Yugoslavia. The single mother was asked to join them and in this period of time the family travelled regularly once a year for four weeks to the same campsite. The travel party was always a larger group of about 12 persons including children.

"Then they asked me if I want to come with them. I put the kids in my R4 [car] and drove there. From this moment on every one of us was enthusiastic."

The primary motivation for these camping holidays was to give the children the opportunity for recreation and vacation. Mrs Koch's financial situation did not allow

other more expensive travels. She did not need any recreation for herself because she was not employed at that time. She considered her time as a housewife as being a holiday.

“Children need to go on holidays, all children travel, and it was affordable... I didn’t need it, because I didn’t work and that’s why I have every day as a holiday. Now it’s the same, here, I also have every day as a holiday. I don’t need relaxing holidays.”

When the children grew older, and Mrs Koch started working full time again, the camping holidays ceased. Her children started to follow their own travel interests with friends when they became teenagers. After the children left home, Mrs Koch’s financial situation improved and she had more money to travel.

“Well, when they got older I could leave them at home alone. ... And besides, if we are honest you can travel quite differently because you have more money available. If there are adolescents in the household, it is expensive, and this money remains in your pocket and I actually put it in my holidays.”

At that time Mrs Koch’s travelling was very fragmented. She was very engaged in her job and had regular business trips abroad – for example, to the US – and work obligations also meant she could not take long holidays in the summer months. There was no travel routine or fixed travel pattern and Mrs Koch changed travel partners, destinations or means of transport according to her wishes. Travelling was not very important to Mrs Koch and she didn’t plan her holidays. The decision to travel was spontaneous and she gathered her information from magazines and friends. Despite this haphazard travel pattern, Mrs Koch considers the time after her divorce and the departure of her children as the starting point in her travel history.

“Well there was no continuous travel behaviour and unlike others I didn’t have holidays every year. I travelled on a whim and when I had time. Once I travelled

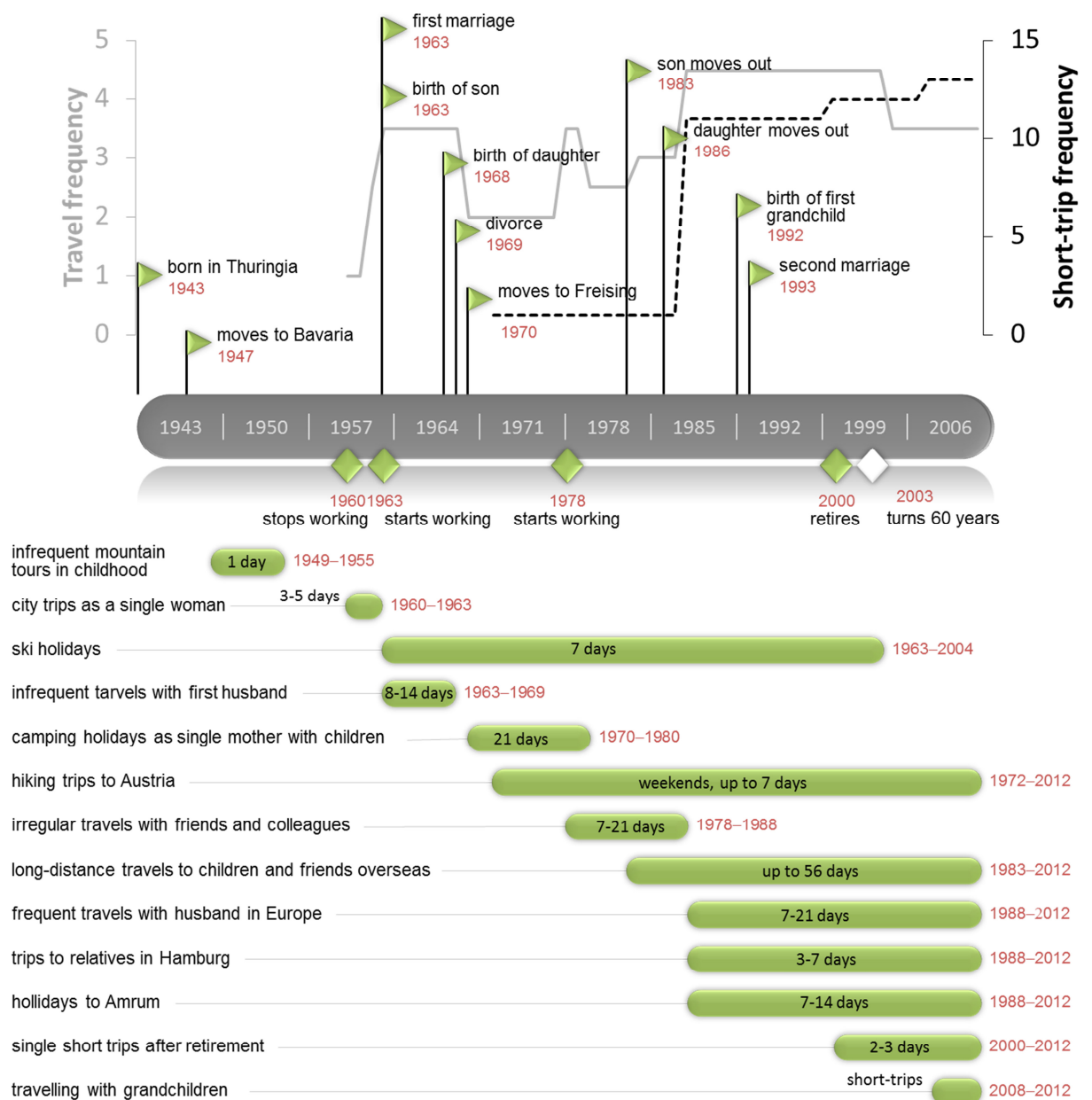
with my sister and a friend to Greece to go island hopping. Then I went on a ski trip and another time to Spain. Higgledy-piggledy.

Then we had the two kids and during this time you couldn't really travel. I started it [travelling] only after I got divorced and the children grew older."

Mrs Koch was 50 years old when she married her second husband. The re-partnering changed her travel behaviour considerably. Since the couple met they travel together and Mrs Koch's holidays with other friends or relatives have almost ceased. In the beginning Mr and Mrs Koch had different travel interests and they both had to adjust their travel patterns. In order to do that, each partner organised a favoured holiday trip. Mr Koch showed his new wife his holiday apartment in Denmark and took her to the North Sea island of Amrum, while Mrs Koch took her new husband to her favourite destination, Greece. Mr Koch moved from Hamburg to Freising and during their trips in the Bavarian region the couple discovered their enjoyment of hiking. In 2004 they booked a 14-day hiking trip to Sicily.

"He booked the first holiday and I booked the second one. Only things he didn't see before and vice versa, things I didn't do. We wanted to find out what we like the best if we travel together."

Figure 5.3: Mrs Koch's travel history



Current travel behaviour

Friends and relatives play an important role in shaping Mr and Mrs Koch's travel behaviour. For example, the Kochs spent three holidays together with Mr Koch's parents in Norway. The couple travels several times a year to Hamburg to see Mr Koch's family and they also fly overseas to visit Mrs Koch's children in New Zealand

and the United States. Mrs Koch has made three trips to New Zealand, the last in 2007. In 2010 the couple went together to the US to see her daughter and grandchildren. These trips are not only about visiting the relatives; the Kochs also combine the family visits with sightseeing trips around the country. They stay for several weeks and prefer to rent a mobile home to get around. The couple have friends who live in Hong Kong, Australia, France and Switzerland and all of them have invited the Kochs for a visit. The couple also have a group of friends with whom they travel together each year for a couple of days. Figure 5.4 shows Mrs Koch's current travel patterns in Europe and worldwide.

Figure 5.4: Map of Mrs Koch's current travel patterns



Key: red = extent of travels

Mrs Koch travels more frequently since she retired. Her husband is still employed and he has to plan holidays in advance to fit in with work. Travelling together with her husband is less flexible and for this reason Mrs Koch has started to travel sometimes without her husband. In this way Mrs Koch is less restricted in her travel activities and

she can organise her travels according to her interests. This pattern also affects the vacation decision-making process of the couple: Mrs Koch can fulfil her own travel needs on her solo trips, so when she travels together with her husband, his interests tend to take priority.

“I can travel whenever I want and my husband allows me to do that. I can visit my friend in Paris. I can walk the Road to Santiago for six weeks, if I want to. Otherwise I couldn’t do that.

I started to travel more and I travelled more by myself. I do a lot by myself.”

Every year, Mrs Koch travels with a friend to the North Sea island of Amrum in northern Germany. They travel in the springtime and stay at the same holiday apartment. These regular travels with her friend are not in keeping with Mrs Koch’s usual travel pattern, which is multifaceted and based on seeking new experiences. The motivation to go to Amrum is to relax and to recover rather than to be very active. Occasionally Mrs Koch joins alpine groups to go on hiking trips. Mr Koch also travels alone when he joins trips with his table tennis club. Travelling with the sports club is a remnant of Mr Koch’s older travel patterns. Mrs Koch once accompanied him on one of these trips, which she didn’t enjoy.

Every year Mr Koch’s granddaughter (aged 10 at the time of the research) comes for three weeks to Freising during her summer vacation. To spend time with his granddaughter, Mr Koch takes a holiday from work and they undertake journeys within the region. These short trips include, for example, visiting castles or hiking in the mountains for a few days. Every few years Mrs Koch’s children return to Germany to visit the family during the summertime. The couple adjust their holidays according to

the family visits. The couple are looking forward to Mr Koch's retirement so they can increase their joint travel activities. They will have more time together for travelling and the couple will be able to travel more spontaneously.

"We are already talking about it [the time when Mr Koch is retired]. ... I am looking forward excitedly. Travelling alone is nice but it is only nice if you visit a city or something where you can walk around and see different things. I like it better to travel with my husband."

5.2.4 The importance of travel and future intentions

Mrs Koch's part-time volunteer work does not affect her travel activities because she can adjust her working hours according to her own schedule. Other activities are subordinate to her travel wishes. For example, Mrs Koch started to learn the accordion but when she realised that the fixed lesson times were interfering with her holiday plans she stopped classes. Mrs Koch likes travelling but holidays for recreational purposes are not very important to her. She is not working full time anymore and considers every day a holiday.

Mrs Koch's desire to travel is driven by her interest to see something new but also to get away from her everyday life. Travelling has become very important to her. She allocates a lot of money and preparation time to her travels. Mrs Koch has several bookshelves of travel literature and she uses the internet to inform herself, reading websites and blogs.

"I don't want to be every day here in Freising. I mean there are so many nice places all over the world and there is still so much to see, which gives me a lot. It's not only that I inform myself beforehand but also I get hooked on it after I travelled a country. ... Afterwards I also read travel literature and travel stories to check if I experienced the same and if it's right what they are actually writing."

Mrs Koch has no special 'dream destination' but she does have travel preferences. Together with her husband, they want to see more of their home country, Germany. They are also planning a longer trip with a campervan in Canada. Travelling is an integral part of Mrs Koch's life and she wants to travel as long as possible. She will stop travelling only if she has to, due to deteriorating health. She considers going on ship cruises as her last travel activities because they are enjoyable even with mobility difficulties.

"Even with a walking frame you can go on a ship cruise. ... I said I only will do that [a cruise] if I can't walk anymore. Not before. I wouldn't do it before."

5.3 Mrs Neumann: Cessation of travel activities in old age

Gender: female | Age: 83 years | Year of birth: 1928 | Place of birth: Bavaria | Future travel intention: no | Employment status: retired | Marital status: widowed | Relationship status: single | Parental status: one child | Housing situation: assisted living | Property situation: rented apartment

5.3.1 Personal biography

Mrs Neumann was born in 1928 in Munich, where she lived for 73 years. In 1952 Mrs Neumann married and 11 years later she gave birth to a son. Her son was a frail child and for this reason she quit her office job and worked as a housewife so she could take care of her family. Her husband worked as a technician and retired when he was 62, in 1983. At this time their son still lived with them; he didn't move out until he finished his studies in 1988. In retrospect, Mrs Neumann is not pleased that she has been a housewife most of her adult life.

“I gave always everything for the family. I was a bit stupid.”

In 2001 Mrs Neumann and her husband moved to Freising. This was necessary because Mrs Neumann had suffered a heart attack and she needed a senior-friendly house. For this reason, the couple moved together with their son who could give support to the parents. Four months later Mrs Neumann’s husband passed away, which was a big blow for her. Mrs Neumann currently lives in an apartment that is part of an assisted-living complex. The 82-year-old woman is ill and her doctor had diagnosed only a short life expectancy at the time of her only interview.

“You know, with 73 years moving to another place and the husband then dies. That is terrible.

My doctor said I will only live for another six months. Well, if it has to be like this... I am over 80 years old.”

5.3.2 Current social network

Mrs Neumann regrets having moved away from her home town because she has never established a social foothold in Freising. She lives in an assisted-living complex where she feels very lonely because she has only limited contact with other residents of the facility. Mrs Neumann’s son lives within two hours’ driving distance and visits her every fortnight, but only for an hour each time. Two other acquaintances living in Freising have only limited time for visits.

“I don’t know anyone, in this village out here. ... And here in the house, here are only old people. I think it was wrong to move in here. ... He [my son] only comes for one hour or so. I am very lonely.”

5.3.3 Mrs Neumann's travel biography

Travelling was not very common when Mrs Neumann was a child. Her family made trips to the mountains in the Austrian Alps (Figure 5.5), but these trips were few and far between. Being a frail child, Mrs Neumann was sent to the Austrian mountains and the North Sea in northern Germany for health treatments. She has fond memories of the North Sea and said she would like to see the sea again.

“I never forgot the sea.”

After Mrs Neumann married the couple travelled only to mountain regions. Her husband was a passionate hiker and he encouraged his wife to join his hiking tours. Initially they went by train and bikes to the mountains. Later on, in the early 1960s, their financial situation improved and the couple purchased a car, which replaced the train as a means of transport. Eventually Mrs Neumann refused to travel exclusively to the mountains. The couple renegotiated their travel patterns and Mrs Neumann's husband agreed to visit other destinations, as well.

“Well, we married in 1950 but at this time we only took the train until we had money.

My husband chased me around in the mountains for four years, until I bucked.”

Mrs Neumann gave birth to her only child when she was 35. With only one income earner, the family had to budget their money and more expensive travels were impossible. When their son grew older and their financial situation improved, the family went for summer holidays to destinations near the Mediterranean Sea in Italy or to the former Yugoslavia. The sea air was considered healthy for the frail young boy. In

this period the family spent their whole summer holidays, four weeks, at a vacation home.

The Neumanns financially supported their son during his studies. During that period, the couple could not afford expensive holidays even though Mr Neumann had a good pension income. When their son finished his studies, the couple increased their travel activities. By this time, Mr Neumann had retired.

“And then we travelled a lot, because the boy was old enough. When he finished the studies, we took the aeroplane and we stayed in hotels.”

The focus of Mr and Mrs Neumann’s travels was on walking in the mountains and holidays in southern Europe. They travelled to alpine regions in springtime and by aeroplane to Mediterranean island destinations in autumn. The mountain trips were mainly day trips but sometimes also longer, for up to four days. After Mr Neumann’s retirement, the couple preferred to go hiking during the week to avoid other tourists. The island destinations were, for example, Mallorca, Tenerife and the Greek isles. At that time they stayed in hotels and not in vacation homes anymore. The couple also started to book vacation packages with travel agencies.

“We travelled to all these different islands. We always had a beautiful time.”

When Mrs Neumann’s husband passed away, his widow could not travel because the loss of her husband was too much for her emotionally. Being new in Freising, Mrs Neumann did not have a strong social network who could support her. After the loss of her spouse, Mrs Neumann’s travelling almost ceased. Besides infrequent day trips, she had only two larger group travels, which she attended as a single person. She undertook these travels because she wanted to escape from her rather depressing

daily routine. The first trip was with a bus tour operator to the Czech Republic. She stayed in a hotel in Karlovy Vary for eight days and visited the health facilities of the city.

“My husband was in the grave and I went to the grave of my husband. I felt miserable. ... I had to get out for once and I thought by myself this would be good. Financially it was no problem.”

In 2010 Mrs Neumann undertook her last travel to break out of her everyday routines. It was a cruise to the Adriatic Sea and was planned deliberately as her last travel in life. For this reason, Mrs Neumann booked an expensive room with a balcony. The travel was something special to Mrs Neumann and she considered it not appropriate for her age. Mrs Neumann knew the Adriatic Coast from previous holidays and she had seen most of the places already with her husband.

“I had to get out. I didn’t want to be all the time in this stupid Freising. And I just wanted to have a last travel. And it was my last travel.”

The cruise involved some complications, which related to Mrs Neumann’s advanced age. For example, Mrs Neumann almost missed the organised bus to Verona because the station was not clearly marked – she would not have found the right place without help from other people. Likewise, during a day trip in Istanbul she got lost and needed the help of other tourists to find her way back. Also, Mrs Neumann encountered significant difficulties on the onshore day trips because they were not designed for people with restricted mobility. Mrs Neumann mentioned that the travel guide wasn’t patient enough with her because she moved too slowly with her walking frame.

“They drive you to Dubrovnik, which takes half an hour by bus. And they said in the beginning there will be a travel guide, a local, but then we will be by

ourselves. The last bus went at four o'clock and I thought, with my walking frame I can't enter the bus.

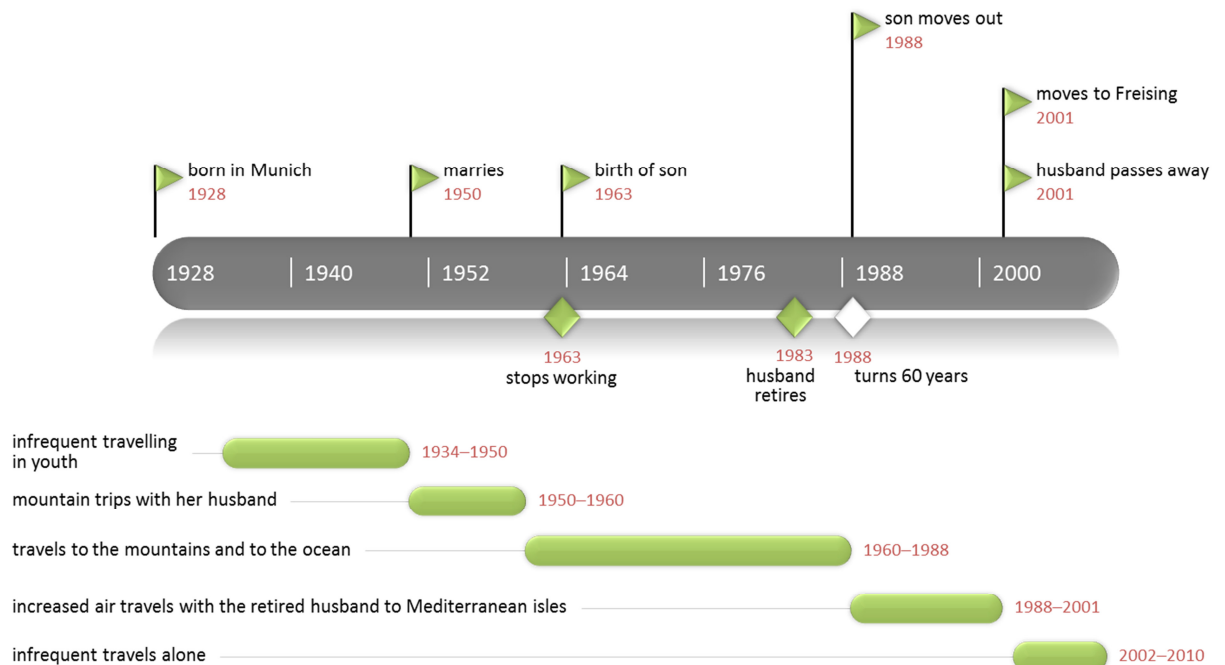
The guide was outrageous and he didn't wait for me because I had the walking frame."

At this time, Mrs Neumann still made occasional day trips within the nearby region, but when she experienced at one point a sudden feeling of faintness she decided to stop going on trips. In 2010 Mrs Neumann made her last trip; she was 82. Her current life situation is not satisfying, but because of her limited life expectancy, she wouldn't consider further travelling.

"Something [the weakness attack] happened to me and that's why I don't undertake day trips anymore.

Now I am locked up and I don't live very long anymore, anyway. They had some bad news for me but I don't let myself go. Well, now it would be stupid to go somewhere; I still need to be reasonable."

Figure 5.5: Mrs Neumann's travel history



5.4 Mr Fischer: Emergent tourism interest after widowhood

Gender: male | Age: 75 years | Year of birth: 1936 | Country of birth: Hungary | Future travel intention: yes | Employment status: retired | Marital status: widowed | Relationship status: single | Parental status: one child | Housing situation: single household | Property situation: rented flat

5.4.1 Personal biography

Mr Fischer was born in 1936 in Hungary. During World War II, his family was displaced and migrated to Freising. At the age of 22 Mr Fischer began to work for a health insurance company, where he remained for the next 43 years. At the beginning of the 1960s he met his wife; they married two years later. Their only daughter was born in 1976. Eight years later Mrs Fischer was diagnosed with breast cancer. She succumbed to her illness in 2002, one year after Mr Fischer retired. Mr Fischer lives by himself in an apartment in Freising on a monthly income of about EUR 1500. His hobbies are hiking and travelling.

5.4.2 Current social network

Mr Fischer has an intact social network consisting of family, relatives and friends. Since Mr Fischer's wife passed away, the most important person in his life is his daughter along with her husband. They live in Shanghai but will return soon to Germany. Mr Fischer has visited his daughter in Shanghai a few times. Apart from that they have constant phone contact. Mr Fischer's extended family also live in Freising and he regularly sees his sister and nephews. Mr Fischer still has contact with his wife's

family, who are also in the region. Mr Fischer's relationship with some friends became closer after the death of his wife.

"My wife always made the correspondence, writing postcards for Christmas, etc.; it was none of my doing. When she died, for me it was like a new beginning. You have the choice and either you get in touch with other people and then they get back to you. Or you don't do anything and the people will forget you. I started then the correspondence, I called people and now I have good contact to relatives and friends."

Mr Fischer is a member of the local alpine club and attends meetings and goes on trips to the mountains. Sport has always been an important part of Mr Fischer's life and he is still a member of a sport club even though he can't pursue sport activities as actively as he did when he was younger.

5.4.3 Mr Fischer's travel biography

In childhood Mr Fischer spent his school holidays with relatives in the nearby regions of the Bavarian Forest or Franconia (Figure 5.6). He enjoyed meeting up with other children to play in the natural landscape. As a teenager Mr Fischer went camping with friends during his holidays. When he was 18, Mr Fischer went by car with friends camping to Italy because he liked the beaches, sea and sun. The travel group dissolved when the friends started to have serious relationships.

Mr Fischer's travel behaviour changed when he was 25 years old and he met his future wife. She disliked beach holidays and so Mr Fischer adjusted his travel pattern. The couple undertook city trips; for example, to Paris and Prague. They also went to Budapest to visit Mr Fischer's extended family in Hungary. They stayed at hotels and valued comfort, even though they had to watch their budget. They undertook two or

three travels a year at that time. The couple travelled to enjoy the landscapes and to see new cities and places. Mr and Mrs Fischer also started to go hiking together. At least fortnightly they did a day trip within the nearby region.

“Later on we travelled to the beaches again, after our daughter was born. ... Let’s put it like this: If we had the choice we preferred the Black Forest, France, Colmar and further down, but also southern France. But not for swimming; we didn’t do that until we had our daughter.”

After the birth of their daughter the couple changed their travel behaviour. The family started to travel with friends and their families to beaches in Italy during the school holidays. In the mid-1980s Mr Fischer undertook, together with his mother and the local Catholic women’s association, several pilgrimages; for example, to Lourdes, Fatima and Rome. His mother had never travelled and Mr Fischer wanted to show her other countries after his father passed away. The trips were organised by a travel agency specialising in pilgrimages. Mrs Fischer usually stayed at home to look after their daughter. When their daughter got older, the family shared interests in culture and the arts and they began to spend more time in Italian cities. Mr Fischer also started to ski, taking lessons together with his teenage daughter. Every winter the family went on a ski trip for the ten days.

“Our daughter was interested in arts and we wanted ... for example, Florence, etc. I was interested, as well, to see the museums, the famous David. My daughter liked it and was very enthusiastic and for this reason we did this kind of travel more often.”

The family travelled together until the daughter was about 16, when she began to want to stay at home with her friends. For the next two years Mr and Mrs Fischer made only shorter trips because they did not want to leave the daughter too long

alone at home. When their daughter moved away from home, the couple were able to spend more money on travel; their budget was also facilitated by Mr Fischer's increased income over time. They could now afford to take an aeroplane to more distant destinations, to book with travel agencies, and to stay in more comfortable hotels.

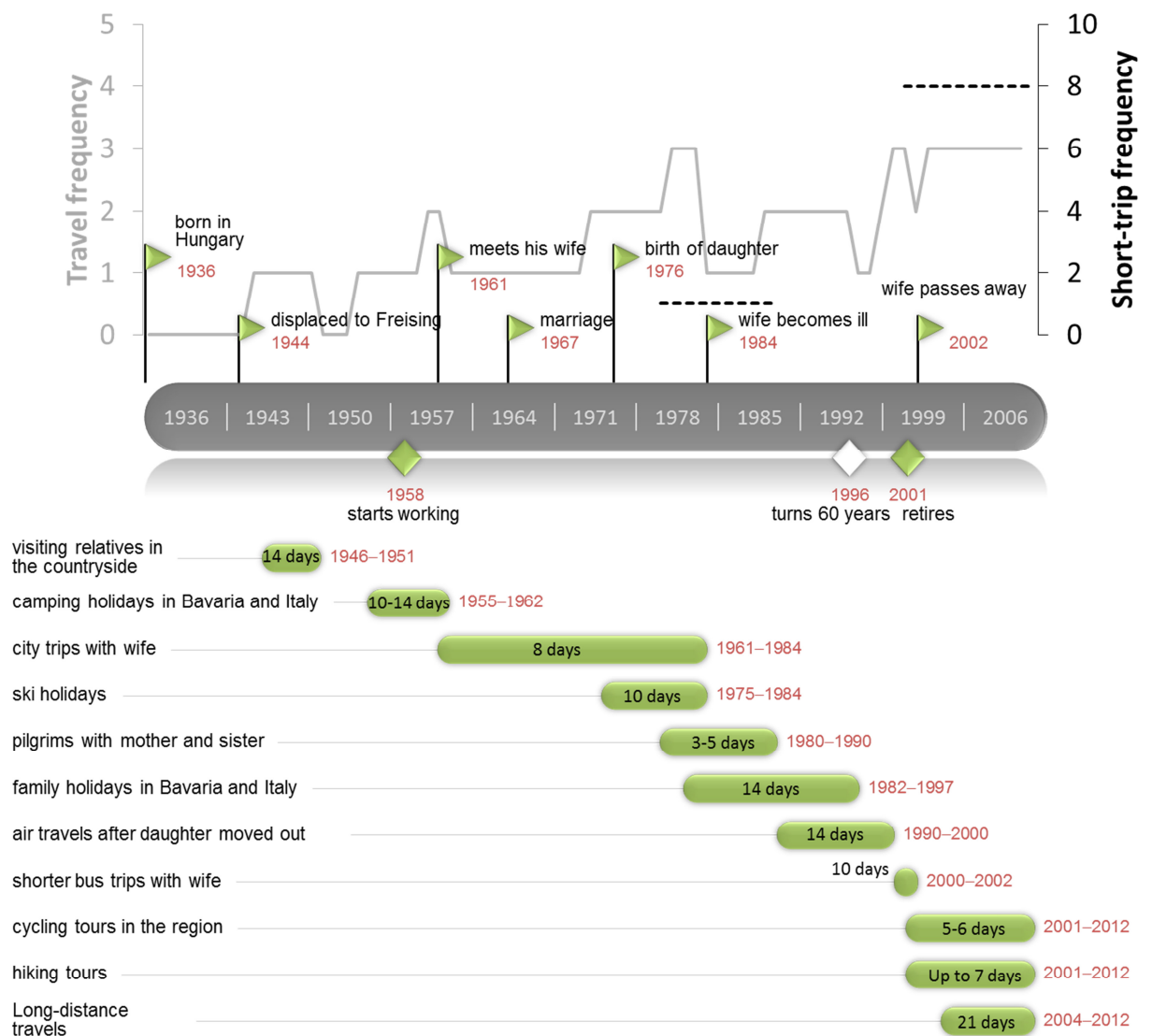
"Not before our daughter left the home and was independent did we start to have larger holidays, with the aeroplane to Malta, the Greek islands and so on. Because you could say, 'Well, she is 18 now, you don't need to look after her anymore. She will be fine without us.' Then we could allow us larger trips, also by aeroplane.

As a young family father you have to see how it goes. We saved money to buy our own house but later on you have more financial opportunities. You don't have to take only the cheap stuff. You can go where you haven't been before and also where they offer better comfort."

In 1984 Mrs Fischer was diagnosed with breast cancer and she lived with the disease for 18 years. The illness affected the couple's travel behaviour, their activities depending on the course of the disease. When the disease progressed, they began to book bus tours to closer destinations, mainly in Germany, as longer travels by air became too stressful and exhausting for Mrs Fischer. They also had to reduce their hiking activities, which turned into less strenuous walking journeys. During that period Mr Fischer adjusted his travel needs to the health situation of his wife. He retired in 2001, which did not have a positive effect on his travel activities at that time. In the last phase of Mrs Fischer's illness, the couple completely ceased travelling.

"We looked together at what she can still do. We couldn't do the hiking trips anymore and when we visited a city, well, we sat down in a café and had a break. ... So we decided to take a bus. The travel behaviour definitely changed at that time. ... It got worse and at some point I didn't travel anymore."

Figure 5.6: Mr Fischer's travel history



After the death of his wife, Mr Fischer reflected on his life. He also had to rethink how he wanted to travel in the future. Mr and Mrs Fischer had plans and were looking forward to his retirement so they could have longer travels, but this never eventuated. Friends encouraged him to get active and to join them travelling. Mr Fischer found himself at a crossroads but, instead of retreating from his social life, he contacted friends and joined alpine clubs and other associations to socialise. The widower started to cycle again, an activity that he had enjoyed when he was young.

“I didn’t start [to travel] again until she [his wife] passed away. My friends then encouraged me: ‘Come with us, join us.’

I felt alone after my wife passed away in 2002. All of my friends had partners and you become something like a foreign object, and you are an appendage again. I remembered that I like cycling when I was young and I began cycling again.”

Current travel behaviour

Being single, Mr Fischer wouldn’t travel alone because the social aspect of travelling is very important to him. He likes to get in contact with others during his trips. He made new friends with similar interests and together they go on cycling and hiking trips. Mr Fischer’s motivation to travel is to experience something new and different. He also considers the health benefits of travelling which he believes facilitates physical and mental fitness. Mr Fischer puts a lot of effort and time into the preparation and post-processing of his trips since he retired and his wife passed away. He keeps contact by email with people he has met on his trips to exchange photos, which he likes to edit.

“As a retiree I could enjoy my life and could go out eating every day and life just goes on. But I still want to experience something. I want to talk about it and you need to keep fit physically and mentally because if you are alone you can only talk to yourself.”

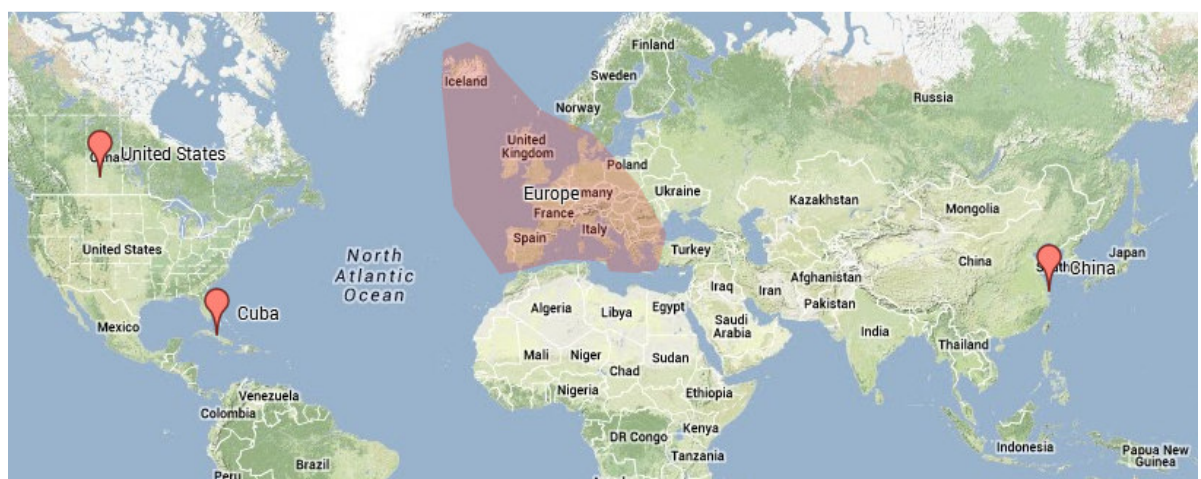
Together with other members of the alpine club, Mr Fischer organises private cycling and hiking trips. The group is comprised of single persons as well as couples. During the summer season the group goes on a trip about once a week. Those spontaneous journeys depend on the weather conditions and are within the nearer region of Bavaria. The group also shares cultural interests and visits museums and concerts. Day trips are undertaken by car or sometimes by train.

Mr Fischer is very fit and he still participates in organised hiking and cycling trips although he can no longer do extreme tours. Mr Fischer stopped skiing in 2009 because he did not enjoy this activity anymore.

“You need a certain strength and some sure footedness to do a via ferrata [a challenging climbing route] and it became a bit too risky for me. In the alpine clubs it is always possible that there are also people who are ten years younger than you. You then need to decide if you want to join them or not. ... I don’t do this anymore.”

Besides those short trips, Mr Fischer also undertakes about three longer trips a year together with different travel groups. In recent years they have been, for example, to Iceland, Cuba, China and the United States (Figure 5.7).

Figure 5.7: Map of Mr Fischer’s current travel patterns



Key: red = extent of travels

In 2004 Mr Fischer walked the pilgrims’ route to Santiago de Compostela for six weeks. Due to his extensive travel activities Mr Fischer generally budgets his money carefully, partly because he is afraid of an increase in health expenses. This is reflected in his travel activities. About 25 friends from the alpine club joined an organised bus trip of

more than four weeks around the United States. The camping-style trip was relatively inexpensive because the bus also contained the sleeping facilities. Mr Fischer has participated in those cheaper bus travels several times. He stopped this kind of travel to have more comfortable transportation and accommodation.

“Well, last year in Iceland. We select the destinations... where we haven’t been, yet, what could be interesting. It’s the combination between hiking and sightseeing, to experience the landscape. And everybody thinks about it.”

Mr Fischer has travelled three times to Asia, trips which included visits to his daughter, who moved to Shanghai. He combined these travels with sightseeing, hiking and cycling to learn more about Asian countries. Before his daughter moved to China, he was not interested in this area.

Interviewer: “What was the motivation to go to Shanghai to see your daughter?”

Mr Fischer: “To have the opportunity, to take advantage that my daughter is there, you know? They knew a little bit about the language, you understand, and they said as long as you are in Shanghai... because alone you can’t... then we do something together. I had the opportunity to stay at their home.”

Mr Fischer’s travel behaviour has changed in terms of means of transport. Despite using the car for longer travels, he now prefers the aeroplane. Comfort also plays an increasingly important role if he goes on a journey.

5.4.4 The importance of travel and future intentions

Since Mr Fischer retired and his wife passed away, travelling has gained a greater significance in his life. He wants to break out of his daily routine to see something new, and to add meaning to life. He has sufficient resources, the physical abilities to travel and, since his retirement, the time to travel as much as he wants. Mr Fischer will

maintain his current travel behaviour as long as possible. He can see a positive side to being single and independent of others.

“You know that singles travel differently than couples because both of them have to agree with decisions. Both of them need to make compromises while I can say I like it and don’t need to ask somebody. I can say, ‘I will do it’ and I do it. I don’t need to consider financial constraints. It is more difficult for couples because one of them might be more sensible or already a bit sick and the other one is more mobile. Then they need to compromise. ... While I can travel according to my opportunities and nobody would restrict me.”

For 2012 Mr Fischer planned a trip to the Baltic countries and he also has an open invitation to visit a friend in the United States. Due to his age, the main focus of his travel has shifted towards the nearer European countries. Because of health risks and stressful visa applications, he does not want to travel to distant exotic countries anymore. He also considers concentrating more on cycling trips within the region. Mr Fischer believes he has seen a lot of the world and he wants to scale down his activities.

“I was thinking about Taiwan but there are some visa problems with China. It is still difficult. ... Well, I would say [I would like to travel] more in European countries. Maybe I concentrate more on cycling trips in our country.

I have seen quite a bit. ... And when you get older you look more after your health.”

5.5 Mr Wagner: A ‘lone wolf’ away on travel after divorce

Gender: male | Age: 73 years | Year of birth: 1938 | Place of birth: East Germany |
Future travel intention: yes | Employment status: retired | Marital status: divorced |
Relationship status: single | Parental status: three children, one grandchild | Housing
situation: family household with children and grandchildren | Property situation:
privately owned house

5.5.1 Personal biography

Mr Wagner was born in 1938 in Saxony and lived there until he was 15 years old. He and his family then migrated to Oldenburg in northern Germany. After finishing school he moved for his tertiary studies and then several times more as different jobs took him to a variety of locations throughout Germany. Eventually he settled down at his present place of residence in Freising, in 1980. Mr Wagner was married for 25 years but divorced in 2001. He has three children and one baby grandchild. Mr Wagner retired in 2001. He lives with his daughter's family in his own house in Freising. Mr Wagner is a great fan of ships and hydraulic engineering and he now spends most of his time on this hobby.

5.5.2 Current social network

The most important people in Mr Wagner's social network are his children, especially his daughter with whom he has daily contact. He also sees his two sons frequently; they both live approximately 30 kilometres away. He also has frequent contact with his sister, who resides in Switzerland. Depending on her health, Mr Wagner visits his sister regularly. Mr Wagner attends fortnightly meetings of a charity association. Mr Wagner describes himself as a loner and this is reflected by his solo travels when he was young and his way of travelling as a senior.

5.5.3 Mr Wagner's travel biography

During World War II, travelling for leisure purposes was not common and his family undertook only a few short trips when he was a child. Mr Wagner experienced his first travel when he visited the Baltic Sea, 250 kilometres away from his hometown; this

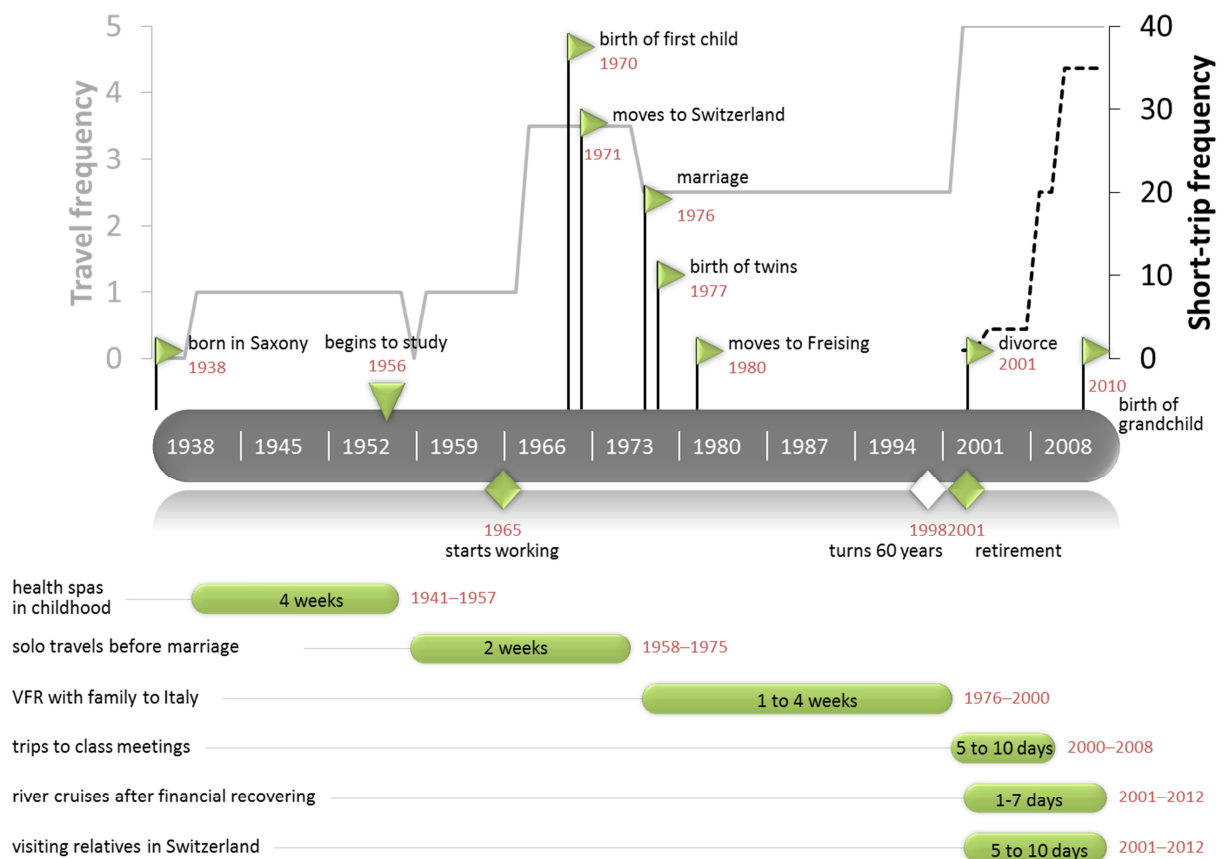
trip was in the early 1940s and he travelled with his mother. Being a frail child, Mr Wagner had some stays in health facilities at the seaside for several weeks (Figure 5.8). Later on, when he started to study, he ceased travelling with his family and developed his own travel patterns. He preferred adventure travels, to see something different and new. This pattern is exemplified by his solo trips to Greece on an ocean liner, a cruise in the Caribbean, and a safari in West Africa. Mr Wagner also remembers a three-week car trip to Turkey with two friends, which included a drive of several thousand kilometres.

“They were always adventure travels or sightseeing trips but never leisure trips in the sense to lying down somewhere and waiting to recover.”

When Mr Wagner married an Italian woman and started a family, his travel behaviour changed. The couple had three children and their holiday trips were planned around the needs of a young family. Family travels in summer, during Christmas time and at Easter concentrated on beach holidays in Italy and visits to his wife’s family and relatives. Mr Wagner disliked both beach holidays and visiting family. To fulfil his own preferences, he negotiated aspects of the trips with his family and tried to include sightseeing trips.

“In fact, I always tried, ‘Let’s have a round trip’ ... but it was always combined with at least one week lying on the beach. ... The kinship [in Italy] was boring.”

Figure 5.8: Mr Wagner's travel history



Mr Wagner got divorced at about the same time as he retired. Both events had an impact on his travel patterns. When he retired at 63, he had more time and an enhanced desire to travel. He identifies the divorce as a release from his former travel obligations such as spending time on the beach. He can now travel according to his own desires and there is no need to worry about others' considerations.

"If I wouldn't be divorced ... and my wife wasn't interested in those crazy trips that I like, it would be different. What I do is sometimes demanding. Well, I couldn't travel like this with a woman."

Divorce and retirement also had financial implications. The retirement decreased his income and, furthermore, he had to pay his wife out of her share of their jointly owned house. During this time Mr Wagner couldn't afford to travel other than to see his sister

in Switzerland. When his financial situation improved, Mr Wagner started travelling again.

Current travel patterns

Mr Wagner was a hydraulic engineer by profession. He describes himself as a big shipping fan. He hosts his own website about scheduled river cruises in Europe. His interest in ships, cruises and canals shapes his travel choices. Since 2008 he has undertaken increasingly shorter trips of between three and ten days, mainly in Germany but also in neighbouring countries (Figure 5.9). In 2011 he travelled about once every month during the summer season. These trips are very carefully planned because Mr Wagner is only interested in specific ships, cruises, rivers or canals.

“There are specific vessels, and I want to travel during daylight. Not with a cruise where they go during the night and stop for the day at some city and they say, ‘Now you have to see the city.’”

Mr Wagner’s current travel pattern reflects the adventurous nature of his journeys when he was young and unmarried. His trips are not about relaxing but about his hobby and related discoveries. His trips are combined with sightseeing and visiting cities on the way. He travels alone and arranges all his own bookings, using the internet in particular. The travel itself remains simple and centres on a certain cruise he has in mind. Mr Wagner needs to budget his money carefully and prefers simple and cheaper transportation (mainly trains where he can use rails cards and discounts for seniors) and accommodation.

“I wouldn’t do this as a travel package. I want to do it by myself. I plan everything by myself. Well, I book the cruise ... For the hotels I don’t book in advance and the trains always run. You just jump in, you only need a ticket.”

Figure 5.9: Map of Mr Wagner's current travel patterns



Key: red = extent of travels

Since Mr Wagner overcame his financial difficulties he can afford his trips and could even travel more often if he wanted. He feels healthy but his fitness has decreased and for this reason he prefers shorter trips, which demand less luggage. Mr Wagner doesn't identify himself as an old person and he still feels physically able. He says that many people believe that he looks younger than his age. For Mr Wagner, travelling with a senior travel group is not an option.

"Just recently I have been in Passau and I have seen this cruise and through the window I watched the people sitting at the table and I thought to myself, 'For god's sake, I wouldn't like to travel with all these old people.'"

From time to time, Mr Wagner used to have short trips with his adult children once he had retired. These journeys ended after his children started serious relationships.

“Now, everybody is in a relationship. Before, they were all singles. Erika [his daughter] is in a relationship, Guenther [his first son] has a girlfriend now and Stephan [his second son]... Then, you don’t travel together anymore. It’s different now. When they were still singles it was more likely that all three of us have a trip to Prague.”

When Mr Wagner’s daughter became pregnant she and her partner moved back in with him in Freising. Living with a young family did not affect Mr Wagner’s travel behaviour. His grandchild is too young to travel with but Mr Wagner enjoys looking after her to provide support for his daughter.

5.5.4 The importance of travelling and future intentions

Mr Wagner has no intention to reduce his travel activities. On the contrary, he could imagine travelling more often in the future and he shows interest in extended trips to other countries in Europe such as Sweden or Belgium. At home he can recover from his journeys. Future trips are mostly related to specific waterways or infrastructure he is interested in. When he gets older, Mr Wagner may think of more relaxed ship cruises.

“When I get really old I might have a real ship cruise holiday.”

5.6 Mr Jiménez: Travelling with and without a sick wife

Gender: male | Age: 68 years | Year of birth: 1942 | Country of birth: Spain | Future travel intention: yes | Employment status: retired | Marital status: married | Relationship status: not-single | Parental status: one child, two grandchildren | Housing situation: family household without children | Property situation: privately owned apartment

5.6.1 Personal biography

Mr Jiménez was born in 1942 in Spain and grew up in Barcelona, where he lived until the age of 17. He then migrated to Germany and has been living in Bavaria ever since. In 1960 Mr Jiménez started to work as a metal worker in Munich. He married, and one year later, in 1967, his wife gave birth to a son. The family moved to Freising and invested their savings in an apartment. In 1980 Mr Jiménez's wife was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, which had a major impact on the couple's life. In 2005 Mr Jiménez retired.

Mr Jimenez's son lives in Ulm which is approximately 150 kilometres away from Freising. Their son is divorced and sees his children, who live with their mother in the same city, only irregularly. Mr Jiménez's two grandchildren were born in 2001 and 2003.

5.6.2 Current social network

Mr Jiménez's social network is mainly based on family, friends and a local sports club in the village. Family plays the most important role in his social network. He has regular contact with his son and grandchildren. Even though his grandchildren live 90 minutes away, Mr Jiménez sometimes picks them up from school. He also visits his family in Spain regularly, which he has done ever since he moved to Germany. Mr Jiménez has regular contact with friends and he is involved in a football club where he works voluntarily.

5.6.3 Mr Jiménez's travel biography

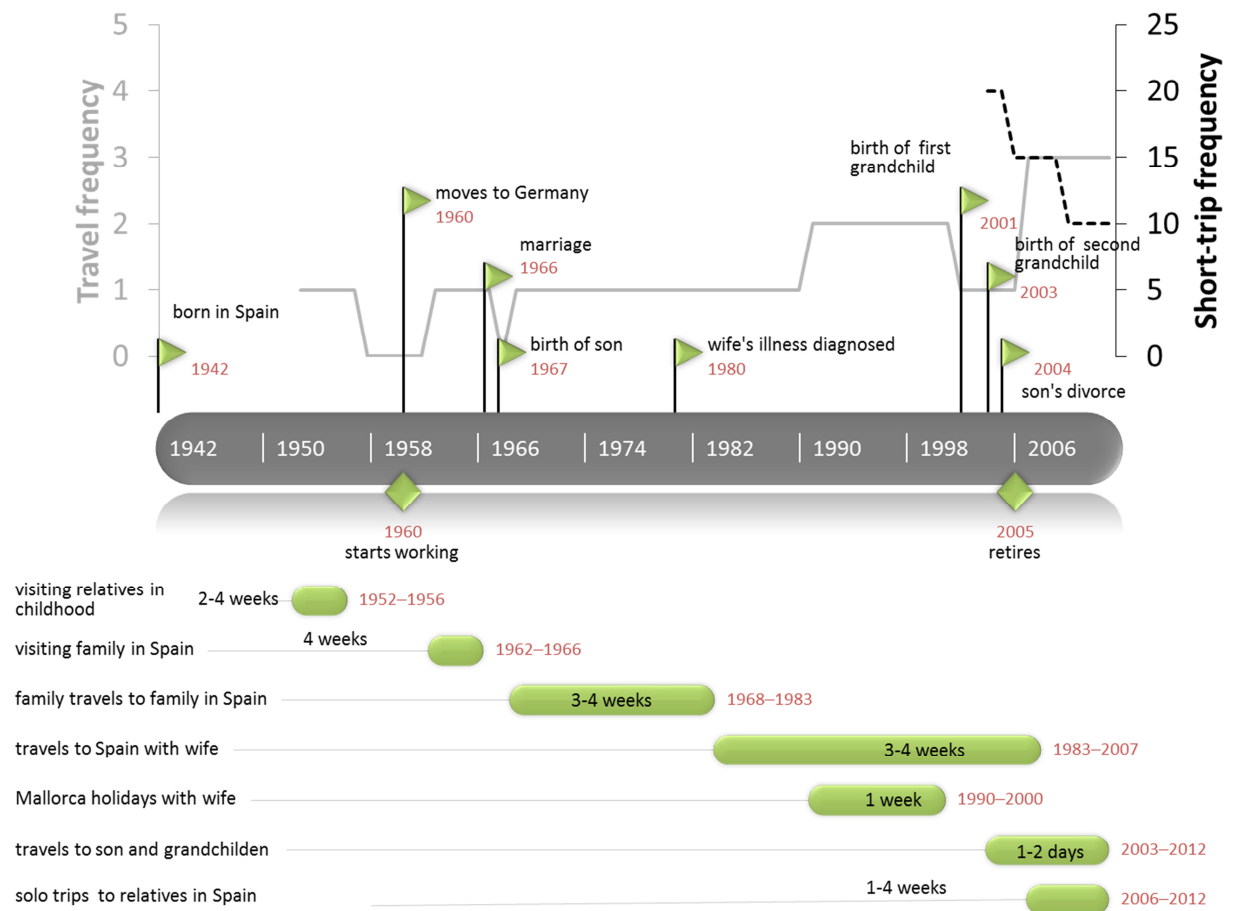
Mr Jiménez's family could not afford to go on holidays when he was a child. Mostly they spent their holidays in Barcelona and very occasionally they visited relatives in the countryside for a few weeks (Figure 5.10). Mr Jiménez's first real travel experience was his migration to Germany when he was 17 years old.

"I wanted to leave, to see something different. There was no specific reason. Maybe it was because I had a fight with my boss and I was angry. I heard from somebody who wanted to go to Germany. I tagged along behind him but he stayed and I left. I wanted to do it and I did."

When he first arrived in Germany, Mr Jiménez had no money for leisure or holidays. Only when he could afford it, did he travel back home to Barcelona to visit his family. The emigration from Spain to Germany shaped Mr Jiménez's travel behaviour for his whole life course. Once he began to earn sufficient income, he travelled at least once a year from Germany to Spain, usually using his entire paid vacation to visit his family. The visits centred on seeing his family and relatives but Mr Jiménez was also able to relax at the beach and recover from work. In the beginning Mr Jiménez travelled by bus, but later on he bought a car, which is still his preferred means of transport.

When Mr Jiménez met his German wife they travelled together to Spain. They also visited his wife's family regularly, but only over weekends. The birth of their son interrupted his consistent travel pattern to Spain, but only for one year, and instead they spent the holidays with his parents-in-law. Trips to the Spanish family were also combined with round trips to other parts of the Iberian Peninsula. Their son was part of these family travels until he was about 18 years old.

Figure 5.10: Mr Jiménez's travel history



When Mr Jiménez started a family, he and his wife took out a loan to buy an apartment and they moved to Freising. In the 1980s the financial burdens of their mortgage diminished and the couple spent the extra money also on travels. They began to book fully organised air trips to Mallorca with travel agencies, which were additional to their repetitive visits to Barcelona. This travel was all about relaxation and not very important to Mr Jiménez. The couple only travelled in autumn if Mr Jiménez had vacation days left.

“After you have married and you took out the loan and you have to pay off the loan, then it comes the time when you start to have more money again and you don’t have to budget all your money anymore. And then we also say, ‘Well, we have the money, let’s go to have holidays for ten days or so.’”

In 1980 Mr Jiménez's wife was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. For this reason the couple had to cease their trips to Mallorca as they became too stressful for his ill wife. In the mid-1980s, Mr Jiménez started to have short trips alone to Italy for four to five days. He used remaining paid holidays to see the country but also because the daily routine with the sick wife was very demanding. At that time, Mrs Jiménez was able to look after herself at home but the travels were too stressful for her. Mr Jiménez travelled three times alone to Italy. Occasionally, Mr Jimenez also had trips with members of his football club within Germany or Austria.

"It started because I wanted to see the country. Just like that, I had to go. And my wife is sick, she has MS and I can't include her in every activity... I would like to include her but she can't do it, she has not enough strength. I need to consider: Can I do it or not? And I had this phase when I said, 'I am doing it.' But then it was like, 'No, you have been away last year; this year you have to stay at home.'"

Current travel behaviour

Mr Jiménez's current travel pattern still centres on visits to his home country, which he currently does without his wife (Figure 5.11). Travelling with the wife has become almost impossible because of her lack of physical strength. In 2008 Mrs Jiménez was also diagnosed with cancer and even short trips to see their son have become very arduous. She cannot bear long trips in the car or in the aeroplane anymore. If the couple travels together, the vacation revolves around the wife. Mrs Jiménez enjoys musicals and they went together to Hamburg and Vienna to see a performance. The trips were short and they stayed in high-class hotels. Because of his wife's limited ability to travel, Mr Jiménez continues to travel alone.

“Once, we spent a weekend in Hamburg and I was fascinated. ... But then I said, ‘I barely could see anything because I was with my wife.’ I have to consider what she can do and what she can’t do. And then I said, ‘You know what? Next year or in two years I will leave on Friday and come back Sunday night.’ Indeed, once I flew there by myself.”

Figure 5.11: Map of Mr Jiménez’s current travel patterns



Key: red = extent of travels

While he is away on his solo travels, Mr Jiménez is dependent on external support for his wife. He needs to adjust travel timing to the availability of neighbours and relatives. His wife declines external professional help from a mobile care service, which would give Mr Jiménez more flexibility to travel.

“Three years ago my wife had surgery because she got cancer. When she recovered I couldn’t leave her alone and say, ‘I will go on holidays now.’ It was not possible. I was waiting and I asked my sister-in-law and a friend and the neighbour, a young Turkish woman, to make sure there will be someone who looks after her.”

Mr Jiménez is facing difficulties balancing his travel desires with his wife's capabilities. He talked about his favourite travel destination, which is Havana in Cuba. Once he had the opportunity to travel to Havana because he got a bonus from his employer, but he was not able to do the trip because his wife was physically unable to undertake such a long trip. Instead the couple booked a trip to Marbella, in southern Spain.

"It was almost 2000 marks; it was good money. Then I thought by myself, 'Now I can do it.' My conscience didn't allow it though, and then I went with my wife to Marbella for 14 days."

Since he has retired, Mr Jiménez has had more discretionary time and flexibility to visit his relatives in Spain. In summertime, Mr Jiménez still takes his car and stays for several weeks in Barcelona. Additionally he books air trips in March or October, only for a week or two. His Spanish family inherited a vacation home, which is mostly free and which he can use. He would like to make a round trip within Spain but because of the lack of a travel companion he would not consider that trip.

"When I go in August, mid-August to mid-September, I go for four weeks or three, depending on my mood because I can return whenever I want. There is no schedule, you know."

Responsibility towards his family is an integral part of Mr Jiménez's personality. Mr Jiménez would subordinate his own needs to those of his family. When his son started his own family, Mr Jimenez paid for a new apartment. Mr Jiménez and his wife visited their baby grandchildren regularly to give support and to help in the household. Before he retired, Mr Jiménez coordinated his own vacations with his son so he could visit his grandchildren or support the family. The whole family also travelled a few times to their vacation home in Spain. As the grandchildren grew older, the family did not need

that much help and support anymore. Now their son is divorced, which restricts the opportunity of Mr Jiménez to see the grandchildren.

“We went with the parents to the vacation home where we have space for everybody. They are still enthusing about it, ‘Grandpa, when we will do it again?’ ‘Ask your father.’ I have no impact anymore. I try it again and again to make sure we don’t lose the contact.”

5.6.4 The importance of travelling and future intentions

Travelling is important to Mr Jiménez and as long as he has the physical ability to do so, he will continue to travel. However, despite his enjoyment of travel, family will always be more important to Mr Jiménez than his desire to travel. He is also aware that fate can play a hand in any opportunity to travel; for example, his thwarted trip to Havana. Mr Jiménez wants to use his car as means of transport as long as possible so that he can remain flexible. He might take short trips to Berlin or Vienna.

“As long as I am healthy, if my visual faculty and my power in the legs and the arms remains I will consider travelling very important for me and my self-dependence. Maybe I will take the bus here and there, I can’t tell, yet. ... I prefer to take my own car to remain independent, to decide what I want to do by myself.

Well, I wanted to make a round trip through Spain. But I don’t know how to do it. It is stupid to do it alone, really stupid. And if my wife can’t do it, it will remain a dream like Havana. But that is not important. You know, if it’s just such a dream, a travel, it’s not important.”

5.7 Mrs Schulz: Discovering the home country after having seen the world

Gender: female | Age: 68 years | Year of birth: 1943 | Place of birth: Bavaria | Future travel intention: yes | Employment status: retired | Marital status: married | Relationship status: not-single | Parental status: three children | Housing situation: family household without children | Property situation: privately owned house

5.7.1 Personal biography

Mrs Schulz was born in southern Germany in 1943. She started working as a secretary when she was 20 years old. At that time she was sent by her company to South Africa where she met her future husband, who is also German. They married in 1972 and in the same year their first daughter was born. Mrs Schulz quit her job and the family returned to Freising. In 1977 and 1980 a second daughter and then a son were born. Being a housewife, Mrs Schulz took care for the children until the last child left the parental home in 2000. Mr Schulz had retired one year before that. The couple lives in their own house but is currently financially constrained because they still support their son who is studying.

5.7.2 Current social network

The most important social entity for Mrs Schulz is her family. She has regular phone contact with her children who also come for visits every one or two weeks. Her son lives in Freising while her two daughters live in the broader area of Munich. Mrs Schulz maintains regular contact with her sister and brother-in-law, who live in the neighbourhood. Mrs Schulz meets with hiking friends regularly to go into the mountains. There is also everyday contact with neighbours and friends.

“We go out on New Year. I know them all through the hiking club. One friend I know since I moved to Freising, I meet her spontaneously.”

5.7.3 Mrs Schulz’s travel biography

Mrs Schulz did not travel a lot when she was a child because her parents managed a bakery and there was no time to go on holidays. Mrs Schulz started her first travels

without her parents when she was 14 years old (Figure 5.12). It was a cycle trip with a friend to Cologne for one week. She had her first travel abroad, to Italy, when she was about 16 years old and had just finished her schooling. It was a bus trip and Mrs Schulz stayed for one week in a hotel near the ocean. Two years later she travelled with some friends on the Orient Express to Turkey.

Mrs Schulz became friends with a female workmate and together they started to travel in Europe once a year. They went to Paris and Rome, stayed in hotels and used a car for transport. At that time they could not afford air travel. During the winter holidays the friends went skiing regularly in Switzerland, usually for a week.

Mrs Schulz started to travel together with her husband when they met in South Africa. They undertook weekend car trips to discover the country. When they had longer holidays, they also travelled by aeroplane to nearby places in Africa; for example, to Mozambique, Zimbabwe or Zambia. The time in Africa was a very intense travel phase in Mrs Schulz's life. The couple returned to Germany for their wedding and combined the trip with ski holidays in Switzerland.

"Either we went by car to Sodwana Bay, which is a huge, wonderful coast along the Indian Ocean. This is something you usually don't see, or we flew once to Rhodesia [now Zimbabwe and Zambia]. We also went to Mozambique, or the Zululand for one week; my cousin was there by chance. ... Well, whenever we had a long weekend or vacation we took the aeroplane or drove somewhere"

When the couple started a family and moved back to Germany, they adjusted their travel activities. The family had summer and winter holidays. They travelled usually during the Pentecost holidays to islands in northern Germany and later in southern Europe to Spain or Italy. The Schulz family stayed either in hotels or vacation homes

that were close to a beach. They also went twice to an aunt's vacation home in Italy.

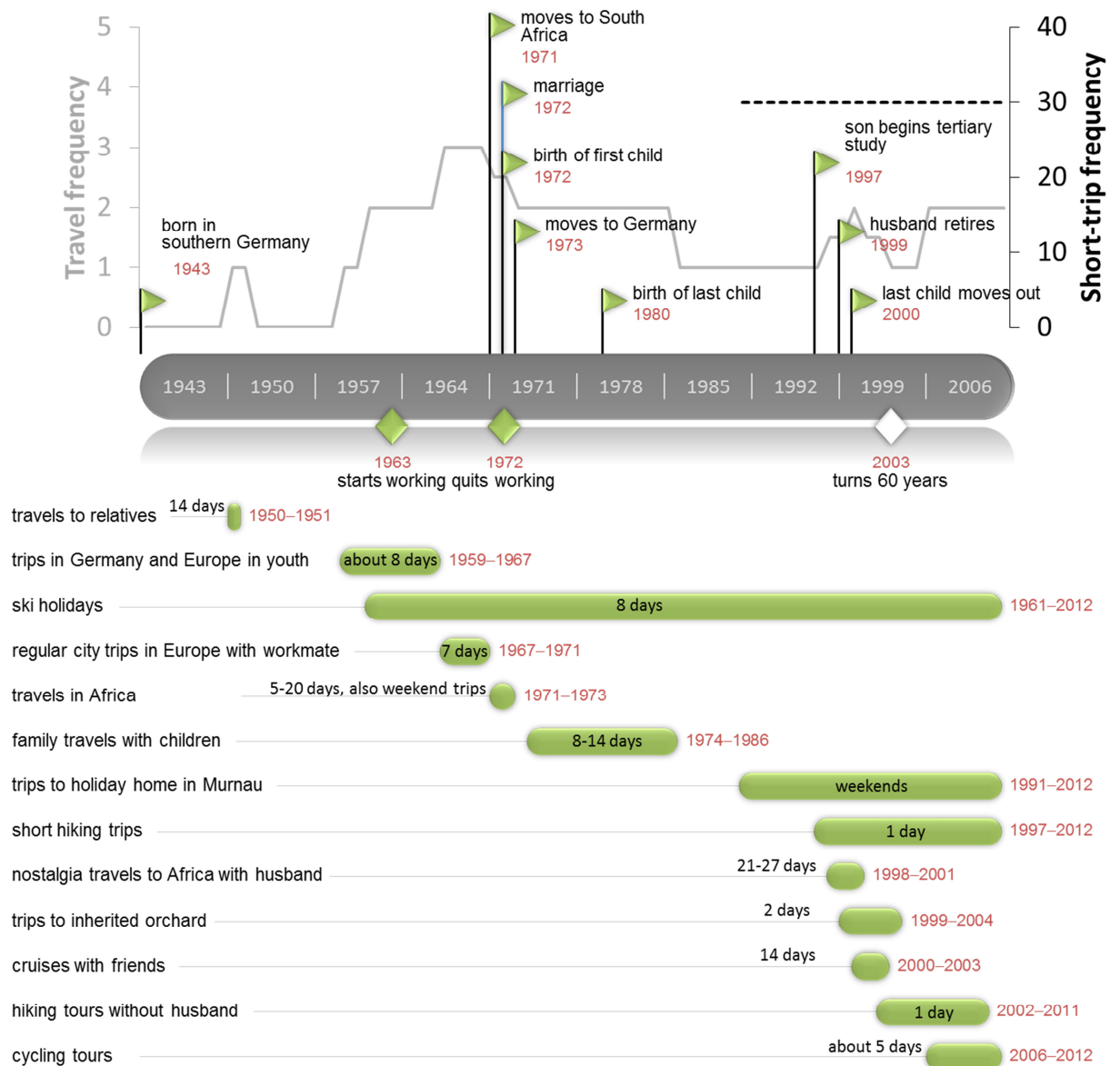
During the winter time the family went skiing once a year.

Interviewer: "Where did you travel at that time?"

Mrs Schulz: "We have been once on the island Elba [in Italy]. I think of it now because it was so beautiful. And then once to Menorca [Spain]; Heiko was already born. We went two times to the North Sea and once to the island of Foehr, because I didn't know the North very well and my husband loved it. We went to the Baltic Sea and the North Sea. And we went to Italy. When all three children were born we actually went almost every summer to Italy because it was the most convenient holidays for us. The children could go in the ocean and play at the beach, and it was always relaxing for us."

As the children grew older and began to leave the parental home, Mr and Mrs Schulz started to travel as a couple again. They still had one holiday in the summer and skiing holidays in the winter. In the beginning of 2000 the couple had three boat cruises in the Mediterranean Sea. The trips were organised by a friend and involved a larger group of about 20 persons. The trips were very expensive, and because they also wanted to have a change, the couple stopped going on the cruises. In that same period of time, Mrs Schulz looked for new activities because her children were now independent.

Figure 5.12: Mrs Schulz's travel history



Mrs Schulz started hiking, which became her new hobby, and she joined an alpine club.

From that time on, Mrs Schulz made regular mountain trips, either privately organised or with the alpine club. She was supported by her husband but he never followed this passion as much as his wife did.

“When I was about 50 years old I began hiking. The children were gone and I wanted a new hobby.”

About 25 years after the couple moved back to Germany, Mr and Mrs Schulz travelled to Africa again. Mr Schulz remains interested in the continent. In 1997 they travelled together to Namibia and one year later to South Africa to revisit the places where they used to live.

“We wanted to see how everything had changed. ... We just wanted to see everything again, that’s why we went there again.”

Current travel patterns

The visits to Africa became more adventurous when the couple booked trips with a bus tour operator who specialised in camping tours. However, Mrs Schulz preferred more comfortable and luxurious holidays.

“I don’t like to sleep only in tents and to drive with these jeeps. I prefer more luxury, let’s go the whole hog. I prefer eight days’ luxurious [travel] than three weeks in those tents.”

Because of these differences, the couple decided to travel separately. In the beginning of 2000 Mrs Schulz intensified her hiking when she started to go on glacier tours and do more demanding mountain climbing. Mrs Schulz went 34 times to the mountains in 2011, and her activities included climbing, hiking, glacier tours and ski trips. Her husband dislikes the extreme and lengthy mountain and climbing tours that are favoured by his wife. Sometimes they go together but walk different trails with different degrees of difficulty. The mountain trips are mostly day trips to the Bavarian Alps but they can also last for more than a week. The couple also go on multi-day trips to other alpine countries; for example, to Switzerland, Austria and Italy (Figure 5.13) Mrs Schulz orders a specialised hiking tour catalogue and she organises trips together with a group of friends who share her interests.

Figure 5.13: Map of Mrs Schulz's current travel patterns



Key: red = extent of travels

Mrs Schulz has a positive attitude towards the travels that she undertakes apart from her husband.

“Well, I actually like it [travelling separately]. ... On the weekends, often we go together hiking but he joins another group. He always goes in a second group with a moderate level and maybe only for three or four hours. I am always in the first group where you hike for eight hours. I think that’s great and we enjoy it because when you come back home in the evening there is always something to talk about. It’s the same when I go in the mountains during the weeks and he does something else.”

Mr and Mrs Schulz both enjoy cycling and they have frequent tours together. These trips include day trips, which they do about every two weeks to the Bavarian Alps in the summertime but also longer cycling holidays with friends, which can last up to one

week. The cycling holidays are organised with a travel agency or individually. Often the group uses the train as means of transport.

Family and relatives are very important to Mrs Schulz and, together with her family, she visited her parents fortnightly until her mother died in 1990. They inherited a property with a fruit orchard, which was about 90 minutes' car drive away. When the husband retired, the couple decided to take care of the orchard. They went every two or three weeks to the property on weekends to work in the orchard.

“And there we spent our holidays. It was holiday for me. We had a cottage there and we could stay overnight and cook and so on. ... We always considered it holidays.”

After about five years the couple decided to sell the property. The family used the money to buy a holiday home in Murnau, in the foothills of the Bavarian Alps and started to discover the region during their holidays.

Mrs Schulz still goes once a year on ski holidays organised by a sports club in La Plagne, France. Until last year her husband accompanied her but now the trips have become too arduous for him and he no longer skis. Mrs Schulz prefers to go skiing in March because of the good weather conditions. Due to the couple's current financial difficulties, the ski holidays have to be undertaken with a limited financial budget.

“We only go skiing in La Plagne because it is organised and because it's cheap. I would prefer to go somewhere else every year but we can't afford it at the moment.”

5.7.4 The importance of travelling and future intentions

Mrs Schulz has no desire anymore to travel far away. She discovered the beauty of her home region once she started to go on hiking tours in the Bavarian mountains. When

Mrs Schulz was young she had wanderlust and dreamed of travelling to foreign countries. In her senior years, her appetite for travel has been sated, and Mrs Schulz enjoys being at home. In the summertime she prefers not to travel so she can look after the garden, which is another of her hobbies. This means there has been a shift in interest in and the meaning of travelling for Mrs Schulz.

“I feel at home happy and blessed when I read a book or – as I said – if I am in the garden and have a nice day.”

Mrs Schulz will continue with her existing travels, depending on her health conditions, but wants to focus on the more relaxing aspects of travel. With increased age and decreased muscular strength, heavy luggage and hiking backpacks have become problematic. Her husband is five years older than her, and therefore more concerned about health issues.

5.8 Summary

The within-case analysis provides a holistic picture of seniors' individual travel histories. The description of the seven cases also reveals the diversity in seniors' living circumstances. Each case shows specific features regarding the individual's life and travel history. Results of the thesis show that life events effectively impact not only on the individuals' everyday life but more specifically also on their tourism behaviour. This aspect is addressed in the following Chapter 6 where the focus of analyses changes from the complete life course towards themes, revolving around significant life events which were identified as influencing factors on tourism behaviour.

Chapter 6. A cross-case analysis: Themes in seniors' tourism behaviour

The objective of the cross-case thematic analysis is to identify relevant patterns across the 23 cases. The preceding analytical procedure involved thematic analysis and thematic timelines and identified themes by comparing multiple cases with each other. This chapter presents findings on identified life events as they relate to seniors' tourism behaviour and changes in travel patterns. The cross-case analysis not only presents explored life events but also contributes to a better theoretical understanding of how life events impact on tourism behaviour.

6.1 Deteriorating health

Health conditions affected travel behaviour either as a negative event with immediate impact on travel activities or as chronic deterioration where the impact is more gradual. Mrs Schroeder (Appendix E) for instance, could not travel as planned to Mexico because of an urgent eye surgery, while Mrs Becker (Appendix F) was restricted to shorter travel activities due to an intestinal surgery.

Results show that chronic deteriorating health affected travelling in multiple ways. The act of travelling was perceived as stressful in later age which contributed to reduced tourism activities. This included specific physical activities pursued on vacations such as skiing or hiking. Tourism activities associated with physical stress and anticipated potential health risks, such as hiking and skiing, were often the first travel patterns that were reduced or abandoned in old age. Mr Fischer and Mrs Bauer (Appendix G) stopped their skiing activities because it became too stressful. To undertake this sort of

travel in old age depended on the senior's perception of their physical capability and health.

Limiting health factors related to walking difficulties (for example, Mrs Richter – Appendix H) but also little energy to travel, which was reported by Mrs Schmitz (Appendix I), even though she did travel a lot (she said even “too much”). Reduced energy was a factor frequently cited as a constraint on tourism activities; for example, the weight of luggage or backpacks was mentioned by several interviewees as a factor limiting travel duration, because longer trips require more luggage.

Deteriorating health conditions discouraged travel activities when mobility, blood circulation or special dietary requirements had to be considered in travel plans. Research participants adjusted their travels according to their physical abilities and had to compromise between travel preferences and capabilities. Deteriorating health also had an impact on travel activities, even when that activity was less active than that undertaken in younger years. Mrs Neumann, for example, had problems following a group excursion while on a ship cruise.

Mrs Neumann: “We went to a bazaar, where they had 2000 shops, but everywhere the same stuff. Nothing for me, and I couldn't stand it because of my health and the walking and I lost them [the travel group].”

An important consequence of declining health was necessary changes to the transportation phase in tourism. Some interviewees mentioned that trips not only became shorter but also closer destinations gained importance. It was more comfortable travelling to closer destinations especially because this involved shorter transportation time. Mr Braun (Appendix J) reported that travelling to closer

destinations also gave his group greater flexibility if they needed to return home unexpectedly.

The interviewees abandoned the car as means of transport when their advanced age affected their driving abilities. Family Braun first sold their caravan when Mr Braun was in his 70s because this type of travelling became too stressful to manage. Later on they changed their means of transport for their annual trip to see friends in Italy. They used to travel the 1,300 kilometres by car, which allowed them more flexibility in terms of mobility and luggage. Then, once the drive became too arduous for Mr Braun, the couple started to take the aeroplane, which introduced some limitations: without their car at the destination, the couple were less flexible and less independent for getting around and sightseeing. As a result of this reduced mobility, the family began to stay for only two weeks instead of the four they used to spend in Italy.

Mr Jimenez preferred to take his car to visit his family in Barcelona in the summer. The car's flexibility and capacity were very important to Mr Jimenez. Trains can be an alternative to the car but transporting travel baggage is an issue for older people. Mrs Schroeder, who is 88 years old, preferred the aeroplane over other means of transport such as trains and cars because it was less stressful for her. On the other hand, long-haul flights became very arduous for Mrs Koch as she got older. As a result, she modified her travel behaviour by including longer stop-overs at transit points, which made long-distance flights more comfortable.

Mr Schmidt travelled to North America for the last time when he was 65 years old even though his travel group continued with their hiking tours overseas. The travels to

the United States and Canada became too arduous for Mr Schmidt and he changed his travel focus to the European Alps.

Mr Schmidt: “The backpack has about 20 kilos and that’s hard, the backpack is heavy. These tours would be wonderful if you would have a lighter backpack, because it’s heavy, but that’s the only way to do it.”

Ship cruises were often seen as being a travel option suitable for older and more fragile people. Mr Wagner, for example, did not identify himself as an old person and he still felt physically able, although he said he would consider going on a ship cruise when he was older. A similar view was shown by Mrs Klein (Appendix K) when she said a ship cruise is also possible in older age.

Mr Wagner: “When I get really old I might have a real ship cruise.”

Mrs Klein: “We looked at the people [on a cruise ship] and said, ‘Well, we can do that also when we are 80 years old.’ Sure, we can do that even with 80 years.”

Several of the interviewees mentioned that a certain level of comfort associated with accommodation or travel organisation becomes more important in advanced age. Mrs Neumann, Mrs Zimmermann (Appendix L) and Mrs Schroeder all reported that door-to-door baggage service was a convenient feature of tour operators. Mr and Mrs Braun also started to book packaged holidays because round trips, which they used to undertake, became too stressful in advanced age. Mr Fischer spent more money on travel comfort as he aged. He described comfort in rather basic terms; for example, showers in the room (instead of shared showers), room comfort and baggage transport. Senior-friendly and accessible accommodation also gained importance in older age (see, for example, Mrs Zimmermann).

For some older people with health issues, access to medical care during trips became increasingly important and influenced the decision-making process for choosing destinations. Mr and Mrs Braun started to travel more often to domestic destinations in Germany because of better access to medical care, while Mrs Schroeder used for her last travels the services of the Red Cross, which offers specialised holidays for their disabled or immobile customers.

Some of the interviewees preferred to cease travelling completely rather than risk health problems or limiting their tourism experiences while travelling. For example, Mrs Schroeder's travel dream was always to climb Kilimanjaro, but when her son asked her to join a trip to Tanzania she refused because she could not do the actual hiking. Another example is Mrs Richter, who enjoyed organised coach group travels in senior age, but since she had surgery, which constrained her mobility, she has chosen to stay at home.

Mrs Richter: "He travelled [her partner], but I can't... Because there are guided city tours and they do sightseeing and I can't follow them. ... They told me, 'You can come with us' and I can stay in a café. Well I can do that at home, as well. For this I don't need to travel to other countries to sit in a café."

Health issues were often mentioned by participants when they talked about what would prevent them from travelling in the future. Mrs Schulz predicated her future travel plans on her health. Many other participants responded in a similar way. Mrs Neumann's last travel activities were day trips in the surrounding area. She ceased those day trips since she experienced a faintness after a bus trip.

Mrs Neumann: "You become older and more fragile and there comes the point when you can't do it anymore. You then have to be happy for smaller things."

The climate at potential destinations was also mentioned as a factor influencing health and travel choices. Many interviewees chose to avoid very hot climates. Mrs Koch, for example, did not want to travel to South-East Asia anymore because of the humidity and heat. In contrast, warm and less humid climates were attractive for many of the seniors interviewed. Mr Fischer's personal travel preferences were warm climates in Mediterranean countries and islands. Mrs Schmitz was concerned about the climate conditions in Germany when she talked about her potential future travel behaviour.

Interviewer: "How do you think you will travel in the future?"

Mrs Schmitz: "It depends on my physical conditions. ... We would probably travel to closer destinations or in Germany. Germany is a great country, don't you think? But the weather makes always difficulties."

Holidays connected with physical activities were considered healthy by many of those interviewed. Mr Mueller (Appendix M) did not travel often anymore but suggested that 'leaving the house' has a stimulating effect on the circulatory system and blood pressure. Mr Fischer and Mrs Schmitz focused their trips on activities such as hiking and cycling. They viewed these as exercise which has an important role to play in their healthy lifestyle. Others, like Mr and Mrs Hoffmann (Appendix N) or Mr Mueller and Mrs Richter, booked travels to health resorts to receive specific health treatments. Mr Hoffmann also went once a year to an island in northern Germany because the fresh sea air is good for his lungs.

6.2 Age-psychological factors

Aging affected tourism participation because seniors are increasingly aware of their limited life expectancy, which encouraged travelling as much and as long as it is

possible. This point of view was shared by Mrs Klein, Mrs Koch and Mrs Schmitz, who all showed strong interest in travelling.

Mrs Schmitz: "It might happen that there will be at some point a disease or there is something with my legs. Soon I will have surgery on my knees. ... There will be the times I can't travel as I wish to, but then I have seen a lot already."

Interviewees had different perceptions on their future travel activities. Being a fit senior, Mr Jimenez wanted to continue travelling as long as his legs can carry him. Many of those with walking difficulties stated that they want to travel until they need a wheelchair – although Mrs Schaefer (Appendix O), who requires a wheelchair, wanted to travel as "long as I can crawl". Mrs Schaefer has had major surgery and was worried if she will ever be able to travel again.

Mrs Schaefer: "Since I have these problems with my legs, I don't make any plans anymore. I don't have any plans."

Interviewer: "No?"

Mrs Schaefer: "If something comes up, I will do it. I need to wait and see. ... As long I can crawl, I can sit in my wheelchair, we [she and her friend] will travel."

Mrs Schroeder reported a shift of her perception towards senior travellers and their circumstances. Since she started to travel with the Red Cross, together with other largely immobile people, she has developed a better understanding of the needs of wheelchair travellers. Mr and Mrs Hoffmann, as well as Mrs Bauer, started to appreciate the amenities of bus travel in their later years.

Mrs Hoffmann: "Bus travels became so convenient."

Mr Hoffmann: "You don't need to bother about anything. Before, we couldn't imagine this. Before, we laughed at bus travels."

The seniors perceive themselves as a vulnerable population in terms of safety and health, which affects their travel activities. In particular, the singles said they prefer group travel as they grow older, not only for socialising reasons but also because they consider it safer. Mr Mueller only travelled in groups because he is epileptic and needs constant company. Mrs Klein and Mr Schmidt preferred to go hiking with travel guides and hiking groups for safety reasons.

Mr Fischer had concerns about his diet and potentially unhealthy food when he travelled to 'exotic countries'. Nevertheless, he has spent considerable time over the last three years in Asian countries. Mr Fischer also ceased his ski trips because he perceived the health risks of skiing as being too high for someone of his age. Mrs Zimmermann was worried about her health, which was one of the reasons she ceased travelling. Furthermore, she anticipated financial obligations from increasing health expenses and preferred to save some money in case of illness rather than spend it all on travelling.

Mr Fischer: "We Europeans we need to be careful. And if you are older you look more after your health."

Mrs Zimmermann: "I don't travel anymore. I liked travelling, also to the seashore. But you know... you have to be considerate. You could break your leg or something. I still could travel."

The extent of previous travels also had some impact on tourism behaviour later in life. Mr Fischer considered focusing in future on closer destinations in Europe or even just within the region of Bavaria. His physical abilities were still sound, he had sufficient income to retain his current travel activities, and he was flexible with regards to time, but because he had seen already many countries all over the world, he felt he did not

need to travel further afield anymore. Likewise, Mrs Koch was still fit and enjoyed mountain tours in the Bavarian Alps, but because she had travelled to many countries she also felt no need to travel far away anymore. As Mrs Schulz noted:

“When I was a girl I had wanderlust, it couldn’t be far enough. I always daydreamed about travels to ... my god, America and ... I always knew that I wanted to go far away, I always wanted to go far away. And somehow I don’t need that anymore. ... This [wanderlust] is saturated.”

Mr Weber (Appendix P) indicated a similar relationship between his extensive travels, attending academic conferences all around the world, and his tourism behaviour as a senior. As a semi-retiree, he was satisfied with his past travel experiences and now preferred to travel to regions closer to his home.

6.3 Detachment from children

Family-related travel significantly influenced the seniors’ tourism behaviour. Many interviewees indicated that family interrupted travel patterns and preferences such as skiing, cycling, hiking, novelty-seeking or booked organised travels. Mr and Mrs Hoffmann emphasised the impact of their children on their travel habits:

Interviewer: “Did something change since you had your children, regarding your travelling?”

Mrs Hoffmann: “Very much. It was more complicated.”

Mr Hoffmann: “Yes of course, because since then it was all about the children.”

When their children started to travel on their own, some empty-nesters started to return to their earlier pre-children travel patterns. Mr Wagner, for example, never enjoyed his travels with his family to Italy. After his divorce and the departure of his

children from the parental home, he started to travel alone again, a pattern that he had preferred when he was younger.

Several interviewees stated that they began new travel patterns after their children became independent. Mrs Schulz joined an alpine club when her children left the family home. She pointed out how she only started mountain hiking, which represented her most prominent travel pattern, at this later point in her life. Mr and Mrs Hoffmann also developed a new pattern once they started to travel again without children. They undertook organised bus trips when the children were still young but already independent and the parents got more time for themselves. The couple became interested in Eastern German culture after the German reunification and continued the bus trips on a regular basis. Later on they expanded their travels to cities in Europe, joining trips organised by a theatre club, the church or by a bus travel agency.

Mrs Hoffmann: "And we had more time and the children were more independent. You know, they are not at home all the time anymore and you don't need to entertain them during the evening."

Mr Hoffmann: "You start doing sightseeing, which we never did before. You don't do that with children."

Both Mr Fischer and Mrs Koch said their children's growing financial independence was an important life event which increased the disposable income they had available for travel. Many participants started to travel with travel companies and to book packaged trips with travel agencies when their financial situation improved (for example, Mrs Klein and Mr Fischer). Package tours were reported as being relatively expensive and were a matter of the available travel budget.

Disposable income also opened new opportunities in the choice of accommodation. Improved comfort, which came with staying in hotels, was viewed as a reward for working all their life, a viewpoint exemplified by Mrs Neumann's story. Being a housewife, Mrs Neumann still had to do housework while the family was travelling, but this changed in her senior years. Mrs Neumann's case shows that financial obligations to children can last for a considerable length of time. Mrs Neumann mentioned her son, who lived with his parents until his mid-twenties. During this period the senior couple couldn't afford expensive holidays even though Mr Neumann had a good pension. When their son finished his studies, the couple were able to increase their travel activities.

Interviewer: "You did not go in a hotel because you couldn't cook for yourself?"

Mrs Neumann: "Yes. But when our son finished his studies we used air travels and stayed in hotels. ... Before we only had holiday apartments. I was the stupid [one] because I had to cook."

A similar story was told by Mrs Schulz. At 68 years old, she and her husband still supported their son's studies to the tune of EUR 1000 a month, which had a significant effect on their travel patterns. Mr Schulz had to stop his regular safari travels to Africa until their son was financially independent, and Mrs Schulz was restricted in her choice of the ski resort where she goes once a year.

Mrs Koch's case tells a different story: she reduced her travel activities after her children moved out of the parental home. Being divorced, Mrs Koch lost her stable travel group, which resulted in less consistent travel patterns even though she could afford more expensive trips. Her travel behaviour became more consistent again when

her children moved overseas and she met her second husband. She then spent more money on her holidays and visits to her children overseas.

Interviewer: "The fact that your children left the home, did it make a difference regarding your travelling? Was it important to you?"

Mrs Koch: "Yes, for sure. Because they could... I mean when they grew older you could leave them alone. ... And to be honest, you can do other travels because you have more money available. If you have teenager at home, they are expensive. And that's the money you can keep. And I invested that in my holidays."

6.4 Pets as family members

Pets emerged as an important factor that influences senior tourism behaviour. Having pets was not only linked to a love of animals but also related to life events such as family building or loneliness due to divorce. Mrs Bauer, who was divorced, owned a pet that required her full attention. She had had cats for 18 years and they played a very important role in her life. If Mrs Bauer wanted to go travelling she needed somebody who looked after her cat. Before her parents passed away (her father died in 2007), they looked after her cat while she was travelling. After that she had to ask friends to do that. Because of the pet, Mrs Bauer only went on short trips, for no longer than five days. Her first cat died in 2009 but she could not bear living alone and she adopted another cat from an animal shelter.

Mrs Bauer: "They [her parents] looked after the cat for the first couple of years and that's why I could still travel. I am a bit peculiar in this and I need somebody here because I don't want to leave my cat alone. ... I always had a friend who stayed here overnight."

Mr and Mrs Braun could not travel by aeroplane as long as they had a dog. They only travelled by car and had to consider pet-friendly accommodation. Mr and Mrs

Hoffmann have had a cat ever since they started a family. For this reason they could not travel longer than a week. Their daughter and some friends looked after the cat while the couple were away. The cat was already old and was supposed to be the couple's last pet. After the cat died, they wanted to go on longer trips.

Mrs Hoffmann: "We are constrained by our cat. If we didn't have the cat we would travel much longer."

6.5 Migration and visiting friends and family

Another identified life event is migration. Migration has shaped the travel behaviour of Mr Jiménez over his whole life course. Since he moved to Germany, he has travelled at least once a year to Spain, usually using his entire paid vacation to visit family in Spain. Mr Jiménez increased his visits to Spain as he got older and had more flexibility and time to travel. He reported that he developed more desire to visit his home country as he got older. His VFR travels represents a strong travel pattern, which was resistant against life events such as marriage and family building, retirement and the illness of his wife.

Not as influential as Mr Jimenez's migration was Mrs Bauer's moving from northern Germany to southern Germany. Travelling back to her family was always important to Mrs Bauer, especially after she got divorced. VFR in her home region was a constant over many years and shaped her travel behaviour until her parents passed away. After that, the frequency of these trips dropped significantly.

Another theme is that migration of family members and friends can induce not only VFR activities but also combined leisure travels. Mr and Mrs Braun's son, for example,

moved to Spain, which influenced the holidays of his retired parents for the next 20 years. Mr Fischer's daughter moved to Asia, which induced him to visit her twice in 2011. He combined these travels with trips around Shanghai and other parts of China. Mrs Koch's travel activities showed a similar pattern to Mr Fischer's. Her children also moved overseas, and she has visited them four times in New Zealand, six times in Australia and five times in the United States.

Mrs Koch: "Of course we stayed longer, for about six weeks. We know everything in New Zealand, because you don't want to hang out only with the family."

Some cases demonstrated that VFR activities change with increased age. Mr Schmidt, for example, stated that he did not often visit family or friends because most of his relatives had already passed away. Travel patterns also shift from being the visitor to being mostly visited, as shown by Mrs Schroeder's or Mrs Neumann's stories.

The elderlies' last travel activities were often VFR trips to remaining family. The extent of these remaining trips depended on distances and inter-familial relationships (see, for example, Mrs Becker). Distances gained importance in later years, especially when the old person required some sort of caregiving and relatives moved them closer. Mrs Schroeder, for example, moved 250 kilometres from Coburg to a retirement home in Freising after she had had an accident, so she could be closer to her son. As a result of this move, she had to stop travelling since tailored travel products that would take her health into account were not offered in Freising. She also had to leave behind her familiar social environment, including potential travel partners. She seldom visited her children in Frankfurt, which is nearly 400 kilometres north-west of Freising.

Interviewer: “You mentioned these travels with the Red Cross; I could imagine this could be nice for you, if you would find here something similar.”

Mrs Schroeder: “Well, I did this in Coburg with my friend. We were picked up at home, went to Nuremburg and from there we took the aeroplane. But when my friend can do this trip from Nuremburg I might not be able to do the same from Munich. I would love to do something together with her again. But I doubt that this will happen.”

Mrs Neumann, who was 83 years old at the time of the interviews, also moved in an assisted-living complex. She had not had much contact with other residents of the facility which contributed to her ceasing of travel activities.

6.6 The living environment

A recurrent theme in the data was a sense amongst participants that the living environment plays a role in tourism participation and behaviour. Mrs Becker, for example, enjoyed gardening, which was one of the reasons why she returned home every second week from her camping holidays in summertime. On the other hand, she mentioned the noise of the nearby airport, which pushed her every second week away from her home town. Likewise, Mrs Bauer stated that she did not necessarily need to go away because she enjoyed her home environment. Gardening was a hobby, too, of Mrs Koch, one which demanded her special attention during the summertime – she would not leave home at that time because she wanted to enjoy the flowering and the yield of the garden.

Interviewer: “The main holidays are in summertime?”

Mrs Koch: “Well, rather in spring and autumn. Almost never in the summer, because you can’t leave the garden. I have a garden with vegies, which needs to be watered regularly and I can’t go away.”

Mrs Schulz, who described herself as a domestic person, enjoyed staying at home. Like Mrs Koch, Mrs Schulz preferred not to travel away in the summertime so she could look after the garden, which was a great hobby. She was aware that there will be a time when she has to cease travelling. In this sense she was already prepared for her non-travelling times.

Mrs Schulz: "I realise that the older you get the more your happiness is not only about travelling. Sometimes it's only an excuse for people who can't relax at home. But I can now."

Mrs Schwarz (Appendix Q) showed strong family bonds with her hometown. She never moved away and her entire family lived in the same area in Freising, which resulted in very limited VFR. She never showed a strong desire to travel. This is also explained by her strong working commitment to her business. Mr Mueller's case study draws a similar picture. He showed strong roots with home and culture. In contrast to Mrs Schwarz, though, he enjoyed his infrequent travelling for relaxation, but predominantly in the closer Bavarian area.

Another theme was the social environment. This is subject to change with increased age due to mortality in old age. Mrs Neumann and Mrs Schaefer, both characterised by a weak social environment and lack of potential travel partners, ceased travelling completely in their old age. Mrs Neumann never managed to build a new circle of friends after she moved in senior age from Munich to Freising and her husband passed away. The last travels she had were organised travel packages and ship cruises, which she undertook by herself. Having stopped her tourism activities she considered travelling "crazy".

6.7 Grandparenthood

Joint travelling with the grandchildren was a common theme in seniors' travel patterns. Being a grandparent also often influenced VFR travel patterns. The importance of grandchildren on seniors' tourism behaviour is exemplified by Mrs Schwarz, whose only travel activities were short trips with her grandchildren to the Austrian mountains. Despite the large geographical distance to her children and grandchildren, Mrs Koch travelled regularly to Australia, New Zealand and the United States to see her grandchildren. She explained her motivation to undertake these stressful trips to visit the children and grandchildren as follows:

Mrs Koch: "I said, 'This year I don't come, why don't you [the daughter] come for 14 days?'"

Interviewer: "Ok, that means this might become less, because you don't like those flights anymore?"

Mrs Koch: "Well, what do you mean with less? As long as you have grandchildren... sometimes I think, I am 70 now, if I get 80 years old, which is good age, than you can guess, that I will see my children another five times. What is five times? You shouldn't think like that but you have to."

Mr and Mrs Hoffmann's grandchildren had a big impact on their lives and daily routine. Mrs Hoffmann spent a lot of time with her grandchildren (babysitting, taking them to the doctor, etc.) because she wanted to support her daughter's family. The Hoffmanns reported that their grandchildren could become a more significant influence on their travel behaviour in the future, when the grandchildren are older. Mr and Mrs Hoffmann had already been on a farm holiday with their eldest grandchild.

Mrs Hoffmann: "Yes, we have been on a farm with the little [one]. We would do that again, anytime."

Mrs Hoffmann: "We would go on holidays with him again, when the boy is a bit older and you can travel with him."

This indicates that travelling with grandchildren is influenced by the grandchildren's age. Many interviewees, such as Mr Wagner and Mr Weber, mentioned that they would like to travel with their grandchildren when they get older.

Mrs Koch invited her grandchildren who lived in Germany to her home during the summer school holidays. Together they had short trips, which included visiting castles or hiking in the mountains. She only invited her grandchildren when they were between 10 and 15 years old, which appeared to be the best age to spend longer periods of time together.

Mrs Koch: "When they come the first time you do great things every day. The 'Deutsches Museum', Mount Zugspitze, concerts, Olympiahalle. Sometimes they can bring a girlfriend for a week. Because I can't be all the time with them, because some wouldn't talk. You don't get a word out of them. ... For me it is stressful. It is stressful with the older ones, not with the 11, 12 years old. They keep themselves busy."

When their grandchildren were infants, Mr Jimenez and his wife visited their son's family regularly. The senior couple coordinated their own vacations with their son and a few times they spent their holidays together at their vacation home in Spain. Since the grandchildren have grown older, the family do not require much support anymore and visits have reduced. Furthermore, their son got divorced, which restricted the opportunities for Mr Jiménez to see his grandchildren. He wanted to have more contact with his grandchildren.

Interviewer: "You would like to travel more often with your grandchildren but the circumstances don't allow?"

Mr Jimenez: “Yes, for them it would be great. Alone with their grandpa, they wouldn’t hesitate one second.”

Conversely, other interviewees showed no desire to travel with their grandchildren.

Mrs Schmitz stated that there are generational differences and for that reason she had no interest in travelling with her grandchildren. Mrs Krueger (Appendix R) regularly looked after her grandchildren, who all lived nearby within the Freising region. Instead of travelling with her grandchildren, she concentrated on spending time with them as part of their everyday lives. Mrs Schroeder stated that some of her grandchildren lived just too far away to have regular contact or to travel together.

6.8 Illness of the spouse and nursing obligations

Illness of the spouse and, in particular, nursing obligations had a strong impact on travel behaviour. The influence depended on the seriousness of the illness, which is subject to change over time. Nursing family members, usually parents or spouses, was often demanding on both time and money, and this operated as a barrier to travel. Among the case studies, it was predominantly the women who were involved in nursing tasks. For example, Mrs Braun and Mrs Schroeder talked about their nursing obligations in senior years and how they influenced their travel practices.

The illness of the partner did not necessarily involve nursing obligations. Mr Mueller, for instance, undertook travels by himself after his partner, Mrs Richter, had surgery. The difficulties she had walking made travelling impossible.

Nursing a partner or spouse, who had often been the main travel partner, had implications on immediate travel behaviour. The choice of trips pursued needs to take into consideration the needs of the sick person. Mr Fischer’s story exemplifies this

situation very well. Travelling with his sick wife became more difficult with the progression of her illness, and his wife's health conditions became a main criterion in the couple's travel decision-making process. Escaping from a depressing everyday life shaped by illness became a travel motivator before Mrs Fischer passed away. In the last stages of her illness, the couple couldn't travel at all.

Mr Fischer: "I saw that she [his wife] had problems with breathing when we went hiking and I had to lower my sights. ... I had to be considerate, which was a matter of course. We just travelled to the Burgenland [Austria] or something like that. ... It got worse and at some point I didn't travel anymore.

I wanted to escape from the daily routine. To do something, because the frequent visits to the doctor are so depressing. To be among other people...That's why we did that."

Mr Jimenez gave similar answers. His wife had a severe illness and needed constant care, but that did not prevent Mr Jimenez from visiting his family in Spain. However, without somebody looking after his wife, Mr Jimenez could not travel. He started to travel alone in the earlier stages of the wife's illness to escape from his everyday life as a caregiver. He went on some solo trips, each lasting several days, to Italy.

Together, Mr and Mrs Jimenez only undertook short trips at weekends. The trips revolved around Mrs Jimenez's well-being and her husband had no time to enjoy the trip for himself. For this reason, he sometimes visited the same places again later, just by himself.

Nursing was sometimes considered a full-time job and prevented travel activities. Mrs Schroeder, for instance, nursed her aunt for several years, and during that time it was not possible to go on holidays.

Interviewer: “How did you travel at that time [after she moved back to Coburg, a city in northern Bavaria]?”

Mrs Schroeder: “Well, in the beginning it was difficult. Because I had a very sick aunt and I didn’t dare. Because I thought she would die in the meantime and then I needed to be there. I was the only remaining person.”

Others also mentioned caregiving obligations as a constraining factor; for example, Mr Weber and Mrs Braun. Conversely, nursing family members who live some distance away increased VFR, as in the case of Mrs Hoffmann.

6.9 The loss of a spouse: separation and death

The interviews revealed that the loss of a spouse and dissolution of relationships can have similar effects on travel behaviour. A number of aspects influenced the impact of these turning points, including the length of the marriage or partnership, the life cycle stage when the divorce or death occurred, financial resources, the social environment, and emotional factors (such as the reason for separation, and whether one is the spouse being left or the spouse who is leaving).

Some interviewees revealed that the loss of a spouse had immediate consequences for tourism participation. Mrs Neumann moved to Freising just four months before her husband passed away. After the death of her husband, she was not emotionally capable of travel.

Mrs Neumann: “My husband passed away just four months later. At that time I didn’t travel at all. I didn’t travel in 2002.”

Interviewer: “Why did you not travel?”

Mrs Neumann: “Because I couldn’t. My husband was in the grave. I went to the graveyard. I was devastated, here in Freising.”

Some cases indicated that VFR activities gained importance after losing a spouse. Mrs Becker, for example, showed increased VFR activities immediately after the losses of her two husbands.

Losing a partner can have significant financial implications. Mrs Klein struggled financially after her divorce, when she was 48 years old. At that time she raised her children as a single mother, which did not allow her to travel often. The divorce of 63-year-old Mr Wagner also created financial difficulties because he had to pay his wife her share of the family home. During this time Mr Wagner could not afford to travel. When his financial situation changed, Mr Wagner started to travel again.

Mr Wagner: "A divorce incorporates financial burdens and in the first years after the divorce, which took place at the same time as the retirement, I haven't had any money to do a larger travel. ... The only trip I made was maybe to my sister in Switzerland because I didn't have to pay for accommodation. ... Apart from that, I didn't travel in the first years after the divorce and the retirement. But it was more because of the divorce."

Mr Fischer's and Mrs Krueger's social contacts played a significant role in helping them in the recovery process following the loss of their spouses. Friends and family convinced them to continue travelling. Mr Fischer (66 years old) reflected on his life after the death of his wife. He started to cycle again, an activity he had enjoyed when he was young. Friends encouraged him to get active and to join in their trips and holidays. He became a member of an alpine club to meet new people and to go on cycling and hiking trips. Mr Fischer's travel activities increased after the death of his wife. Being a widower, socialising was an important motivation to travel.

Mr Fischer: "When my wife passed away, in 2002, I felt a little bit... let's say a little bit alone. All my friends had partners and you become something like a

foreign object, and you are just an add-on again. I remembered that I liked cycling when I was young and I picked it up again. ...

When you are travelling you meet not only Bavarian people but also from all over the world and that's interesting. And maybe you keep in touch. You exchange emails and pictures. The travel is not over when I return."

Mrs Schmitz showed a similar reaction to the loss of her spouse, due to divorce when she was 47 years old. Since their separation, her travel behaviour became far more diverse. The divorce constituted a milestone in her travel biography. The family is not involved anymore in Mrs Schmitz's travel activities.

Mrs Schmitz: "Well, my divorce shaped me and my travel behaviour because then I did completely different travels. ... Well, we always travelled. It was always very general... camping. ... We never did cultural trips or city trips or something like that, to see the country or combined travelling and sports, as I do with my cycling."

Interviewer: "That wouldn't have been possible with your husband?"

Mrs Schmitz: "We could have done that, yes. But I have to say that in terms of travelling and all that, my life became much more colourful since I am alone. It's really true because I do more things."

After the death of her husband when she was 48 years old, volunteering became a major theme in Mrs Krueger's life. Initially she travelled with a voluntary organisation, helping sick people to travel to Lourdes, a place of pilgrimage. A few years later she started to make overseas journeys with a friend.

Mrs Krueger: "I started my large holidays after my husband passed away. Because I have a lovely friend ... and together we went everywhere apart from New Zealand and Korea, my dream. We travelled a few times to the US and India."

Mrs Bauer also decreased her travel activities in her last years. Travelling was not very important to her anymore. Apart from skiing, which she continued after her divorce (at

age 47), other travel patterns lost significance. Even though the couple had divorced 20 years earlier, Mrs Bauer related and explained her limited travel activities with reference to this turning point.

Divorced and widowed seniors reported that being single means being independent in travel decisions, which only need to be negotiated with possible travel companions. Nevertheless, Mrs Schmitz and Mr Fischer noted that travel companions are still very important, which is one of the reasons why they sometimes booked group travels.

Mrs Klein was very flexible in her tourism activities and also adjusted her travel to accommodate the preferences of her travel companions. Mrs Schmitz also enjoyed the flexibility of being single. She had several travel partners but also booked group travels with previously unknown people. She explained her decision-making process in the social context as follows:

Mrs Schmitz: "Well, now I travel with Maria, for example. And I have another companion, Martin, no matter what I say, he always comes with me. And with others, friends, mostly I travel with friends. But I also had solo journeys, but in a travel group. When somebody bothered me I said I want to travel alone again."

Being widowed, Mr Fischer did not need to consider another person's travel habits and preferences as a couple often has to. He preferred to travel with other singles, which gave him more freedom to arrange travels that interested him. Travelling with couples would have often required compromises with the accompanying couple. On the other hand, Mr Fischer agreed that there are difficulties involved in travelling with unknown people.

Mr Fischer: "As a single you have very different interests. You don't need to consider others, you can make spontaneous decisions. And also, if you have friends where both spouses are still alive, you are not that much involved in their

travel activities than before. ... I then joined the alpine club or other organisations, where it doesn't matter if you have a partner or not."

Interviewer: "This plays a role? To be alone makes a difference?"

Mr Fischer: "Yes. And I have to say, if you have a double room with somebody you don't know and you get a snorer, the whole holiday is wasted."

6.10 Meeting a new partner in later age years

Another theme to emerge was that of meeting a new partner in old age. Mr Mueller, being widowed, started travelling again after he had established a new relationship in his later years. Mrs Koch was 50 years old when she married her second husband, and the new relationship changed her travel behaviour sustainably. After she met her current husband the couple travelled together and Mrs Koch's former holidays with friends or relatives have largely ceased. Mr and Mrs Koch had different travel experiences and they had to adjust their travel patterns to their new partners. In order to do that, each organised a preferred holiday trip. They had trips to Mr Koch's holiday apartment in Denmark and to Greece, which is Mrs Koch's preferred destination. This strategy showed that they shared many travel interests.

The case studies show that travel groups dissolve or evolve when group members start new relationships. Mrs Klein, for example, travelled with a group that included other singles. She mentioned a friend who had dropped out of the travel group once she, the friend, had met a new partner. The friend returned to the group when she became single again.

6.11 Working commitments and retirement

Many cases indicated that life events associated with working commitments have a strong influence on tourism behaviour. Mrs Schwarz is the only person interviewed who was still working full time in her senior years and she showed no variation in her tourism activities. She had never travelled very often due to her obligations towards her business. Mrs Schwarz only reported short trips for a long weekend during the summer sales. Her most significant travel was to the Mediterranean Sea in Italy because Mr Schwarz wanted to see the sea once in his lifetime. The couple still enjoyed running their business and retirement was not considered.

Interviewer: "You don't want to travel at all?"

Mrs Schwarz: "No, I never wanted to. I was never interested in going far away to other countries. Probably we were not used to it from early age."

Mr Wagner exemplifies the increased importance of hobbies and other activities after retirement. His fascination with ships and cruises shaped his travel pattern. His life revolved around this new hobby and, as a result, he extended his travels to Germany's neighbouring countries and travelled more frequently.

Mrs Becker has increased her time away from home significantly since she retired. Mrs Becker's predominant travel behaviour was formed by frequent trips to a campsite in the Bavarian mountains, which has been her main travel destination for the past 24 years. Since she retired, she has spent half of the summer in the Bavarian mountains. Mrs Becker considered the campsite as her second home and she spent her time there doing similar activities to what she does at home, such as reading, chatting or gardening. She returned to her home in Freising to work in the garden or because she

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had some other obligations. The travels to the campsite were very consistent and weather conditions had no impact on this travel pattern.

Mrs Becker: "Mrs Werner [Mrs Becker's neighbour] said to me just recently: 'Ursula, the weather forecast says it will rain; will you come home?' I said, 'Why should I come home?' Then I said, 'I have gas for the heater and I have the mobile home over my head. And I also have the tavern here and the newspaper to read.'"

Other retirees also emphasised the importance of travelling after retirement. Mr Jimenez mentioned that he had more discretionary time and flexibility to travel since retirement. Mr Schmidt enjoyed hiking and skiing during the weekdays since he was retired because ski fields and hiking tracks are less crowded at that time. Mrs Schaefer noted that if she did not do a long-haul trip as retiree, it would not ever happen. Mrs Koch additionally highlighted the importance of travelling as an activity that gave meaning to life.

Mrs Koch: "You have more time when you are retired. You need to keep yourself busy during the day. If I know I want to go to Norway I already know where my ferry departs and where and everything. You prepare yourself much more in advance."

Retirees such as Mr Fischer used their additional time to extend the travel experience by exchanging holiday photos, editing photos and creating albums, and staying in contact with people met on the trip. Mr Fischer spent considerable time gathering extensive travel information, not only before but also after the actual trip. The increased time available due to retirement and fewer family obligations facilitated these activities.

The case of Mrs Koch showed that retirement not only had consequences for the individual concerned but also for their spouse. Her husband was not yet retired at the

time of the interview but was going to stop working soon. Mr Koch's working obligations meant that they still had to plan holidays in advance and conform to his leave schedule. Travelling together was less flexible and for this reason Mrs Koch often travelled alone. Mrs Koch has been retired since 2000, which facilitated her travel activities. Travelling alone meant less restrictions and Mrs Koch could organise her travels according to her interests. This also meant the couple placed a stronger emphasis on Mr Koch's travel needs when they travelled together. Mrs Koch was looking forward to travelling more with her husband. The couple had already talked about the time when they will have more time together for travelling and are able to travel more spontaneously.

In contrast, the retirement of Mrs Schulz's husband didn't affect her travel behaviour greatly. In the beginning they had a few nostalgic trips to countries in Africa, where they had met and spent time together.

The case of Mrs Bauer shows that retirement can reduce income and therefore influence tourism participation. Retirement per se did not change Mrs Bauer's travel behaviour much; instead it was leaving paid employment and its knock-on effect of reduced money that affected her travel opportunities. After she retired, Mrs Bauer moved to a cheaper apartment and she had to invest some money in this new home, which limited her financial resources for travel.

Data suggest that travel motivations change after retirement. For Mrs Koch, travelling in terms of recreation lost importance because she could relax at home; instead,

seeing something new and discovering other destinations became a paramount reason to travel. The same was reported by Mrs Schmitz and Mrs Klein.

Mrs Klein: "If you don't work anymore travelling is a change of scenery. It has a different meaning. When I was still working it was important to have my wellness in November or to go to a carnival in February. But I don't need this anymore. I am relaxed."

Mrs Schmitz: "I can relax the whole day. I want to see something, I want to experience something and as long as possible I want to do something active."

Some seniors continued or resumed temporary part-time employment in senior age, which contributed to a better financial base. Additional income had positive effects on travel activities, also because part-time employment usually also came with flexible working hours. The same applied to voluntary work, which became more significant in later age years due to more available time and fewer family obligations.

Retirement from work did not have much influence on Mrs Klein's travel patterns even though she was then more flexible and had more discretionary time. Being divorced Mrs Klein still worked part time to earn some extra money. Travelling was very important to her and she spent considerable time preparing for her trips and processing them afterwards. While Mrs Klein continued to spend money on travelling, she needed to limit her travel activities after she retired. For financial reasons she stopped joining an annual trip with a theatre club.

Mrs Klein: "You have more time but less money. It is reversed now, before you had no time but money..."

In 2000 the widowed Mrs Krueger started to work part time to top up her income. Her job did not restrict Mrs Krueger's travel activities because the working hours were flexible. She used her additional income also for travel. In later senior age she quit the

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job and focused more on voluntary work and family support. Charity had become important to her, especially after her husband's death. Because of all of her obligations, which also included her involvement with her grandchildren as a grandmother, Mrs Krueger preferred shorter trips so that she could remain flexible.

6.12 Inheritance

Inheritance was always mentioned as a facilitator to travel. Mrs Schmitz inherited money from an aunt when she was 66, and she used this to fund her holiday trips. Before the inheritance, money had been an issue when she wanted to travel. An inheritance also enabled Mrs Schroeder to start travelling again after her divorce. Her financial situation improved, which increased her opportunities to travel. She then also started to book more expensive travel packages with travel organisations.

Mrs Schmitz: "Four or five years ago I inherited some money and since then I have a more easy life. Now I can say, 'Why not? You are so old and you won't live forever, do something as long as you can.' ... And I can afford it"

6.13 Summary

The cross-case analysis of life events presented in this chapter reveals a number of influential factors that affect tourism behaviour and the travel patterns of seniors. These factors are not necessarily limited to seniors but may also influence younger age groups. Due to deteriorating health and the increased probability of particular life events with advanced age (such as retirement, loss of a spouse and the moving out of children), most of these factors occur predominantly in later life stages. Findings of this chapter are the basis for the following discussion on the meanings behind the tourism behaviour of elderly.

Some factors refer to seniors' biology and psychology in terms of physical conditions and age-related psychologies. Other conditions such as grandparenthood, the moving out of children, meeting a new partner, and the illness or loss of a spouse relate largely to family structure but also to the broader social environment. Occupation status has been shown to have an important influence on travel participation, which is mainly linked to financial resources and discretionary time and social meaning. Dimensions that relate to this aspect are retirement, the beginning of part-time jobs, voluntary work and nursing obligations. Further categories that have emerged from the case studies are inheritances (improving the financial situation), the living environment (affecting well-being at home), the ownership of pets (often restricting travel activities) and migration (which can impact on VFR activities).

The analysis not only investigated aspects of 'what' turning points impact on seniors' travel behaviour but also 'how' they operate on each life event. The results showed that, dependent on conditions and living circumstances, the effects of life events can be diverse. Travel activities, distances and durations can increase, decrease or stagnate. The travel motivation of seniors is as manifold as that of their younger counterparts. Seniors travel to seek experiences, to interact with other people, to relax, and to have a last meaningful travel experience.

Depending on life events, travelling for social interaction is subject to change. Travel groups break apart and take new forms, and seniors start travelling alone or may book group trips in order to meet other people. Means of transport, type of accommodation and the use of travel agencies and travel packages are similarly affected by life course transitions. The interviewed seniors often reported that increased age and associated

health issues brings with it a desire for greater comfort and a higher level of services that ease the travel activities. Finally, seniors may change how they collect their information. In particular, elderlies who engage strongly in travel activities in their senior years show increased interest in collecting travel information. They also extend the travel experiences by gathering further information after the actual trip and keep contact with people they have met on their travels. Data suggest that younger seniors are increasingly using the internet to gather travel information, to book tourism products, and to communicate with travel partners and people they met while away.

Chapter 7. Theoretical interpretation of seniors' tourism behaviour

The within-case and cross-case analysis not only identified a variety of life events but also demonstrated how they affect seniors' tourism behaviour. This chapter focuses on the question of why tourism behaviour is subject to change in senior years. The aim of this chapter is to interpret the empirical results within a theoretical framework, which goes beyond the rich descriptive analysis provided in the previous chapter. The interpretation centres on key concepts that were identified in the literature review as being potentially meaningful to answering the research questions. This includes the following theoretical perspectives:

- constraints and facilitators
- ecological systems
- gerontology and aging in social context.

In the first stage of this interpretation the nature of life events is discussed, and this is followed by the adaption of Crawford, Jackson, and Godbey's (1991) hierarchical leisure model into a senior tourism constraints/facilitator concept. The new model integrates an ecological perspective and shapes the discussion that follows on seniors' tourism behaviour.

The discussion is structured in terms of different levels of constraints and facilitators: intrapersonal, intrastructural, interpersonal, microstructural and macrostructural. To situate findings in the cultural setting, results and themes are cross-fertilised with secondary data on seniors' living circumstances and travel behaviours in Germany.

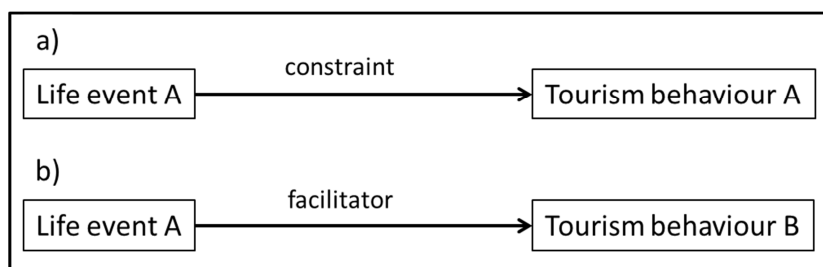
7.1 The nature of life events

The research presented in this thesis has revealed that life events have a significant impact on seniors' travel behaviour. The nature of life events is diverse. The observed differences and specifications in Chapter Six require a more detailed interpretation in order to draw more general inferences on the relationships between life events and travel behaviour.

7.1.1 The quality of life events

Life events are *ambiguous* and do not operate exclusively in one direction or another (Figure 7.1). For example, divorce can either engage seniors in travel participation or may, under different circumstances, discourage tourism activities. Likewise, a serious disease can appear as a barrier to the annual 'routine' vacation, or conversely, it may engage a diseased person into medical or health tourism. The birth of a grandchild may lead to family tourism, but can also restrain holidays if the grandparents have to look after the grandchildren while the parents are away.

Figure 7.1: The ambiguity of life events



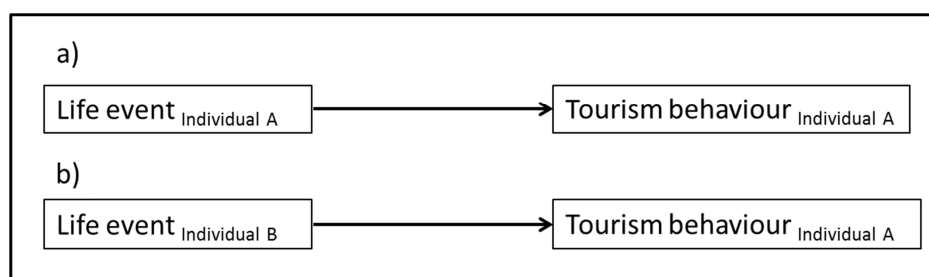
Personal and socio-historic conditions determine in what way travel behaviour is formed by life events, i.e. whether the life event operates as a constraint or a facilitator. Kleiber et al. (2002) highlighted the role of perceptions in defining negative

life events. In fact, life course transitions are not necessarily universal and can often be limited to specific individuals or groups depending, for example, on their socio-economic status (Jackson, 2005a; Jackson & Searle, 1985).

Like Jackson's (2005a) study, the research presented in this thesis found that life events can have either a *direct* or *indirect* impact on travel behaviour. Transitions impact on the individual themselves; for example, when the retirement of Mrs Becker increased her travel frequency (Figure 7.2 a). On the other hand, life events can affect other individuals, which may also have implications for the senior's travel behaviour (Figure 7.2 b). Mr Mueller, for instance, undertook travels by himself after his partner, Mrs Richter, had surgery. The difficulties she had walking made travelling impossible. This means that it is not only the life of the individual but also the living circumstances and capabilities of others that form tourism behaviour.

Indirect effects may apply in particular to the life partner or the spouse, being the most relevant travel partner for many seniors. Interviews indicate that indirect life events can have an impact on travel behaviour that is similar to direct life events.

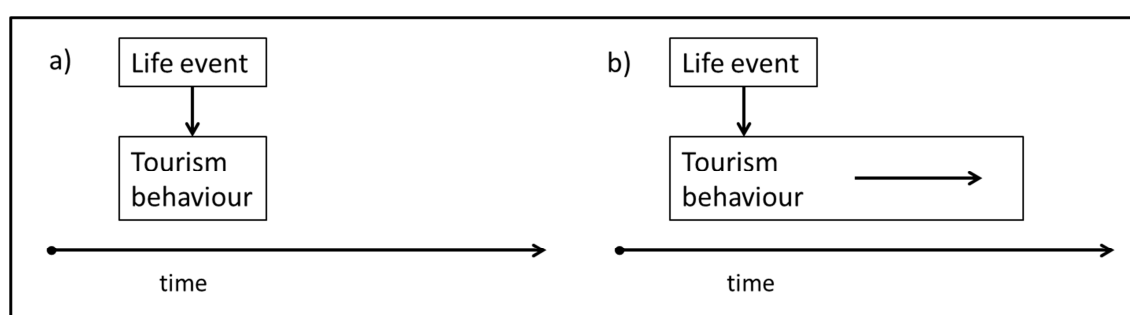
Figure 7.2: The direct/indirect dichotomy of life events



Life events may vary in the nature of their effect on seniors' tourism behaviour. The impact of life events can be *isolated* (Figure 7.3 a), which is exemplified by Mrs Krueger

who had to cancel a planned trip because she wanted to see her granddaughter's music performance. This may not be a major life event but the example shows how even minor events may have an immediate impact on travel activities. Other life events have *systemic* influence (Figure 7.3 b), which goes beyond a single holiday and effect, for example, family structure, social environment, the financial situation or the individual's physical capabilities. Retirement, for example, affects tourism behaviour in the long term.

Figure 7.3: Isolated and systemic life events

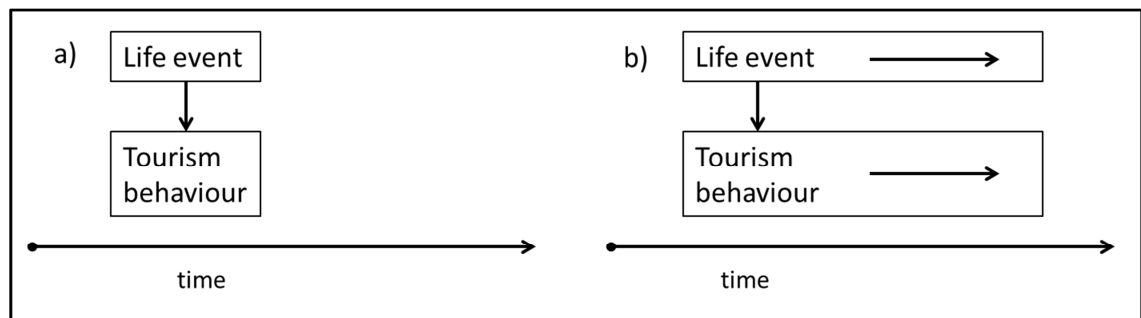


Decrop (2006) uses similar categories to classify decision-making processes and identifies situational and structural constraining conditions. While situational factors impact on current travel behaviour, structural conditions have continuous influence on travel decisions.

Life events may be *continuous* or *acute* in nature. Jackson (2005a) relates continuous transitions to a 'multiple stage process' consisting of sequentially linked sub-stages. The thesis focuses more on acute, single-stage life events (Figure 7.4 a) but recognises that the influential elements of travel behaviour can be fluid (Figure 7.4 b). The timing of transitions can be blurred and entry and exit from one to another state is not always well defined (see Grenier, 2012).

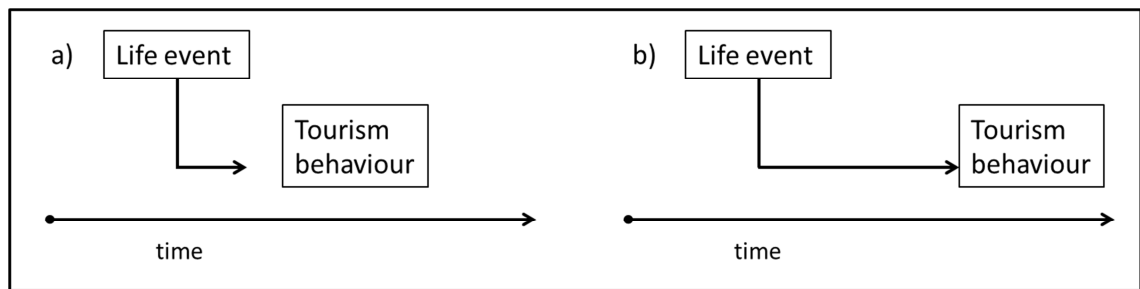
Deteriorating health, for example, does not necessarily imply a major life event but contributes gradually to behavioural changes. Carrying luggage becomes harder and walking with a travel group more challenging. These behavioural changes are often explained by the abstract concept of biological aging.

Figure 7.4: Durability of life events



Life events may have long-term effects on travel behaviour. Literature distinguishes between *proximal* and *distal* experiences (Martin et al., 2011). Proximal happenings occurred more recently (Figure 7.5 a) whereas distal events have been experienced in the further past (Figure 7.5 b). Family building, for example, is an event that has implications for the rest of a lifetime: children have special needs in childhood, they may ask for financial support during their studies, and may require help when they have babies of their own. All these happenings are rooted in family building and may affect tourism behaviour in the short-, medium- or long-term future.

Figure 7.5: Durability of impacts



Life courses and travel histories are unique to each individual but may share similar sequences that occur at *socially expected times* (Helson et al., 1984, p. 1079; Neugarten, 1979). Sequences often follow a certain order, similar to the FLC concept, such as marriage, birth of children, children leaving the parental home, retirement, deteriorating health and death. This relatively predictable order validates, to a certain extent, studies that use chronological age as an influencing variable (see e.g. Collins & Tisdell, 2002; Sund & Boksberger, 2007).

The life course is also formed by a number of unexpected, *non-normative life events*; for example, migration, divorce, remarriage and new relationships, grandparenthood, part-time occupation, inheritance, illness and the loss of a spouse. These events may be as influential as normative life transitions but have only minor relation to chronological and also perceived age.

7.1.2 The hierarchy of life events

Multiple life events can occur simultaneously, which complicates the interpretation process of causal explanations. Because the life course is shaped by a series of life events, travel behaviours are likely the result of multiple causal factors. This is also

suggested by Jackson (2005a) who notes that various transitions can be interconnected and experienced at the same time.

The research findings suggest that it is not necessarily a single life event but a combination of factors that results in specific tourism behaviour. Increased travel distances in senior age may be the result of a combination of conditions such as available money, more time, and travel partners (see the case of Mr Fischer). Furthermore, the interplay of life events, with each event having only a minor influence, may result in a specific and relevant behavioural outcome. This finding is supported by Woodside et al. (2006) who state that only the combination of a number of constraints and facilitators results in specific travel outcomes.

Findings of the thesis indicated that dominant watersheds (such as illness, migration, divorce, and moving out of children) may overshadow other life events, which have by comparison less power to constrain or facilitate tourism behaviour. Overlapping life events can often have a reinforcing, overriding or mitigating impact. For example, retirement may reinforce financial difficulties caused by divorce (see Mr Wagner) whereas inheritance may mitigate financial difficulties caused by divorce (see Mrs Schroeder).

7.1.3 Relationships between personal characteristics and life events

Tourism behaviour is not only shaped by life events but also other personal characteristics. Jackson (2005a, p. 131) stated, in this context, that situational and personal characteristics can *ameliorate* or *exacerbate* the impact of life events and transitions. Personal characteristics (for example, enduring attitudes, values or fears)

may be both consistent over time and subject to change (Caspi & Roberts, 2001; Neugarten, 1973). What is interesting is that factors such as fear of flying, canniness or specific leisure preferences can be dominant over life events and can either override or mitigate life events effects.

Fear of flying was found to be a very entrenched personal characteristic. The thesis shows that fear of flying can be consistent over the life course and can either prohibit the use of aeroplanes or constrain it when this means of transport is disliked rather than rejected completely. This can result in travels to closer destinations. Flying as a means of transport is almost an essential part of the tourism product with regard to the tourist destination and distance as well as expenditure (Fleischer et al., 2012).

Results of the thesis indicate that growing older does not influence fear of flying among the cases. About 50% of the population associate flying with negative feelings ranging from some degree of discomfort to intense fear (Capafóns et al., 1999). For around 10%, the anxiety leads them to avoid this means of transport. This form of anxiety is commonly based on perceived rather than objective risk and becomes more prevalent after global political and health crises (Boksberger et al., 2007).

Economic variables also influence personal attitudes and tourism preferences. Some cases of the thesis fit into Decrop's (2006) avaricious category. These seniors have shown a continuous pattern of travel across their life course and do not spend much money on travelling. Caspi and Roberts' (2001) study implies that personality formation can be traced back to the parents' influences. Adopting parental values

implies that generational behaviour and attitudes are transferred to later generations, which can explain conservative travel behaviour in old age.

Travellers may show behaviours that rely on the decision making and motivation of their travel partners. The traveller gives priority to their partner's wishes (Kozak, 2010) due to a general disinterest in travelling rather than an involved negotiation process. Travellers with this personal characteristic take a submissive role in the travel decision-making process, and this role can be persistent over the life course and even across changed decision-making units. This concept shows similarities to Plog's (1974) 'psychocentric traveller', Gonzalez et al.'s (2009) 'stable passives', and Decrop's (2006) 'active/passive vacationer' dyad which segments travellers into either those who strive for activities or those who prefer more household-centred leisure time.

7.1.4 Life event resistant travel patterns

Specific tourism patterns can be consistent over time and resist the impact of watersheds. These non-effective turning points are mainly events that change the social environment; for example, divorce or remarriage. Watershed-resistant travel activities may be maintained over time even though elements may change; for example, the destination, travel partners, travel duration and frequency.

Findings suggest that life event resistant travel patterns often include a form of leisure tourism that relates to a hobby or interest that goes beyond the pure tourism experience. This is supported by Nimrod (2008b) who found that hobbies and interests are persistent and not much influenced by retirement. This appears to apply also for other life events. Similar findings occurred for some sort of VFR and health travels,

which showed continuity throughout the life course and resistance against specific life events.

7.1.5 Life events that interrupt tourism patterns

Previous travel patterns can be re-adopted after life events interrupt individual travel preferences. The duration of interruption (life events with either long- or short-term effect) and level of compromise made between life event and tourism preferences may influence the ability to re-adopt previous behaviours.

A very strong interrupting life event is found in family building. Family leisure has a strong sense of purpose (Shaw & Dawson, 2001) which is also reflected in tourism activities. Many of the seniors interviewed reported that their family travel focused on the needs of the children (beaches, activities suitable for children) and interrupted personal tourism preferences. After family travel ends, new travel patterns can be developed. These new patterns may be either re-adopted from earlier travel periods or created as a new type of travel.

In summary, the nature of life events reflects a great variety among seniors' living circumstances. Findings indicate that life events and their impact on travel behaviour may have specific properties which they show, for example, in their variations in timing or duration. Life events impact on each other and they may be hierarchical, diverse in their effectiveness, and interact with other influential factors such as personality. Some people may experience a specific life event completely differently from how others experience it, which indicates the need for a contextual perspective.

Furthermore, even though some themes of transitions are effectively universal, others may be specific to the senior population.

7.2 Tourism constraints and facilitators: A life events perspective

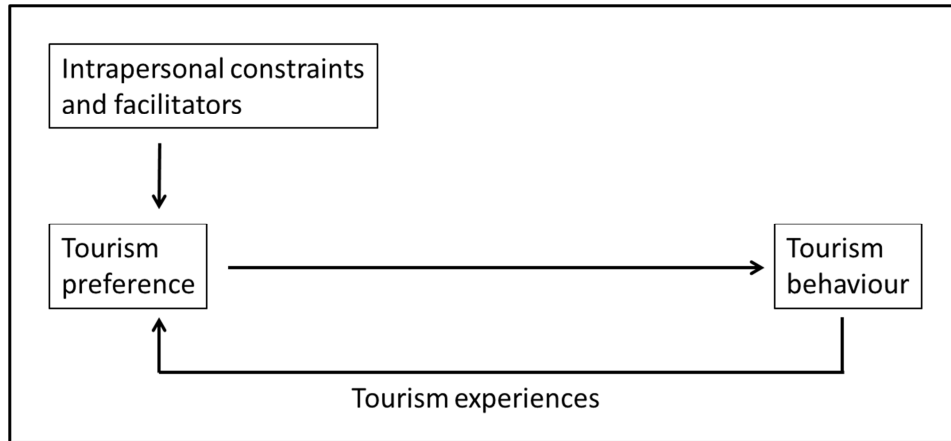
The discussion on senior tourism behaviour in the life course ties in with the constraints and facilitators concept, which provides the main structure of this chapter. Constraints and facilitators arise from life events (see e.g. Hutchinson & Kleiber, 2005; Jackson, 2005a) when individuals encounter difficulties or opportunities. Life events are negotiated in the course of their appearance, which directs how travel behaviour is affected. In this sense, life events and transitional points can be understood as causal explanations for the constraints and facilitators that influence travel behaviour. Constraints and facilitators are dynamic across the life course and operate as mediators between life events and tourism behaviour.

As a corollary, the absence of constraining life events should result in a routine travel behaviour that is largely undisturbed and only subject to internal changes, such as physical conditions, altered attitudes, desires and expectations. This aspect refers to Crawford and Godbey's (1987) terminology of 'leisure preference' and adds to Jackson et al.'s (1993, pp. 4-5) assumption that "Participation [in leisure activities] resulting from negotiation is likely to be different from participation as it might have occurred in the absence of constraints."

In the absence of other intervening factors, the impact of the travel experience itself may contribute to a larger proportion of the change in tourism behaviour. Figure 7.6 illustrates the case of a largely unconstrained life course where tourism preferences

are mainly shaped by intrapersonal factors (see section 7.2.1) and the tourism experience itself.

Figure 7.6: Model of unconstrained seniors' tourism behaviour



Human behaviour is biologically and socially constrained or facilitated. Societies set boundaries for the individual in form of formal rules and regulations. Societies also set social norms, which represent a rather informal understanding of a supposed human behaviour. In this sense, individual tourism behaviour is constantly exposed to constraints.

A negotiation process between constraints, facilitators and motives directs the impact of life events on tourism behaviour. This is based on the assumption that tourism behaviour has both a cognitive conscious and unconscious dimension in the decision-making capability (Woodside et al., 2006). Negotiated constraints and facilitators set the boundaries to the unconscious tourism decision-making process. Using Jackson's words, "It is at the transition points where the unconscious becomes conscious" (2005a, p. 115).

7.2.1 A model of senior tourism constraints and facilitators

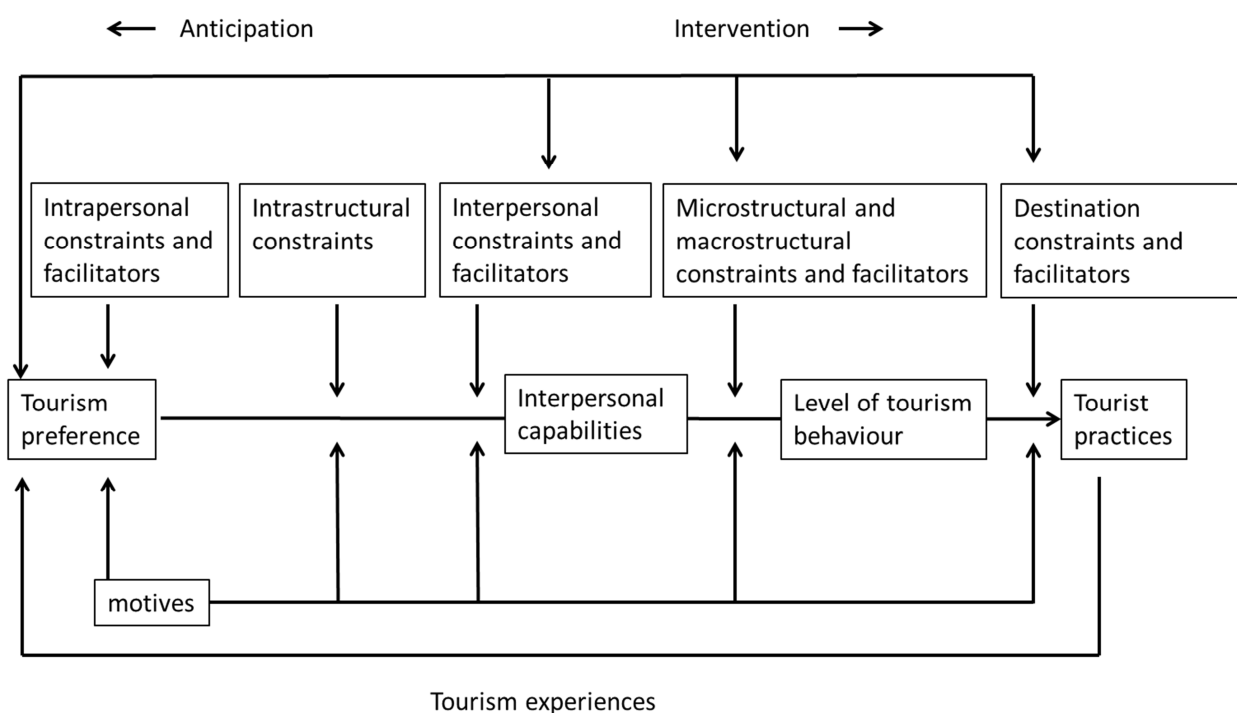
Many of those interviewed for the thesis showed a strong desire to travel and from this position the tourism behaviour of seniors is constrained, facilitated and negotiated. The thesis adopts Crawford et al.'s (1991) and Jackson's (2005a) hierarchical model, and adapts it from a static leisure-based model to a dynamic tourism-centred life events approach.

It should be noted that, even though leisure and tourism show similarities in some aspects (Carr, 2002), there are significant differences between these two concepts, that go beyond simple geographical distances. Distances are not only measured in geographical distance but also in time, costs and cultural proximity, which gives the experience at the destination a paramount position in the tourism product. Tourism involves higher financial risks, while these are often much lower for standard leisure participation. Leisure is largely pursued on a daily or weekly basis while tourism is much more a peculiarity with a range of attached expectations. Therefore, the decision-making process for tourism participation is often more complex and multi-layered than for simple leisure activity.

The model shown in Figure 7.7 conceptualises senior tourism behaviour from a constraints and facilitators and a socioecological perspective. Intrapersonal constraints and facilitators relate to psychological factors, such as stress, prior socialisation and perceived self-skill, that shape individual tourism preferences (Crawford et al., 1991), while intrastructural constraints, such as bad health and illness, impact on tourism participation as structural, isolated and acute barriers. Interpersonal constraints and

facilitators include the social components of travelling such as companionship or decision making processes which influence the interpersonal capabilities to travel. Microstructural constraints and facilitators are those structural constraints that are rooted in the individual ecological microsystem (for example, time availability) while the macrostructure relates to cultural and natural dimensions of the social environment. Destination constraints and facilitators influence seniors' tourist practices and their behaviour at the tourism destination (for example, infrastructural factors or entrance fees).

Figure 7.7: Model of senior tourism constraints and facilitators



The thesis supports a general hierarchical order that characterises constraints and facilitators operating on seniors' tourism behaviour. Constraints, facilitators and travel motives are negotiated on hierarchical levels in the course of the travel decision-

making process, beginning with internal factors, followed by factors from the interpersonal and structural dimensions. However, the hierarchical order is not absolute. Data supports the idea that even when interpersonal constraints are overcome, intrapersonal factors may be renegotiated. For some of those interviewed, travelling with friends is more important than the cognitive desire to make a specific trip, which means tourism behaviour is negotiated within and between constraints.

This is in line with Kazeminia et al. (2013) who emphasise the social conditions in tourism decisions by building linkages between travel preferences and interpersonal constraints. Kazeminia et al. (2013) describe interpersonal constraints as being the most powerful category, affecting not only the interpersonal capability of senior travel but also leisure preferences and the level of participation. Samdahl and Jekubovich (1997) also give interpersonal relations a dominant position in forming not only tourism behaviours but also tourism preferences.

According to the original model of hierarchical leisure constraints, interpersonal dimensions describe how social relationship mechanisms affect participation in recreational activities. The variety of social processes in tourism, however, suggests a more finely graded distinction of tourism sociologies by separating the processes into interpersonal travel coordination, the social aspects of the microenvironment and relationships at the destination. The microenvironment encompasses social relationships as causal influencers that might, for example, affect an individual's financial situation or time budget. Interpersonal relationships have a paramount position in the decision-making process of seniors.

Feedback loops in the model indicate that tourism preferences are not only affected by intrapersonal constraints and facilitators but also from the resulting tourism behaviour/experience and other constraint and facilitator categories. Feedback loops pointing from participation to tourism preferences and motivation have been also suggested by Jackson et al. (1993), Gilbert and Hudson (2000), and Pearce's travel career concepts (Pearce & Lee, 2005). In this case, the actual tourist practice and conjoined experiences form future tourism behaviour. The importance of the tourism experience and satisfaction for future travel behaviour is well established in the literature (Pearce, 2005).

Persistent constraints and facilitators can be anticipated by the individual and shape future tourism preferences. Jackson (2005b) states that the anticipation of interpersonal and structural constraints can influence the desire to participate in travel. This may be expected in relation to negative, constraining events such as illness or the loss of the spouse. A significant inheritance, on the other hand, can operate as a facilitator, completely changing the perspective on travelling in the long term.

Findings of the thesis also indicate that seniors' strategies to cope with constraints and facilitators are not only based on negotiation procedures within the travel decision-making process but also before or after the travel by intervention in underlying conditions. As a successful proactive response to constraints (Jackson, 2005b), seniors' tourism activities are often organised around barriers that can be manipulated to diminish constraining effects. Seniors become, for example, members of associations and clubs to find new travel partners or they work part-time after retirement to be able to maintain their tourism habits. This supports Samdahl and Jekubovich's (1997)

findings that people can be viewed as 'active agents' negotiating their way through demands and desires. The ability to manipulate and negotiate constraints diminishes with increased age, which provides an explanation of why, at some point, travel activities are no longer pursued.

A specific feature of the model of senior tourism constraints and facilitators is health. Studies implicitly suggest the need to separate the individual's body and soul by assigning psychological factors to intrapersonal constraints and the physiological state and health to structural constraints (see e.g. Raymore, 2002; Samdahl & Jekubovich, 1997). This might be the reason why literature shows some inconsistency in the classification of health constraints. Among others (e.g. Raymore, 2002; Silva & Correia, 2008), Samdahl and Jekubovich (1997) classified health as a structural barrier with the argument that participants perceived health as imposed upon them, experienced from outside. Others relate health to intrapersonal constraints (see e.g. K. Hung & Petrick, 2010).

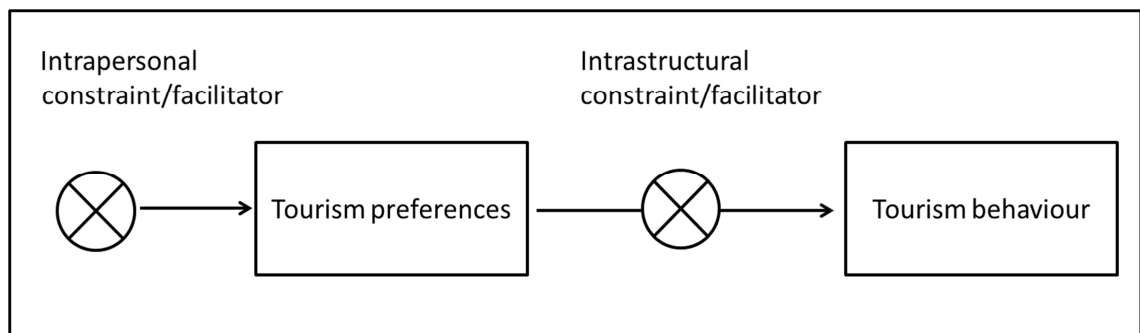
In this aspect of the model, the difference between isolated/acute and continuous/systemic life events becomes apparent. Isolated health incidents or conditions are associated with structuring constraints (for example, an accident). This dimension is referenced in the proposed model to intrastructural constraints.

Continuously deteriorating health impacts not only the biological body, but also affects state of mind. Declining health conditions, therefore, shape travel preferences as intrapersonal constraints or facilitators. Hutchinson and Kleiber (2005) concluded, that:

Although coping continues to be an ongoing response to situational stressors associated with negative life events, over time people begin to come to terms with the event and even seek to integrate it somehow with the personal narrative written before it happened (p. 144).

This notion is also supported by the original concept of leisure constraints, which links perceived self-skills with the intrapersonal dimension (Jackson et al., 1993). The thesis shows that there is only a thin line between intrapersonal and intrastructural constraints and the main difference lies in the timing of the health event, either before or after tourism preference and motivation is formed (Figure 7.8). Due to the interrelation between intrastructural constraints and intrapersonal health conditions, these dimensions are discussed below as one combined theme.

Figure 7.8: Intrapersonal and intrastructural impact on tourism behaviour



The research conducted for this thesis suggests that there may be different levels of health condition internalisation or acceptance. Depending on the expectancy of a certain health condition (expected/unexpected), the internal acceptance of an event may be deferred. With the passage of time, the perceived health condition may either improve or become chronic and internalised as an intrinsic factor in the formation of tourism preferences. The temporal distance may affect the internalisation of deteriorating health or health events. This is supported by Martin et al. (2011) who

state that distal and proximal events may have differing cognitive effects in terms of seniors' well-being. Figure 7.9 depicts different levels of the internalisation of health events.

Figure 7.9: Level of internalisation of deteriorating health

	Distal	Proximal
Expected	High internalisation	Medium internalisation
Unexpected	Medium internalisation	Low internalisation

Tourism adds a destination component to the leisure-based constraints model, which reflects basically the difference between these two phenomena (Figure 7.7). Not only tourism behaviour, which builds the framework of the actual travel (in terms of where to go, when, for how long, etc.), but also tourist practices at the destination, are subject to constraints and facilitators. This factor is not specifically identified in leisure constraints models but may be relevant in the tourism context (see Steinbach, 2003), and in particular, in the senior context.

Hägerstrand's (1970) time-geographical approach provides a promising approach to constraints and facilitators at the destination level. The deteriorating health and mobility difficulties of senior people fall into Hägerstrand's category of capability constraints and require adjustments of both transportation and destination facilities to ensure the accessibility of tourism products. Special senior prices for attractions may relate to authority facilitators, attracting elderly to participate in tourism activities at the destination. While tourist practices are not a focus of the thesis the research

findings suggest that seniors show specific behaviours at the tourism destination site, which may be shaped by life events.

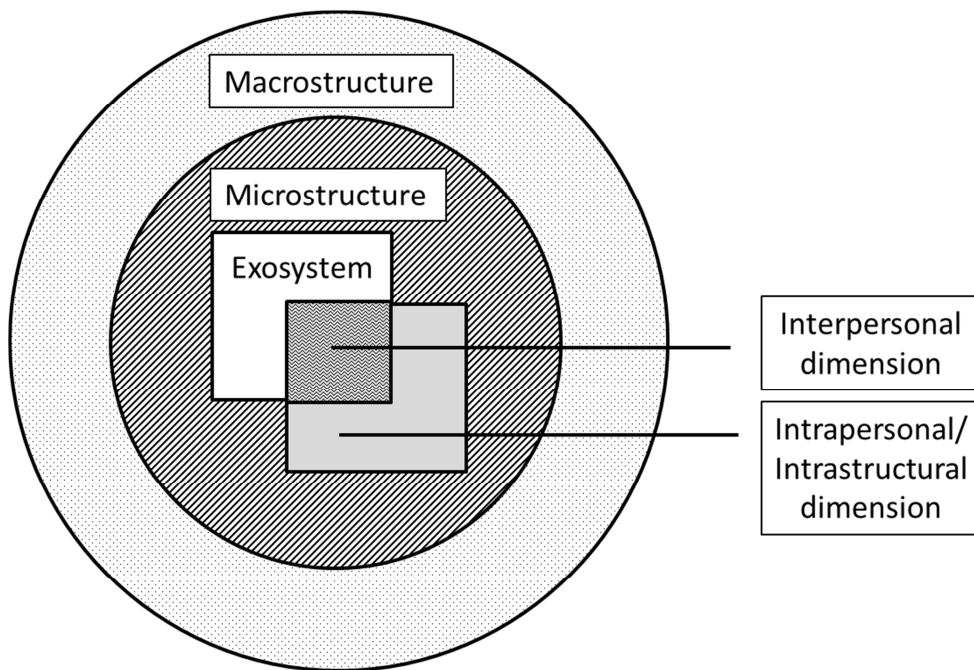
7.2.2 Ecological constraints and facilitators

The constraints and facilitators model developed in this thesis integrates ecological systems categories. A temporal snapshot of the model is presented in Figure 7.10, illustrating how the constraints approach is embedded into the socio-ecological system. The individual and their social interactions, including interpersonal relationships, are placed in an ecological micro- and macrosystem.

Both the microsystem and the macrosystem have a structural component, which lies outside the individual and the interpersonal nature of the tourism activity. The microsystem relates to the closer social environment of the individual (for example, friends, family members, work) while the macrosystem is associated with the broader societal, cultural and geographical context.

The exosystem impacts indirectly on social interaction and, hence, also affects the interpersonal dimension of tourism. This is due to the fact that life events affecting tourism behaviour are spread throughout the whole of one's personal relationships (Hutchinson & Kleiber, 2005). Data suggest that the social distance between the individual and the social unit (friend, or the husband of a friend) being affected by a significant life event can be irrelevant for the level of impact on the individual's tourism behaviour. It can be for example the husband's retirement of a friend which impacts on the friend's availability for the travel companionship.

Figure 7.10: Ecological constraints and facilitators



Boundaries between different constraint dimensions are fuzzy, which has already become apparent in the discussion on deteriorating health (see section 7.2.1). Life events consist of a combination of constraints and facilitators and their complex interrelations creates conceptual difficulties. Hutchinson and Kleiber (2005) correctly note that the interpretation of life events is only heuristically useful, which makes the deconstruction of the phenomenon into constraints and facilitators problematic. These authors conclude that for this reason constraints should be considered as dynamic and interpreted as part of an appraisal process and not in a unitary way.

Retirement, for example, has not only macrostructural and microstructural components (for example, payment regulations, individual income and discretionary time) but also interpersonal and intrapersonal components (social relationships, social status and role). Hence, different life events and related constraints can provide similar

explanations for a change in tourism behaviour. Divorce and widowhood, for instance, both result in the loss of the partner which can have similar implications for tourism behaviour. Table 7.1 illustrates from the research findings identified life events and shows at what levels of constraints and facilitators they are experienced.

As can be seen in Table 7.1, most life events affect not only one but several constraint dimensions. Intrapersonal constraints and facilitators are often related to health, emotions, mental strain, social roles, perception of skills and other age-psychological factors. Interpersonal dimensions relate to the availability of travel partners, and intrastructural constraints appear with an acute, isolated negative health event. Microstructural constraints and facilitators are associated with finances, social commitments, the availability of time and the social environment. The macrosystem is not much related to life events and for that reason not investigated in great detail. Some aspects that emerged in the thesis as macrostructural constraints and facilitators were the German political situation, regulations, food culture and the climate.

Table 7.1: Interplay of life events, constraints/facilitators and ecological systems

<div> <div>Constraints facilitators</div> <div>Life events</div> </div>	Intra- personal	Interpersonal	Intra- structural	Microstructural	Macro- structural
Intrapersonal dimension					
Deteriorating health	Perceptions of self-skills		Health	Social integration	
Age psychology	Emotions, perceptions, attitudes				
Microsystem					
Illness of the spouse	Mental strain	Abilities of travel partner		Finances, social commitment	
Nursing obligations	Mental strain			Social commitment	
The loss of a spouse	Grieving/ emotion	Loss of travel partner		Finances, social integration	
Meeting a new partner		New travel partner		Finances	
Detachment from teenagers	Loss of social roles	Loss of travel partners		Finances, social commitment	
Grandparenthood		New travel partners		Social commitment	
Pets as family members				Commitment	
Migration, living environment, VFR	Well-being at home	Change of social environment		Distances, social environment	
Working commitments	Social role, status			Finances, time budget	
Inheritance				Finances	
Macrosystem					
German reunification					Politics
Health system					Regulations
Retirement pay					Regulations
Climate					Natural environment
Food					Culture

7.3 The effect of intrapersonal constraints and facilitators on tourism preferences

A finding of the thesis is that aging and related deteriorating health significantly impact on seniors' psychology and biology and therefore their travel preferences. This contradicts Kazeminia et al. (2013) who found only minor relevance for this constraint in seniors' tourism behaviour. Since their study is based on travel blog content with mainly young seniors (younger than 65 years), the sampling might only reflect elderly people who experience intrapersonal facilitators rather than constraints. This could explain the general positive blog comments towards travelling.

Aging is universal, basic to the organism, progressive and deleterious (Novak, 1997) even though mankind attempts to slow down this process with medical developments. The probability of life events affecting the biological condition increases with age and may directly impact individual health, both mentally (for example, cognitive and memory abilities) and physically.

Intrapersonal constraints and facilitators in the traditional three-dimensional model are often associated with personality (Raymore, 2002) and its effect on leisure participation. Some personality processes show consistency over the life course, while others are developmental and dynamic and may be subject to life events in late life (Neugarten, 1973), which in turn can affect interest or disinterest in tourism participation.

7.3.1 Biological aging and intrastructural constraints

The most significant finding related to biological aging is that senior travellers often are motivated to travel as long as they are physically capable of doing so, a finding supported by other studies (Fleischer & Pizam, 2002; Romsa & Blenman, 1989). Tourism behaviour is negotiated through deteriorating health and adjusted to biological conditions in many aspects, such as means of transport, distances and trip duration. Negotiation processes, however, have only a limited capacity to enable the continuation of habitual tourism activities. Health deficits can cause reactive responses (Jackson, 2005b) and prohibit tourism participation in old age for two reasons: firstly, the senior's health conditions are very severe and travelling becomes impossible or too risky, or secondly, the senior would rather stay at home than make too many concessions to habitual tourism experiences because of bad health. It is therefore clear that the elderly do not travel under all circumstances.

Deteriorating health as constraint

This thesis found that health has a constraining effect on seniors' leisure and travel participation, a result suggested by many other studies (Fleischer & Pizam, 2002; Nimrod, 2008a; Strain et al., 2002; Zimmer et al., 1995). With deteriorating health, flexibility and accessibility of health services become paramount trip characteristics and, for this reason, travels are of shorter duration and to closer, often domestic, destinations. Similar results were shown in Fleischer and Pizams' (2002) study which found that health constraints become significant at about age 65, resulting in a decrease in the number of vacation days. Another constraining factor related to

declining health can be travel insurance, which becomes more expensive in older age. This constraint was also identified by Kazeminia et al. (2013).

Deteriorating health can explain differences in tourism behaviour between seniors and younger age groups. In this context, the difference between travelling and tourism becomes apparent since tourism activities and the 'being away' is still enjoyed in old age while the travel part (transportation) is often considered stressful and just a means to an end. Seniors prefer longer travels because a trip of longer duration increases the benefits compared with the arduous transport 'cost' of multiple short trips. An increase of travel duration with increased age has also been found by Lohmann and Aderhold (2009).

Comfort and other amenities become important properties of tourism products because they can compensate for declining body functions. According to Artho (1996), there is a trend towards quality and comfortable tourism products, which is reflected by the increased use of high-category accommodation in senior age (Sonntag & Sierck, 2005). Comfort also plays an important role in the choice of transport. A prominent theme of the thesis was difficulties with carrying luggage. Findings suggest that declining strength limits the usage of those types of transportation that require lifting and carrying luggage for longer distances. For safety reasons, seniors tend to abandon their cars or mobile homes at a certain point and switch to other forms of transport such as coaches, aeroplanes and cruises. The latter options are considered more comfortable but, on the downside, they are also associated, by some, with a decline of independence and lessened travel experience.

The change to more comfortable transportation was not only observed for those with health deficits but was also seen in younger and fit seniors. This contradicts Gonzalez et al.'s (2009) observation that coaches are preferably used by 'stable passive' senior travellers. An interpretation of this phenomenon is that high-class coaches can be viewed as a luxury way to travel, so their choice as a preferred form of transport relates to costs rather than health conditions.

Deteriorating physical conditions and the increasing desire for comfort needs to be negotiated with a series of other factors such as travel partners and travel expenses (trip quantity and the number of vacation days versus trip quality). Comfort in this context is much more than just improved services – it also includes special services, which are, for example, provided by the Red Cross. In later age, pull factors associated with the travel product (such as comfort and special services) may become more effective in attracting senior tourists than the attraction of the destination itself. In this sense, the availability of a comfortable transport system may become an important component of the travel product.

The need for accessible and convenient transport contributes to the explanations why cruise tourism is so popular among the elderly (see Lohmann & Aderhold, 2009). Several of the seniors interviewed in the research had been on ship cruises, mostly older seniors such as Mrs Neumann and Mr and Mrs Braun. The main advantages of cruise tourism lie in the convenience of being able to see a variety of destinations without the effort of packing and unpacking, high-quality accommodation and entertainment facilities, and the all-inclusive character of the trip (Patterson, 2006).

Lindquist and Golub (2004) highlighted the potential of cruise ship care combined with assisted-living facilities, which is considered to be a valuable future option for seniors.

Biological aging as a facilitator to travel

Current statistics suggest that the 'new' old generations are healthier than their predecessors and health issues affecting tourism participation may be shifted to later age. For example, in terms of the number of illnesses, German seniors aged between 76 and 81 in 2008 showed almost a similar picture to that of younger seniors (aged between 64 and 69) in 1996 (Motel-Klingbeil et al., 2010, p. 22). This confirms statements such as "people in their early 60s are the new 40-somethings" (Thomson future holiday forum, 2004, p. 7).

Most cases showed that physical well-being is a generic issue in late age, and young as well as old seniors related travelling for different reasons with their individual health situation. Health is not only associated with the absence of illness, it constitutes a holistic concept and is put on a level with quality of life and well-being (Hobson & Dietrich, 1995). Medical and health-related tourism benefits from the aging population (Connell, 2006) and is a booming sector in Germany (FUR, 2009, p. 151). Such tourism also includes health treatments and spa and wellness trips, which are preventative in nature.

Interviews undertaken for the thesis support the theory that seniors perceive travelling as healthy. S. Lee and Tideswell (2005) report similar findings from the Korean senior tourism market. This gains even more relevance when trips focus on physical activities such as hiking or walking. Since the 1990s there has been a trend in leisure travels

towards active pursuits emphasising health and fitness (Patterson, 2006, p. 24). Several studies report that (moderate) physical activities such as hiking and walking are popular amongst senior people (Fleischer & Pizam, 2002; Romsa & Blenman, 1989), which facilitates related tourist practices. A popular physical tourism activity among the seniors studied is cycling, which is a trend for a sub group of mid and later life individuals in the US identified by Gibson and Chang (2012). Bonham and Wilson (2012) found that old women in Australia associate cycling with maintaining mental and physical well-being.

Iso-Ahola and Park (1996) propose also that the social interaction that occurs as part of leisure activities has positive effects on mental and physical health. They found that interpersonal relationships derived from leisure activity participation have positive effects on physical and mental health.

Results from the research point to health measures that influence tourism activities. Illness or surgery, with possible rehabilitation following, can temporarily limit leisure travels (as an intrastructural constraint). At the same time, rehabilitation can lead to associated health tourism. Depending on the individual case, the German statutory pension insurance, which reintegrates sick people into employment, or health insurances often accept the costs of stays in rehabilitation centres and health resorts.

Furthermore, there is a general trend towards medical tourism such as cosmetic surgery and dental treatments (Connell, 2006). The main reasons for this trend are improved health service qualities outside of industrialised countries and financial

considerations since considerable cross-country differences exist in the cost of some medical treatments, including more complex surgeries such as heart operations.

Intrastructural constraints

With increased age the probability of negative life events increases, which entails a structural perspective on physical conditions. Intrastructural factors are related to health incidents that constrain or facilitate travelling. Findings suggest that intrastructural factors operate mostly as constraints or prohibitors.

7.3.2 Age-psychological factors

Intrapersonality is linked with psychological aging, which is complex and consists of multiple components such as mental and cognitive changes and behavioural effects due to biological decline. The thesis focuses on how seniors' perception of their own travel history, age and the finitude of life relates to their tourism behaviours.

Continuity of tourism behaviour

Most of the research participants show the characteristics of continuers (Zimmer et al., 1995) whose tourism activities are of high importance and are pursued as long as possible until insurmountable constraints set in. Findings of the thesis suggest that seniors are strongly attached to their routine travel behaviour even though some elements of tourism behaviours may change. Cases with different levels of health circumstances reported continued travelling even under worsening conditions. With deteriorating health, the perceived minimum conditions to continue travelling shifted in order to maintain travel participation. Similarly, aversions towards typical senior travel products (such as bus travels, travel groups, accessible tourism) shift with the

increased need to adopt senior-friendly tourism types. This demonstrates how strongly the desire to travel impacts on the individual tourism preference.

The phenomenon of coherent patterning of tourism behaviour can be explained by continuity theory (Atchley, 1989). Patterson (2006) associates the consistency of behaviours based on past experiences and decisions into the present, with the “ageless self”. In conclusion, the elderly distinguish between their deteriorating body functions and their subjective sense of self. Regardless of deteriorating health, individuals attempt to maintain stability across different phases of life and also into old age.

From a gerontological perspective, consistency is essential to a successful aging process (Boyd & Bee, 2009). The assumed continuation of behaviours is the foundation to predict future travel and leisure behaviour (see for example Lohmann & Aderhold, 2009) and is supported by a number of studies (Agahi, Ahacic, & Parker, 2006). Lohmann and Aderhold (2009) refer to destinations and travel propensity when they state that the elderly in Germany maintain learned tourism behaviours, which are transferred to old age until up to about 80 years old. Despite focusing on the development of travel motivations, Pearce and Lee (2005) also found that three main motivational factors – novelty, escape/relax and relationship – show consistency (motivations acting as a core force) regardless of the level of travel experience.

This thesis revealed two more aspects associated with consistency in tourism behaviours: the continuation of specific tourism activities can be observed for seniors who have only few significant events in their life course (Figure 7.6) and show only

limited variations in travel patterns (see the case of Mr Schmidt or Mrs Schaefer). These travel patterns – in the absence of constraints – are maintained and may be mainly subject to quantifiable changes such as duration and frequency.

Passive travellers who show dependency on others' travel decisions (mainly of their spouse's) may tend to continue habitual tourism activities that they developed during their relationships. This was observed in cases where the spouse passed away or the couple divorced, but adapted travel patterns were preserved and continued until future life events constrained this travel pattern (see the cases of Mrs Becker and Mrs Bauer).

Interestingly, it is not only tourism participation that successfully segues from middle age to older age but also non-participation. Those who showed not much interest in tourism participation in younger years did not show much more interest in travelling in senior age either.

Saturation

Another factor that has its foundations in the psychology of elderly people is the observation of *travel saturation*. Saturation in tourism studies is generally associated with economic development and (socio-) environmental carrying capacities (see e.g. Romeril, 1989). The individual capacity in collecting tourism experiences, however, can contribute to a reconsideration of travel preferences.

In some cases a significant collection of travel and tourism experiences over a lifetime can explain a lack of desire for further travel in old age. Some interviewees reported travel saturation due to extensive business trips or because they already have

discovered the world on their holidays in younger years. In these cases, travel activities diminished in terms of distances and duration in senior age. This research also suggests that internal factors (Nimrod, 2008a) may gain importance for well-travelled seniors in later age since it is not about experiencing something new but rather about enjoyment and appreciation. For Mrs Schulz, travelling is about enjoying nature and not about seeking novelty or meeting new people. It is important to note that the home environment (social and natural setting, living conditions) may play a significant role in the decision to voluntarily reduce or abandon tourism activities. Those who showed effects of travel saturation reported also a positive image of their living circumstances at home. Haukeland's (1990) study on non-travellers also identified a subgroup which preferred to stay at home in order to maximise the individual well-being.

The implied negative impact of travel experience on tourism participation contradicts other research and the general proposition of associated positive effects from high levels of travel experiences (see for example Fleischer & Pizam, 2002; Pearce & Lee, 2005). Pearce and Lee (2005) advocate a somewhat hierarchical, positive relationship between experiences and travel motivation (high and low motivational levels) without considering that this development could be also reversed. To use Pearce's words, elderly people who have climbed up the travel career ladder (TCL) in earlier years might step back again as they age. Host-site involvement, for example, which is suggested by Pearce and Lee (2005) as being a motivation for well-experienced travellers, may simply become more stressful in advanced age. Older adults may draw from their past experiences when they travel to places visited previously, seeking internal travel satisfaction rather than experiencing something new.

This does not necessarily contradict Maslow's initial ideas of hierarchical human needs, which Pearce's model draws on. The highest level of self-actualisation includes characteristics such as the acceptance of the self and others, positive humour and independence. Following Maslow's model, in senior years simple experiences can gain significant importance in life (Yount, 2008), which is exemplified by Mrs Schulz who prefers to enjoy the flowers blooming in her garden than to travel away. She regards her activities as being only part of her life, which does not require any further tourism experiences to gain personal benefits.

Nostalgia and other factors such as security and recognition may become significant considerations in the travel decisions of seniors in later age. This result is supported by Sellick (2004) who found that nostalgia has a paramount position in seniors' travel motivation. The passing of parents especially can create nostalgic feelings that result in VFR or what P. Pearce (2012) calls Visiting Home and Familiar Places (VHFP). The death of parents or grandparents who lived in nostalgia-inducing places associated with certain periods in life, such as childhood, may result in repetitive travels to these places. The impact of this life event may depend on whether positive or negative reminiscences are associated with the place.

Stressful situations

Studies have found that immediate stress caused by negative life events can facilitate leisure activities as those concerned seek out positive experiences (Hutchinson & Kleiber, 2005). Some interviewees coped with stressful situations in senior life by undertaking travels. In these cases the travel motivation in old age related often to

what Iso-Ahola (1982) calls escaping from the interpersonal environment in order to break out from a stressful and depressing daily routine. His arguments are also supported by other studies such as those of Mactavish et al. (2007) Gladwell and Bedini (2004) and Haukeland (1990).

The thesis shows that seniors' stressful situations are often associated with social isolation and their own, or their spouse's, illness. Illness can result in the well spouse taking solo trips, leaving behind a mentally straining situation in order to recover from stress. Others escape from the daily routine together with the ill spouse, in order to change the scenery. Travelling with ill people can have strong implications for the resulting trip in terms of appropriate tourism products, medical supply and distances and duration of the journey.

The interviews revealed that negative events and stressful periods in life can be associated with reduced travel activities. This result is consistent with C.-F. Chen and Wu's (2009) study which found a negative correlation between escaping tourism motives and travel participation. The increasing life expectancy of people in industrialised countries comes with a longer period of potential illness in old age (Motel-Klingbeil et al., 2010) and health-related interpersonal stress may become important travel constraints in future.

Mortality and the finiteness of life

Another aspect discussed within the context of age psychology is the impact of mortality on tourism behaviour. This is a largely untouched field in the tourism domain. Mortality in this context has two components: How do seniors face

knowledge of their own mortality? and How do the elderly cope with the loss of others?

Death as a discrete topic in tourism is commonly discussed from two perspectives. The first relates to fear of death and to safety issues with the focus on potentially risky tourism destinations due to political instability, natural hazards and crime (see e.g. Faulkner, 2001; Hall & O'Sullivan, 1996). The second area relates to 'dark tourism' which is associated with death and tragedy as a geographically manifested attraction such as historic battlefields or concentration camps (Isaac & Çakmak, 2013).

Some elderly people represent a specific type of the dark tourist; for example, Mr Braun who visited a war cemetery in France where he was stationed during World War II. War veterans are not necessarily fascinated with death and disaster but are facing their personal history, which is connected to specific sites of death such as memorials, cemeteries, museums or other manifested commemoration of warfare. This nostalgic element is a common motive in dark tourism (V. Smith, 1996) and was also found by Gibson (2002). War also affects civilians by expulsion from their homeland, which has similar nostalgic effects on travel activities in later years.

Little attention in tourism studies is paid to the meaning of death and the *awareness of finiteness*. The meaning of death varies across the life course and ranges from the feeling of invulnerability among young adults to the acceptance of finality and inevitability in old age (Boyd & Bee, 2009). In later adult years, the perception of time shifts from birth as a reference point towards death.

A change of one's view on remaining time has implications for behaviour in later life phases. Fleischer and Pizam (2002, p. 108) describe this period of time as being preoccupied with self-utilisation, self-fulfilling and striving for experiences because there is only 'so much time to live'. The thesis indicates that this appears to be particularly important for younger seniors due in large part to their still relatively sound physical and mental conditions. These elderly find themselves in a state of mind that Cicirelli (2006) compares with a 'honeymoon period'. A number of those interviewed, such as Mrs Klein, used the argument of having unfinished businesses as an explanation for their strong interest in tourism activities.

In the further life course, a certain recognition of mortality sets in, which changes the focus of seniors' mind-sets towards how the end comes about (Boyd & Bee, 2009). Interestingly, older seniors talk more about death-related topics and are less fearful of death compared with younger age groups (Depaola, Griffin, Young, & Neimeyer, 2003), which may reflect the acceptance of the inevitability of mortality. This is accompanied by a shift in preferences; for example, a stronger focus on health issues and other concerns that dominate in later life stages, which is suggested by the selective optimisation with compensation theory (Baltes, 1997).

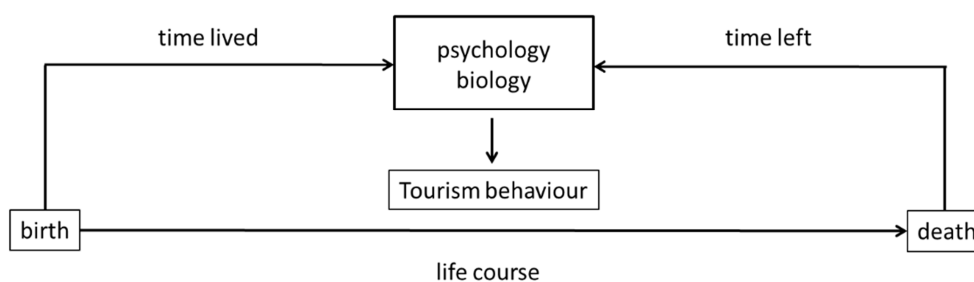
Human development studies have found that activities are consciously reduced in old age to concentrate on those more highly valued (Strain et al., 2002, p. 222). This conforms with Kazeminia et al.'s (2013) findings that seniors focus on meaningful travel companions such as grandchildren and known travel partners. On the other hand, this behaviour may also lead to the ceasing of travel activities or the pushing of travel activities to the background. Being aware of their old age and deteriorating

health, older seniors may undertake deliberate ‘last trips’. These trips may have specific characteristics such as a stronger focus on nostalgic motives and higher expenditures to guarantee the desired tourism experience.

An increased perceived and real sense of vulnerability in later age ties in to this discussion. In older age, seniors become more vulnerable due to illness and injury, deteriorating mobility and strength, and also slower cognitive functioning. Tourism itself can be perceived as a risky activity for health in later age years, not in the sense of a dangerous destination but as a result of their own increasingly frail body.

Depending on its absolute location within an individual’s life course, the time lived impacts on the individual’s psychology in terms of previous life events, tourism experiences and intrapersonal changes (see Figure 7.11). Conversely, the time left impacts on tourism behaviour due to the individual’s awareness of a limited lifetime, and this awareness is subject to increase over their life course.

Figure 7.11: Age-dependent model on tourism behaviour



The loss of partners: death and divorce

The second aspect related to mortality is the loss of others, especially loved ones and those who were once loved. Chambers (2002) found that widowed women react in a variety of ways to their loss. Losing a spouse through death or divorce can create

traumas, affecting psychological well-being (Janke et al., 2008a) and is associated with loneliness and loss (Chambers, 2002), which in turn has implications for tourism behaviour. Tourism is pursued to either seek pleasure or remove displeasure, which gives the emotional state a paramount position in the decision-making process (Jang et al., 2009, p. 57).

In particular, experiencing the death of a spouse and the following grieving process has negative impacts on the emotional state, which can result in a pause in travelling, reduced tourism activities or even the complete withdrawal from leisure travels. Boyd and Bee (2009) note that the grieving process is often accompanied by depression immediately after the loss, which reduces as time goes by.

How travel is related to the grieving process can be explained by different stages of bereavement. Even though grieving varies from individual to individual in terms of intensity and duration and widowhood is multifaceted in nature and is not only associated with loneliness and decline (Chambers, 2002), the process can be largely segmented into four emotional stages: numbness, yearning, disorganisation and despair, and eventually reorganisation (Bowlby, 1980).

The first two stages of grieving fall into a time that often induces VFR travels. This period brings family members together to give support and participate in some sort of institutionalised bereavement process. Utz, Carr, Nesse, and Wortman (2002) state that family contact increases during the transitional period of widowhood. The thesis found that the loss of a spouse can immediately lead to a pause in leisure travel

activities. This is shown by the cases of Mrs Neumann and Mr Fischer, who both paused their travelling during their grieving process.

Yearning and searching for the lost spouse, a phase which can last for several years, constrains tourism activities, but at the same time it may facilitate nostalgic motivations in the travel-decision process. Mrs Neumann's last travel included an excursion to Dubrovnik, a place she had visited in her younger years with her husband. Nostalgic motivations were also identified after the loss of parents, who may be the last personal connector to the home town of childhood. Pearce's (2012) conception of visiting home and familiar places goes beyond administration, the arrangements of funerals and inheritance and points to memories associated with places. Mrs Schulz travelled for several years to her home town after her parents have passed away, delving into reminiscences while looking after family property.

The third phase of disorganisation and despair brings a sense of helplessness, depression and fatigue, and travelling for leisure is limited. These stages comply with what Blichfeldt (2007) describes as the 'loneliness of widowhood', which often includes the ceasing of travel. Mrs Neumann never really recovered from the loss of her husband. Her loss was exacerbated by other challenging circumstances (migration shortly before she was widowed and moving into a retirement home), and she had very few tourism experiences after his death until the combination of social isolation and health ceased her tourism activities completely. Haukeland (1990) also reported that pattern of factors resulting in non-travelling can be complex and diffuse.

The final stage of grieving is when the mourner recovers and takes control over his or her life again.

So far in this chapter the loss of a spouse has been discussed from the perspective of losing a spouse through death. Similar traumatic effects can accompany divorce from a spouse, which often happens before senior age (see the case of Mrs Bauer). Divorce can have long-lasting consequences, not only on the emotional state but more obviously on the household composition and finances, and these consequences can reach into senior age. Especially in the first months, divorce is often experienced as a traumatic loss and stressful life event and can bring depression, loss of self-esteem and isolation (Boyd & Bee, 2009). The social environment and interpersonal relationships play an important role in the recovering process for both divorcees and those who have been widowed, and this is discussed in more detail as interpersonal facilitators.

Eight of the participants in the study had been widowed. Of these eight seniors, four had experienced widowhood in their mid-age or earlier and thus the intrapersonal effect of their loss had no identifiable effect on travel preferences. Some started travelling extensively after a spouse passed away after long illness. This shows that the loss of a partner can stimulate travel activities. It must be remembered that the loss of the spouse can also be a relief, both mentally and physically, in cases when extensive caregiving has been involved. In the course of Mr Fischer's transition to being a widower, his motivation for travel changed from escaping the stress of an everyday life with an ill spouse to intrinsic motivations (seeking experiences). Using Nimrod and Kleiber's (2007) terminology, Mr Fischer represents a senior who takes this negative life event as an opportunity to reinvent himself.

A major travel motivation of Mrs Krueger is connected to her volunteering (supporting pilgrims in Lourdes) since her husband passed away. Explanations for this shift in travel behaviour may be provided by Thoits and Hewitt (2001) who found that volunteer work has positive effects on the individual well-being.

7.3.3 Travelling as compensation

Losses refer not only to the death of beloved ones but also to other important dimensions in life such as jobs, homes or social roles (Victor, Scambler, Bond, & Bowling, 2000). Senior age is associated with fundamental changes in societal participation and role allocations, which, in turn, has consequences for life satisfaction and individual well-being. The thesis findings indicate that role transitions can explain the increase and decrease of tourism activities in senior years. This is supported by Nimrod (2008b) who adopts the selective optimisation and compensation model suggested by Baltes (1997) to explain changes in travel behaviour after retirement. The reduction of tourism activities can be viewed as a selection process while the increase of travelling is a prioritisation of new developed goals as part of a selection and optimisation strategy.

According to Boyd and Bee (2009), seniors aim to maintain a certain degree of activity and social roles, which is associated with successful aging and life satisfaction (Moody, 2009). In this sense, losing social roles as being part of a specific life event operates as facilitator rather than constraint to travel. The argument that travelling can substitute societal obligations such as work or parenthood is supported by Baltes (1997) who

states that successful human development is defined by the maximisation of gains and the minimisation of losses.

Levinson (1986) identifies social relationships as primary components of someone's life structure, which includes different aspects of the individual ecological microsystem consisting of partnership, family and friends, and also employment participation. Drawing on Levinson's assumption that individuals face new developmental (social) tasks by creating new life structures (1986, p. 3), tourism may be part of this strategy in older age. This is supported by Gibson and Yiannakis (2002, p. 359) who state that "tourist roles may also serve as vehicles through which vacationers seek to satisfy unsatisfied (deficit) and growth needs." This may explain why some interviewees made very pragmatic choices, negotiating through constraints such as availability of travel partners, financial situation, mobility, in order to travel as much as possible.

Gibson and Yiannakis' argument is in line with Nimrod and Rotem (2012) who report that senior tourists are highly involved in new experiences as part of a renewal or reinvention process. Nimrod and Rotem (2012) found that seniors experience internal innovations while participating in tourism activities. Liechty et al. (2012) provided in their study on leisure innovations among senior women evidence that the experience of innovation facilitates further innovations. This may explain the high involvement in travel by some seniors discussed in this thesis and the great variety of tourism activities they undertake. Cases often exemplify this reinvention process after negative life events including death of a spouse, lost family roles and divorce.

The thesis has identified two types of key life events that influence individual role conceptions in older age associated with a change in tourism behaviour: changes in social relationships, mainly within the family, and; retirement from employment. Both types of transitions have not only a socio-psychological element but also a structural component, which is discussed later in this chapter. The 'empty nest' and retirement are among expected life events and indicate a transition into old-age-related roles (Moschis, 2012).

Family roles

The restructuring of social roles in the family context is mostly experienced in middle age (Boyd & Bee, 2009) but can explain the development of travel patterns that reach into senior age. The emancipation of children from their parents and vice versa is a continuous process. The exit from the maternal role means a fundamental change in the family structure particularly for women whose identity has strong relations with motherhood.

Family tourism has a strong internal component and is often more about family interaction and development than tourism experiences. Lehto, Choi, Lin, and MacDermid (2009) note that family vacations have positive effects on family functioning and provide unique opportunities for communication and interactions. For this reason, the transition to post-family tourism without this internal function brings a shift in tourism motivation, expectation and associated satisfaction.

Many mothers have positive associations with the emancipation from their maternal role while others also suffer from anxiety and depression caused by the 'empty nest

syndrome' (Boyd & Bee, 2009). Adjustment processes can result in new activities including travelling. The change from the traditional one-dimensional housewife to multiple social roles in modern lifestyles can contribute to individual well-being (Barnett, 2004) and is demonstrated by the cases of Mrs Hoffmann and Mrs Schmitz. Both compensated their empty nest family situation with other existing roles or those newly developed (for example, volunteering or travelling).

Retirement

Effects of life transitions can also occur with retirement, influencing interpersonal work relationships and role allocations (Moody, 2009). Similar to the previous discussion on transformations of family structures, retirement plays an ambivalent role in the theoretical gerontological discourse since it can be both an opportunity and challenge (Birkett, 2013). Some literature describes retirement as a life phase with 'roleless roles' (Moody, 2009), which is accompanied by the loss of other physical and social competences (McHugh, 2000). According to Gibson (2002), for this reason some seniors initially travel but then withdraw to search meaning in later life.

Others emphasise the 'late freedom' and the abundance of discretionary time (Walter, 2006), which aligns with the successful aging paradigm. Contemporary studies have often shown negative effects of retirement to be wrong (Boyd & Bee, 2009) and associate retirement with a beginning of third age rather than with an ending (Price & Nesteruk, 2010).

These findings align with data from the thesis, since none of the cases linked official retirement itself with a deteriorating lifestyle. Many of those interviewed did not

travel for recreational reasons after retirement as they preferred to spend their discretionary time at home for relaxation. Those seniors utilised their travels often for novelty-seeking, ego-enhancement and self-esteem reasons. Mr Fischer, for example, also travelled because he wanted to have something to talk about with others, to be able to take part in conversations at home. Travelling is a prominent topic in day-to-day conversations.

Recent sociological research segments retired people into 'producer-based' and 'consumer-based' retiree identities (Sargent, Lee, Martin, & Zikic, 2013) and both types have been found in this study. The producer-based cases maintain their pre-retirement professional identities by remaining in paid or voluntary work. As a result, retirement does not facilitate much change in tourism behaviour.

According to Sargent et al. (2013), producer-based identities consciously dissociate from those who embrace a consumer lifestyle, which is rather hedonistic and based on leisure, pleasure and experiences. Some interviewees exemplified this type of retiree. Recreation-focused women may view their retirement as 'their turn' (Price & Nesteruk, 2010) without any of the time commitments or other obligations experienced in earlier years (Gibson et al., 2002).

Some cases show ambivalent behaviour by gaining internal reward with some sort of productive work that is combined with a rather hedonistic lifestyle enjoying tourism activities. Mr Wagner, for example, engaged extensively in a new productive hobby that came with a strong travel pattern. The travel pattern is based on largely internal motivations to improve his knowledge of his hobby. Mrs Krueger remained in a

productive part-time employment, and used the additional income to fund her tourism activities.

A third theme discovered in the interviews refers to potentially asynchronous travel experiences of a housewife and her husband and their different expectations after retirement. Gibson et al. (2002) discovered this theme of different expectations on retirement in the leisure context.

The perception of retirement as liberation might be different for housewives who do not officially retire. They often remain in their established marital roles after the husband's retirement, even into old age (Keating & Cole, 1980). Moreover, a well-travelled retiree might prefer more relaxed and maybe even fewer travels while his wife expects to discover the world after her husband's retirement.

Either way, travelling may play an important role in compensating a perceived social degradation or enjoying a more independent lifestyle after retirement. For this reason, travelling can become very meaningful in seniors' life, which explains increased travel frequencies or expenditures compared with their younger years. Some budget their travel expenses and look for bargains to enable as many travel activities as possible.

7.4 Interpersonal compatibility and tourism behaviour

The thesis has found that social relationships have a paramount position in seniors' tourism behaviour. Travelling, in particular for recreational purposes, is to a large extent a social practice, which Larsen, Urry, and Axhausen (2007, p. 248) call a "social life conducted at-a-distance". The social nature of tourism already becomes evident in

the early planning stages since travel decisions are mainly made between individuals (Kerstetter et al., 2005).

Decrop (2006) similarly notes that travelling is extensively group based which is also the case for seniors who pursue commonly tourism activities with a co-participant, their spouse, friends, relatives or a travel group with known or unknown people. As a consequence, travel behaviour can be influenced by interpersonal relationships, which implies that seniors' tourism behaviour is not only affected by their own microsystem but also others and their social systems.

7.4.1 Changes in travel companionship

Interpersonal constraints and facilitators refer to changes in travel companionship through losing or gaining travel partners and their availability or unavailability for tourism activities. According to Sirakaya and Woodside (2005), the composition of travel parties found only minor relevance in tourism behaviour models.

Interpersonal coordination of travel activities can be constrained or facilitated by several life events, which relate to a change in the closer or wider social system. As people grow older, life is accompanied by a likewise aging and deteriorating social system (Charles & Carstensen, 2010), which intensifies the stress on the seniors' interpersonal tourism compatibility and therefore travel participation. The children have moved away, leaving an empty nest, and with increased age more and more potential travel partners such as friends and relatives have passed on. Additionally, illness, fragility or disability constrains the societal participation, which in turn has implications for tourism behaviour.

Losing the spouse as the travel partner

The chronic illness or death of the spouse or separation and divorce in old age requires a reorientation towards other travel partners, which becomes difficult for older people with limited social contacts (see, for example, Mrs Neumann). Under such conditions, family and friends can become more important either as travel partners or as a VFR travel destination (see the reactions of Mrs Becker and Mrs Bauer after widowhood and divorce). Conversely, being single can also be seen as beneficial. Singles have the advantage of lacking the interpersonal constraints from a partner, which increases their flexibility.

Group travels become more appealing to single seniors not only for socialising reasons but also because travelling in a group is considered safer. The composition of the travel group is significant for travel satisfaction, which was mentioned by several cases such as Mr Mueller or Mrs Klein who have quite specific criteria for their potential travel partners.

ICT may play an important future role for seniors in finding new (travel) partners. Nimrod (2012) found that online communities are used by older people not only to exchange tourism information and experiences but also as a platform to find travel partners. Mr Fischer, for example, stayed in email contact with other tourists he met on his trips and who were potential travel companions in the future. In Germany, about every fourth senior aged 60 years or older uses the internet and numbers are constantly increasing (Deutsches Zentrum für Altersfragen, 2010).

New partnership

New relationships and marriage in older age impact on the composition of travel groups. The new relationship of a friend or a spouse's retirement can reshape travel groups, and even collapse well-established travel patterns. There is a trend towards engaging in new relationships after divorce or widowhood and about 18% of Germans who are 50 years old live in a remarriage or post-marital partnership (Nowossadeck & Engstler, 2013). Mostly it is men who engage in new relationships and remarriage in late adulthood, which are associated with positive emotional effects on seniors (Boyd & Bee, 2009).

The building of new partnerships in advanced age is particularly interesting because negotiation processes that precede joint tourism activities are based on the seniors' individual travel experiences. Previous travel practices may be transferred to and merged with new travel patterns introduced by the new partner. Travelling may gain more importance when travelling is pursued as a couple. This is exemplified by Mrs Koch and her new husband; they both had predefined tourism preferences which had to be adapted to each other.

Grandparenthood

It emerged that grandchildren induce tourism activities. Grandchildren can facilitate VFR travels or become a temporary new travel companion. These intergenerational travels are largely dominated by the children's needs and their motivations. Literature recognises that intergenerational groups including the grandparents play a strong role in travel behaviour (Southall, 2012; Gibson, 2002). Themes suggest that several factors

influence grand travel and grandchildren-triggered VFR activities including the inner-familial relationship which can limit and block joint travels, distances between the grandchildren and their grandparents (in time, geographical distance, money), the age of the grandchildren (in terms of matching travel interests), and school holidays.

The age of the grandchildren has a strong influence on joint tourism activities because of the relevance of mutual travel needs and interests. From a VFR perspective, there may be a specific time window when this intergenerational relationship facilitates visiting the grandchildren and vice versa. Mrs Koch reported that the optimal age to travel together with grandchildren is 10 to 15 years. Literature supports the fact that grandparent-grandchild relationships undergo transitional changes especially when the children enter higher education (Crosnoe & Elder, 2002). The thesis research indicates that the focus of joint tourism activities is on building a relationship between grandparent and grandchild. A side effect is to provide the parents with a break from child care.

A number of dimensions can influence future development of joint intergenerational tourism activities of grandchildren and grandparents. In Germany the number of grandchildren increased slightly over the last decade (Motel-Klingbeil et al., 2010). At the same time, distances between residencies of grandchildren and grandparents also increased which impacts on opportunities and motivations to visit. Increased geographical distances between parents, children and grandchildren accompanied by increasingly adopted ICT can facilitate international VFR. Mr Fischer and Mrs Koch, for example, frequently visited their children and grandchildren overseas. These visits

were combinations of internal (seeing the family) and external motivations (Nimrod, 2008a), seeking new experiences in the children's new home countries.

Illness of travel partners

A chain is only as strong as its weakest link. Established travel groups have to make compromises regarding the individual conditions of elderly members in terms of travel durations, destinations, accommodations and accessible health services. Mr and Mrs Braun and also Mr Schmidt reported that travel distances decreased and eventually tourism activities ceased due to deteriorating health of their travel companions.

Illness can also create stress on the relationship (Sexton & Munro, 1985) due to the misbalance of abilities and opportunities to travel. Travel participation for these misbalanced relationships involves a negotiation process to moderate varying tourism abilities and preferences within the relationship. The case of Mr Mueller and Mrs Richter shows also that a feeling of guilt can be involved in the travel decision-making process if opportunities are misbalanced.

7.4.2 The role of the socio-ecological system

Results of the thesis uncovered that the seniors' social environment (family, friends, and acquaintances) impacts on tourism behaviour. The social environment plays an important role in particular for those who experience a change in their social systems. A strong social system can operate as a pool from which new travel partners can be selected. The lost travel partner can be replaced not only by a new spouse, friends and/or a relative, but can be also recruited from an extended social system such as clubs or associations.

The impact of the social environment

After life events with strong emotional effects (such as the death of the spouse or divorce) and the dissolution of travel groups, the thesis found that a strong social environment can be supportive in the recovering of travel activities. According to Martin et al. (2011), a supportive social environment can buffer the effect of stress on well-being caused by role transitions or negative life events.

In order to (re)establish old or new relationships, which are essential for maintaining existing, readopting past or creating new travel patterns, two aspects were identified to be relevant: the external social environment and inter-familial relationships. Mrs Krueger mentioned the importance of her friend who encouraged her to join her on trips overseas, which resulted in a strong travel pattern. Likewise, Mr Fischer reported how his social environment, including his daughter, supported him to get control back over his life.

Inter-familial relationships between parents, children and grandchildren are an important factor for successful aging (Motel-Klingbeil et al., 2010). Inter-familial contacts can be facilitated by ICT. This will become increasingly important in the future since the adaption of the internet has increased among seniors (Beldona et al., 2009; Patterson, 2006). Some of those interviewed used Skype to communicate with their family overseas. This, in turn, may result in changes in travel patterns, either negatively if ICT replaces physical contact or positively if communication technologies improve family relationships, which comes with the desire to visit the closer or extended family. ICT may also become more relevant in the future for family external support. Studies

suggest that online activities can have a positive effect on loneliness and perceived social isolation of seniors (Cotten, Anderson, & McCullough, 2012).

Membership of an organisation enhances a senior's social network and is a proactive strategy to seek benefits from social participation after the loss of a travel partner. Organisations such as alpine or senior clubs often offer travel activities that directly facilitate tourism participation. Clubs and associations also provide a place for building new relationships with potential new private travel partners.

Weak social systems often fail to provide potential travel partners (see, for example, Mrs Schroeder) which can result in reduced and single travel activities. A weak social network can increase the importance of socialising as a travel motive especially in terms of social participation and interpersonal interactions. This conforms to Sellick's (2004) senior travel motivation cluster 'enthusiastic connectors' who scored high on social and connecting dimensions, while also showing a below-average value for being married.

Moving in old age, in particular to retirement homes or assisted-living facilities, can significantly change and often diminish the individual's social system and limit opportunities to travel. The everyday life of residents in retirement homes can be rather passive, with minor social interactions and centred on the apartment or room (Harper Ice, 2002). Under these living conditions, a reciprocal process may set in where seniors start to more actively disengage from society which reinforces their retreat from tourism activities. Mrs Zimmermann, as well as Mrs Neumann and Mrs Schroeder, reported their social isolation in retirement homes due to few social

interactions, which contributed to minor or no tourism activities. This point is expressed by Mrs Neumann who stated, "I don't know anyone here. ... Here are just old people."

Migration and visiting friends and relatives

Migration represents a special case, one that changes the social environment and induces VFR. Unlike migration, nearby friends and relatives do not induce travel activities (depending on the definition of travelling in terms of distances). Hence, migration activities are often an essential factor in determining VFR travel, either as the visitor or being visited.

Findings suggest that VFR gains importance in later years. Most relevant for VFR-related travels are life events and migration patterns of the immediate family circle of parents, children and grandchildren. This induces travel activities (depending on distances) such as going to a wedding, the baptism of grandchildren, or a funeral. VFR decreases in older age due to a declining family system and mobility difficulties, which complicates visiting relatives and friends. The passing away of parents can reduce VFR significantly (see, for example, Mrs Bauer).

The geographical distribution of family members can persistently shape travel patterns up into old age. Some interviewees visited their children regularly and this also directed their leisure travel. VFR and leisure vacations were combined, which was fostered by the fact that the children lived in attractive areas. VFR was also found to be an initiator for new tourism types such as long-distance travels. Data showed that VFR travels can take different forms in terms of choice of accommodation (staying with the

family or staying in a commercial accommodation) or travel motivation (pure visit of friends and family or combined travel activities).

7.4.3 Changes in the decision-making units

The discussion on interpersonal constraints and facilitators shows that life events not only affect the composition of travel groups but can also cause significant changes in the dynamics of travel decision-making processes and associated strategies. Literature identifies children as an important factor in decision making (Kozak & Karadag, 2012) and changes in the family structure impacts on the dynamics and strategies in this process. For empty nesters, travelling is not all about the family anymore and travel decisions can focus on their own individual preferences.

After losing a spouse, former joint decision making becomes individual and seniors rely for the time being on their own tourism preferences. This can create stress in cases where inter-spousal decisions were dominated by the former partner and the remaining senior is not used to making decisions. Newly formed travel groups in senior age, on the other hand, need to negotiate preferences that are based on previous experiences and habits. Today, seniors often draw from a great tourism experience which, from a consumer behaviour standpoint, increases the confidence in making decisions (Carpenter & Yoon, 2011). This raises the question how do new partnership formations negotiate through different levels of familiar decision-making positions, such as dominant versus dominant or passive versus passive combinations. Strategies can be, for example, to alternate preferred travels, a strategy exemplified by Mrs Koch and her new husband, who were both active decision makers.

Findings suggest that in non-partnership travel relationships, composed mostly of friends and acquaintances, hierarchies also exist in the decision-making process. Hierarchies in these relationships may be less strong than in partnerships due to lower commitment levels. Those who do not mind travelling alone may have a better leverage to enforce their travel preferences in an interpersonal travel decision-making process. Others who prefer travelling with a co-participant might negotiate through possible interpersonal constraints to their travel preferences (see Mrs Klein).

7.4.4 Social interaction at the destination

Interpersonal interactions occur at the tourist destination between the tourist and other people. Sharing the tourist space with travel companion(s), other travellers or the host community, impacts on the tourist practices, experience and satisfaction and, in the long term, on future tourism preferences. Travelling with unknown or known people can have positive effects on personal well-being in general (Iso-Ahola & Park, 1996) but also involves high risks for travel satisfaction. This becomes even more an issue when seniors choose to share their rooms with another unknown single person to reduce travel expenses.

Sirakaya and Woodside (2005) highlight the potential risks of travel decisions but note that they can be reduced by extensive information-search strategies. However, while risk-reduction strategies may apply to tourism products and destinations, they cannot be applied to human beings with differing preferences, habits, attitudes or moods. For that reason, seniors often travel with people they already know; this reduces uncertainties and the risk of dissatisfaction with the travelling companion. Swarbrooke

and Horner (2007) note that “the tourist is part of the production process of tourism” being affected by attitudes, mood and expectations. This holds not only true for the tourist themselves but also for other travellers who are sharing the tourist space.

Once at the destination, seniors also interact with other unknown tourists. Mr Wagner, for example, experienced discomfort sharing the tourist space with older people. He considered himself as feeling and looking younger than his chronological age suggested. Others rejected bus travels, which they associated with older adults, until they realised the amenities of this way of travelling. This negative view of other elderly adds another layer to an anti-tourist perspective that in tourism reflects negative perceptions towards other travellers (see Gustafson, 2002).

7.5 Structural constraints and facilitators

The advanced hierarchical constraints and facilitators model distinguishes between microstructures and macrostructures. The absence of a specific structural constraint often implies that this factor operates as a facilitator (Raymore, 2002). Good climate conditions, for example, are attractive for senior tourism activities while climates that are too cold, hot or humid may constrain older travellers. Results suggest that structural constraints do not significantly affect the actual travel participation but rather, in combination with structural facilitators, define the shape of the tourism activity in terms of destination, duration, distances, frequencies and expenses.

7.5.1 Microstructural factors

Identified constraints and facilitators in the seniors’ microsystem are associated with an improved or deteriorated financial situation, and social and working commitments

and related time allocations. From a microstructural point of view, fewer commitments and income restrictions increase the opportunities for travelling. This is supported by Nimrod (2008b, p. 871) who notes: "With more time available, and fewer work and family responsibilities, retirees feel that they can travel whenever they want, for as long as they wish, which also provides an opportunity to travel differently".

Senior age is relatively free from microstructural constraints, a finding from this thesis that is also reported in other studies. Fleischer and Pizam (2002) found that by the age of 65 years, income is at its peak and time constraints are largely absent due to retirement. They conclude that since health constraints are not yet an issue, the younger senior population reaches their maximum number of vacation days in this stage of their life cycle.

This does not mean that seniors are not exposed to microstructural constraints at all. Seniors in their early 60s find themselves in a generational 'squeezed' position in terms of family relationships and associated commitments (Boyd & Bee, 2009). They experience social commitments to both the previous (parents) and following (children) generations. These relationships shift with increased old age, and obligations of seniors concentrate on grandparenting and caregiving of spouses or other family members and friends.

Travelling after family tourism

An early starting point of senior age can be associated with the detachment from children. Family as the most-inner circle of personal relationships can be considered a microstructural constraint because of the high commitments and responsibilities

involved and associated financial burdens. After family tourism, travel patterns may be either re-adopted from previous travel periods or created as a new travel form. The re-adoption of travel patterns may be the case if life events such as partnership and family have interrupted individual travel preferences and small compromises were made in the inter-familial/partner travel decision-making process. In this case travel preferences may have been suppressed and then resumed after the constraint is overcome.

The detachment from family tourism is a continuous process which begins mostly in the pre-senior stage, brings more leisure time and opens windows for tourism activities. This applies especially for stay-at-home mothers who do not resume full-time employment. Effects of the emancipation process on tourism behaviour are fully in place when children eventually leave the parental home.

Once children are financially independent, the remaining empty nesters have fewer financial responsibilities, which can induce positive effects on travel activities. Mr Fischer stated that the moving out of his daughter improved his financial situation and opened up new opportunities to travel. This is not a matter of fact, as some parents still support their children while they are establishing their new life away from the family home and/or during further education. Especially in difficult economic times, support of adult children and intergenerational households regain importance. This is reflected by an increasing number of young adults in Europe who are staying longer time in their parents' household since the financial crisis in the late 2000s (Eurofound, 2014).

Another aspect that comes with the emancipation from children is the independence from school holidays. Seniors can make use of seasonal price differences in shoulder seasons. This, in turn, makes the empty-nester market segment interesting for the tourism industry which wants to fill its gaps in shoulder seasons. Together with work, school commitments are the most significant institutionalised constraint for scheduling leisure travel (Hinch & Jackson, 2000).

Income in old age

Available financial resources are an important factor influencing travel. This research found that divorce, the independence and departure of children, retirement, inheritance and health expenses all impact on the financial situation of seniors. Life events that improve the financial situation of seniors often facilitate travel activities. An improved financial situation may be reflected by the use of tour operators and when seniors start to purchase travel packages. This conforms to the relatively high price elasticity of demand for travel products (Freyer, 2001). On the other hand, the inverse relationship between disposable income and age-related costs (such as health expenses and household support) limits tourism opportunities. Travelling then becomes a matter of adjusting travel preferences to financial constraints.

Income in old age mainly depends on private pension plans, statutory pension insurance and, increasingly often, maintained employment. For younger seniors, high incomes often provide a solid basis for leisure and tourism participation. To afford more expensive and extensive travel activities, semi-retirement is a strategy to overcome financial constraints (see, for example, Mrs Klein or Mrs Krueger). Income in

older age, in particular for single women, drops significantly which suggests that financial constraints do not set in until later life stages. Financial constraints may become more significant in the future since studies have found a trend towards poverty among the elderly (Boyd & Bee, 2009; Motel-Klingbeil et al., 2010). However, in older age deteriorating income is accompanied by other constraints which put this specific dimension into perspective.

Inheritance

Inheritance can add to the individual income and assets of seniors. Inheritances can be of significant value, which improves the financial situation of the elderly and provides the opportunity to spend more money on tourism activities; this, in turn, can increase travel frequencies, duration and distances and/or enhance the quality of purchased tourism products. The probability of inheriting increases with older age, which is particularly significant for seniors with a wealthy family background. The passing away of a close person such as the husband or wife, however, constitutes a life event that may mitigate the positive effect of the inheritance, at least in the short term.

Employment in old age

The thesis shares Hinch and Jackson's (2000) view that overcoming childcare commitments together with retirement constitute the most significant facilitators to travel in older age, perhaps even in the whole life course. Stopping employment completely has financial and temporal implications, both of which are meaningful structural factors in forming tourism participation and behaviours.

Many participants, such as Mr Wagner and Mr Fischer, associated retirement with increased leisure time and more opportunities to travel. Mrs Koch related the retirement of her spouse with high expectations of their future travel activities. The fact that travelling becomes a meaningful activity in retirement age is also supported by Y. Wang, Norman, and McGuire (2005) who found an increase in travel expenditure among elderlies even though their income is not necessarily higher than before they retired.

Others, however, had already shaped their travel patterns to a large extent before their retirement age. Mrs Schmitz and Mrs Klein are both divorced and had raised their children as single mothers. Already in the course of their children's growing independence, these two women had developed new tourism behaviours that continued into their retirement stage. Thus, the impact of retirement was not as strong on their travel behaviours.

Results not only suggest a general increased significance of tourism activities in retirement age but also a higher frequency of short trips. This result contradicts findings from Romsa and Blenman (1989), who initially also assumed a similar relationship between the frequency of shorter trips and time flexibility due to retirement, and Lohmann and Aderhold (2009). Some interviewees, for example, related their increased frequency of short trips with the flexibility of retirees who can travel during weekdays as well as at weekends. This was often reported associated with short hiking and ski trips.

Increasingly retirement in developed countries is becoming a continuous transition rather than a single life event, through reducing working hours and switching to part-time employment (Boyd & Bee, 2009), which can mitigate the effect of complete retirement on tourism behaviour. Part-time work was found in particular among women who were widowed, divorced or empty nesters. Results from the thesis suggest that it is not necessarily the complete absence of employment that results in increased tourism opportunities but the temporal flexibility due to reduced working commitments which also comes with semi-retirement. Their temporal flexibility is the reason why retirees and semi-retirees who experience some sort of structural constraint on their time budget often manage to avoid negative impact on their tourism participation and behaviour.

On the other hand, complete retirement from employment brings opportunities to delve deeper into travel experiences. Additional free time can enhance travel preparation and the post-processing of the trip. This includes the information-search and travel-organisation process, processing pictures, writing travel diaries, and staying in contact with people met on the trip. Even though interviewees with minor structural and intrapersonal constraints and genuine interest in tourism often showed great purchasing experience of tourism products, the decision-making process was extensive rather than habitual (Mayo & Jarvis, 1981). This was even the case for some interviewees who showed great loyalty to tour operators. Travel companies are often selected carefully to meet the seniors' specific travel needs. In particular, younger seniors used the internet as an information source to support their purchase decisions.

The internet may become increasingly important in some seniors' extensive and time-consuming information search and resulting booking behaviour.

An often overlooked aspect in the discussion is the fact that retirement has, besides an individual component, also a *marital dyad* (Keating & Cole, 1980) due to the impact of retirement on the family and spouse. The timing of retirement is often asynchronous between couples (Szinovacz, 1996) and the liberation from work is experienced not only by the retiree themselves but also their spouse. Mrs Koch, being retired herself, is waiting for the retirement of her husband so that they can travel together. In the meanwhile, Mrs Koch enjoys single travels without her husband. The couple already have concrete ideas about their travel plans in their future and their liberation from the husband's working obligations will affect both the husband and the wife.

Social commitments as structuring constraints and facilitators

With increased age, other factors gain importance in seniors' life and with these factors come potential constraints. Volunteering for example, is more commonly pursued in senior age than in younger years (Motel-Klingbeil et al., 2010; Statistics New Zealand, 2009). Gibson et al. (2002, p. 272) associate volunteering in retirement age with the "opportunity to give back". However, the results of this research demonstrate that this microstructural constraint often can be organised around tourism activities.

Social commitments such as caregiving for a spouse or relatives and grandparenthood come with temporal restrictions, which can constrain participation in leisure tourism activities. Conversely, these commitments can cause a strong VFR pattern. The impact

of these social microstructural constraints depends on a number of factors including the nature of the familial relationship, the seriousness of the illness in cases of caregiving obligation, and distances between the receiver and giver of help. Among the cases, it was predominantly the female participants who executed nursing tasks. With medical advancements and a consequential multi-morbidity aging process, caregiving for parents will shift more and more into advanced senior age.

The case of Mrs Krueger shows that grandparenting can be viewed as a role that balances the loss of social functions. Likewise, Mr Jimenez considers grandparenting commitments not as a constraint but as a natural obligation which he enjoys. This result adds another perspective to Nimrod's (2008b) study which suggests that grandchildren can restrict travelling. Some gerontological studies show a strong decline in grandparents' support for their grandchildren in recent times (Motel-Klingbeil et al., 2010). This might be related to social developments but also to increased distances between grandparents and children.

Physical environment and pet ownership

Another finding is that the living space can operate as either a microstructural constraint or facilitator and this corresponds to the discussion on the escaping/seeking dyad. Some evidence was found in the data regarding a persistent impact of deep-rooted relationships with a senior's home town and culture. Strong cultural and spatial bounds may constrain and limit the development of wanderlust.

Unattractive living spaces may induce travel away from home whereas an appealing environment contributes to individual well-being and invites staying at home. In

particular, gardening was a prominent hobby among the research participants, and because their garden requires attention and is well enjoyed, this hobby constrains travelling, especially in the summer months.

Pets also have a very strong impact on tourism behaviour. All seniors in the study who owned pets reported that their pets impacted, to a greater or lesser degree, on their tourism behaviour and participation. Very few studies have researched pets as constraints to leisure and tourism (see e.g. K.-P. Hung et al., 2011; K. Hung & Petrick, 2010) despite the significant market size of pet owners. K.-p. Hung et al. (2011) state that almost half of the American, British and Taiwanese population owns pets.

Pets either stay at home while the owner is away or accompany their owner on the trip. Both solutions have implications for tourism behaviour. The thesis data suggest that pets may not restrict tourism participation per se but they do constrain travel durations and distances. Shorter travels, however, can in turn facilitate trip frequency which may compensate for the previously mentioned limitations. Pets also influence the choice of transport and individual transportation by car is superior to other types if the pet is accompanying the owner (see Mr and Mrs Braun). Those who bring their pets on their travels reported considerations in terms of accommodation and transportation.

The observed significant influence of pets on tourism behaviour can be explained by the very strong bonds that can occur between owners and their animals, which some literature compares with parent-children relationships (K.-P. Hung et al., 2011). The cases of the Hoffmann family and Mrs Bauer show that ownership of pets (in both of

these cases, cats) can occur for reasons other than just a love for animals. Mr and Mrs Hoffmann's cat is a remnant of their full nest and the pet is perceived as constraint to travel, whereas Mrs Bauer perceives her cat as some sort of substitute relationship since the divorce from her husband. Studies show that pets can buffer social isolation or contribute as some form of social interaction (Rogers et al., 1993). Mrs Bauer's attachment to her cat is stronger than its perceived constraining impact on her tourism behaviour. Pet owners are dependent on others (for example, neighbours or family members) to look after the pet while they are away from home, and adequate pet care can mitigate to some extent the constraining effect of pets.

7.5.2 Macrostructural factors

Macrostructural constraints and facilitators are not related to individual life events because they lay outside the individual sphere of influence. For this reason, these constraints and facilitators are not a focus for this thesis. Nevertheless, it emerged that political developments, regulations, cultural differences and the natural environment can operate as macrostructural constraints or facilitators to elderly tourism behaviour. Macrostructural factors relate either to the place of residence of the traveller or the potential destination. The former provides the opportunities to travel while the latter influences the attractiveness (for example, prices, climate, facilities) of and travel opportunities (for example, visa, regulations, infrastructure) to a specific destination.

Indeed, tourism can be viewed as a life event that seeks to change, albeit relatively briefly, some elements of the macrostructure, such as climate or culture. Some seniors change the macrostructure permanently through migration (e.g. Gustafson, 2002); for

example, Mrs Becker spends half of every summer in the Bavarian mountains. Another emergent theme is that with increased age, the perspective on the macrostructure may change. Transitions in health and physical conditions can influence a senior's perception of the risks of travelling in politically instable countries, the effect of climate, or the impact of unfamiliar food and beverages.

The macrosystem affects seniors' travel behaviour by setting social norms, which are partly expressed through laws and regulations. Entering a new age group is, for example, of importance for health and travel insurances, which can become significantly more expensive in old age. With the age transition into retirement status, regulations in pension rights, schemes and payments directly affect the living conditions of retirees. Relevant factors are, for example, regulations governing the timing of retirement and the statutory retirement income. Due to the aforementioned demographic change of aging populations in industrialised countries (section 3.2), younger generations will depend more on additional private pension arrangements to ensure sufficient income in old age (Deutsche Rentenversicherung, 2010).

Another macrostructural life event is war, which often shapes whole generations and has been experienced by almost all of the seniors participating in the study. World War II largely limited and inhibited travel activities. At that time, younger seniors were in their childhood and the war, operating as a cohort effect (Lohmann & Danielsson, 2001), often resulted in a particular travel pattern, which was visiting family in the countryside. Some of the participants, such as Mr Fischer and Mrs Zimmermann, were displaced in the course of the war, and this possibly had long-term effects on their

tourism behaviour. Effects based on this forced migration may depend on the strength of social ties between the expelled individual and their homeland.

Interviewed seniors who were displaced during World War II did not show a strong visiting pattern to their country of origin. Displacements usually affected the whole family and, differing from case to case, disrupted social and family systems during the chaos of war. Seniors who experienced this part of German history in their childhood or youth built up new social structures and networks, and travels back to the country of origin are often associated with nostalgia and visiting remaining family members.

7.6 Summary

The tourism behaviour of seniors can be explained through the theoretical framework of ecological systems and constraints and facilitators. The biographic research approach identified a variety of significant life events that show specific properties in their functioning and effect on seniors' tourism behaviour. This led to an advanced model of hierarchical constraints and facilitators in the senior tourism context. The new model integrates ecological levels and facilitators in a constraints model and adds the destination dimension, the fundamental element in the tourism product and tourism experience. The amalgamation of life events with constraints and facilitators is complex because happenings in life operate on not only one but multiple constraints and facilitators levels.

A certain hierarchy between constraints and facilitator levels could be identified even though some factors showed variations. The mind-set and physical capability for travel have a paramount position in the formation of tourism participation and behaviours.

Especially in older age, the social and interpersonal dimensions of travelling become increasingly important. Structural constraints appear as factors that shape tourism activities in terms of opportunities and temporal and financial resources.

Reasons to stop tourism activities appear to be multidimensional, and can involve deteriorating health, a declining social environment, and a lack of appropriate tourism products. What became clear from the case studies is that travelling often fades out rather than stopping abruptly, and behaviours adjust to declining intrapersonal conditions in terms of frequency, duration or distances of travel activities. For this reason, travel expenses appear to be less important for those seniors whose travel activities are already constrained by other factors.

Chapter 8. Conclusion

The overall aim of the thesis is to gain a better understanding of seniors' tourism behaviour. Chapter Eight reacquaints the reader with the research questions posed in the thesis and how they have been addressed. This is followed by a section that looks at the contribution of the thesis to the body of knowledge in terms of research methods in the field of tourism and the enhancement of the theoretical understanding of senior tourism behaviour. This chapter then provides implications for the tourism industry deduced from the research findings and concludes by outlining possible future research directions in the field of senior tourism behaviour.

8.1 Research questions revisited

The life course of seniors is affected by a number of life events that influence not only day-to-day activities and social interactions but also tourism behaviour. Applying a post-positivist, pragmatist research paradigm, the thesis gave insights about the relationships between life events and seniors' tourism behaviour. Unlike other research, the thesis went beyond age classifications or assumed age-related life cycle stages. The thesis focused on real-life events that included not only expected but also unexpected happenings in seniors' life that can have great potential to impact tourism behaviour. The thesis revolved around the following three research questions:

- What life events impact on the tourism behaviour of seniors?
- How does tourism behaviour change, relative to identified life events?
- Why does tourism behaviour change in senior age?

8.1.1 What life events impact on the tourism behaviour of seniors?

The thesis identified a number of key life events affecting the tourism behaviour of older people (see Chapter Six). Internal forces can be viewed as continuous life events and are related to individual health, cognitive functions and age-psychological development. Other life events affect the family and social structure, such as the emancipation from children, grandparenthood, the loss of a spouse and starting new relationships. Pet ownership is also a significant factor that can affect tourism behaviour because many pets are considered by their owners as family members. Moreover, the thesis found evidence that geographies matter in the tourism domain, not only as an integral part of the travel experience but also as spaces of social interactions at the place of origin. Life events impact on geographies by migration activities which has implications for VFR activities.

Key life events influencing seniors' tourism behaviour relate to employment transitions in the form of retirement. There are also other forms of labour participation in senior age which become increasingly important, such as part-time jobs, volunteering and nursing family members. Another identified factor with similar importance with respect to a senior's financial situation is inheritance.

8.1.2 How does tourism behaviour change, relative to identified life events?

Chapter Six also provided findings on how life events impact on tourism behaviour. In fact, the whole portfolio of tourism behaviour dimensions (distances, destinations, motivations, etc.) is affected by life events, which can be viewed as a combination of causal conditions (Woodside et al., 2007). This reflects the diversity of living

circumstances in old age and adds new dimensions to those studies that assume unicausal relationships between age (e.g. Batra, 2009; L. Huang & Tsai, 2003) or age groups (e.g. S. Chen, 2012; Fleischer & Pizam, 2002) and senior tourism behaviour.

The thesis showed that most constraints on senior travel result in partly successful proactive responses (Jackson, 2005b), leading to a change of tourism behaviour. Results emphasised that life events can operate in different directions, depending on personal circumstances and contexts. Changes in travel behaviour can be of a qualitative nature, when travel products (such as transportation and accommodation), motivations or travel groups are changed and replaced. Seniors with adequate disposable income, for example, tend to use more comfortable accommodation such as hotels. Life events can also influence in a quantitative way by increasing or decreasing frequency of travel activities, and duration or distances. Finally, some travel patterns are unaffected by life events, depending on both the individual's living conditions and personality.

Reactive responses (Jackson, 2005b) on life events that bring the ending of travel activities are not the result of a single life event and associated constraints but a combination of factors (see Woodside et al., 2006). The cessation of travelling in old age is mainly a continuous process where one travel activity after another is reduced and eventually waived. The study suggests that visiting the family is the most constraint-resistant type of tourism while travels involving stressful physical activities are abandoned relatively early.

8.1.3 Why does tourism behaviour change in senior age?

The theoretical interpretation of relationships between life events and seniors' tourism behaviour represents the centrepiece of the thesis. The synthesis of results and interdisciplinary explanatory approaches provided answers on why tourism is subject to change in senior years. The most universal explanation derived from the thesis is that tourism behaviour can be both constrained and facilitated by life events that occur in senior age. This implies that constraints and facilitators are dynamic across the life course based on the occurrence or non-occurrence of life events. The thesis revealed that tourism behaviour of younger seniors is facilitated rather than constrained by life events, but that this situation reverses in later years.

The thesis found that tourism plays a significant role in successful aging strategies and can contribute to life satisfaction and individual well-being in old age. Minor evidence was found that could support theories of disengagement. Only those who found themselves socially isolated showed signs of active disengagement from society. These seniors, who had been socially isolated by unfortunate circumstances, simultaneously experienced other constraints and largely ceased their tourism participation.

Most tourism studies assume a direct connection between preferences and motivation and tourism behaviour. The thesis showed that the explanation of senior tourism motivations goes beyond this simple one-dimensional relationship. The travel motivation of elderly is multifaceted, diverse and subject to change in advanced age. Often a series of motives inform the decision-making process; for example, socialisations, physical activities or experiencing something new. Relaxation seems to

play only a minor role in the travel behaviour of younger seniors but can gain importance again in older age.

In the leisure context, Samdahl and Jekubovich (1997, p. 447) criticise a deterministic perspective of leisure constraints research arguing that “constraint negotiation does not effectively capture the spirit in which these people arranged their lives or the way they sought out leisure opportunities.” The results of the thesis suggest that the tourism participation of older people is largely formed within a framework consisting not only of constraints but also facilitators. Within this framework, seniors arrange and negotiate their tourism behaviour as active creators. The framework does not neglect the human sphere of influence since seniors with the motivation to travel attempt to manipulate constraining conditions as long as they are capable of doing so.

The thesis generated an advanced constraints and facilitators model of senior tourism behaviour based on a number of propositions regarding properties of life events and their relationships to other concurring factors. The structure of the model conforms to Crawford, Jackson, and Godbey’s (1991) original leisure constraints concept in many aspects. Tourism behaviour is formed by travel preferences which are constrained and negotiated on intrapersonal, interpersonal and structural levels. Results also suggest a certain hierarchy of constraints with the social nature of tourism holding a paramount position. Structural constraints are less powerful in prohibiting tourism participation but give travel behaviour a shape through the allocation of opportunities.

The newly developed model presented in this thesis adds Raymore’s (2002) facilitators dimension and encompasses dimensions of the individual ecological system. This

results in a distinction between intrapersonal and intrastructural, and microstructural and macrostructural constraints and facilitators. The difference between intrapersonal and intrastructural constraints is in how far physical conditions are internalised and perceived as a constraining factor. Because the thesis is focused on tourism, the model incorporates also a destination dimension which is subject to constraining or facilitating influences.

Even though life events and constraints and facilitators show a great spectrum of influences, some general inferences can be drawn: intrapersonal constraints and facilitators largely determine why seniors are travelling depending on what type of tourism activity health conditions allow; interpersonal factors impact on with or to whom elderlies travel; and on a contextual level microstructural and macrostructural constraints and facilitators give opportunities to travel.

The intrapersonal dimension is based on the physical state, cognitive aging and psychological aspects of seniors. As a matter of fact, health shifts with increased age from a limiter to a prohibitor of travel activities. Deteriorating health favours more comfortable travels and also a more relaxing form of tourism, such as sea cruises or wellness trips. At the same time, health becomes a more prominent tourism motivator, not only in the form of services but also because travelling is considered a healthy physical activity in itself.

From an age-psychological point of view, tourism is pursued by individuals until constraints or facilitators impact on existing tourism habits. This thesis found that tourism may serve as a vehicle for individual well-being. Tourism in later years can be

associated with successful aging strategies, substituting and replacing lost roles and activities which can be part of a renewal process (Nimrod & Rotem, 2012). Alternatively, seniors who have extensively travelled throughout their lifetimes can be satisfied with their travel experiences and choose to reduce their tourism activities in their later years. This choice comes with a change from external to internal travel motivations where large travel distances and new experiences lose importance.

Aging is accompanied by increased mortality and negative and stressful life events that affect a senior's emotional state and ecological system. Negative events and stressful periods in life are often associated with reduced travel activities and escape motivations. Stressful periods such as illness and caregiving can be time consuming and the senior might not feel emotionally capable of continuing with their habitual tourism activities. Emotional stress can, often temporarily, shift meaningful activities away from tourism.

One of the few certainties in life is death, a fact that elderlies become increasingly aware of the older they get. The thesis showed that this presence of death in seniors' minds can affect tourism behaviour in various ways. The increase of tourism activities can be the result of 'unfinished business', to see as much as possible from the world before it is too late. In a later stage of life, an old person might have reached some kind of transcendent state (Yount, 2008), which changes preferences and behaviours. In the later senior life, other issues such as health and death can become prevalent (as suggested by the selective optimisation with compensation theory), which displaces activities that, in the past, had possible paramount meaning.

The interpersonal dimension can constrain or facilitate tourism behaviour in many ways. Since travelling is considered a social practice, travel companionship is of immense significance not only for the tourist experience but also for the travel participation itself. Some life events impact on the social environment, the family structure or even take away the spouse and most important travel partner. In these cases, future tourism participation often depends on an appropriate substitution of companions or strategies; for example, by shifting to new travel types such as organised group travels. As a consequence, new travel group formations lead to changes in interpersonal tourism decision-making processes.

Microstructural factors are those structural constraints that are within the direct sphere of influence. Younger seniors are often largely free of microstructural constraints or can better negotiate them, which become more relevant in advanced age. A senior's financial situation is less a prohibitor than a limiter to travel, and depends on tourism preferences and the individual's income. Some seniors, particularly those who are younger and fit and who have a strong desire to travel, overcome this constraint with additional income from paid work. As long as hours remain flexible, work and other commitments such as volunteering do not have much impact on tourism behaviour. This may be different for caregiving support, which also involves emotional stress on the caregiver.

The macrosystem is not much influenced by life events and therefore of minor significance to the thesis. In general, macrostructural constraints and facilitators can be distinguished between those dimensions affecting the place of residence (such as regulations and climate) and those with impact on the destination (for example,

political unrest and natural hazards). Some of the factors affecting the place of residence are connected to age, such as formal retirement age or insurance classifications.

8.2 The contribution of the research

The thesis provides a greater understanding of seniors' tourism behaviour. Unlike previous research, the thesis adopts a life events approach to explain how seniors' tourism behaviour changes over time. This thesis adds to scholarship on tourism in various ways, making a number of contributions to methodology, theory and practice.

8.2.1 Methodological contributions

The contribution of the thesis to methodologies in the field of tourism is manifold. The study applied a qualitative retrospective biographic research approach that employed both a within-case and cross-case analysis. The research design draws on two data collection phases with the same interviewees. This technique improved and validated the gathered data.

A contribution is made by interviewing seniors in their natural settings. Previously known people and snowball sampling was employed in order to create trust between the researcher and the researched. The research draws on a participatory research design based on an established personal relationship between the researcher and the researched. To the knowledge of the researcher, the thesis is the first study to employ ecomaps as a data collection technique. This technique allowed collection of structured information about the participating seniors' social environments.

A variety of approaches to the analysis of qualitative biographical data have been developed and applied in the research, both at the intra-individual and inter-individual levels. These include various approaches to the graphical presentation of summaries of biographical data.

8.2.2 Theoretical contributions

The thesis enhances the body of knowledge by describing and theorising seniors' tourism behaviour. The thesis provides answers to the question of how and why tourism behaviour in old age is subject to change. The research focuses not on single holidays or trips but on travel patterns. This gives valuable insights about the connectivity of single tourism activities and shows how a larger tourism portfolio is developed over time.

The thesis contributes to empirical knowledge as it does not concentrate on the tourist themselves but focuses instead on social-historical circumstances of individuals who may or may not be travellers. Seniors are studied as a social entity in their everyday routine and natural environment and not in a tourism setting. This focus also allowed investigation of the question of why people pause or cease travelling.

The research also advances the psychological understanding of seniors' tourism behaviour, an aspect that is highly advocated by Pearce and Packer (2012). The thesis showed that psychological factors and biological changes associated with behavioural effects have specific implications for tourism behaviour in advanced age.

The thesis contributes to a better understanding of constraints and facilitators approaches by modifying Crawford, Jackson, and Godbey's (1991) hierarchical

constraints model. Even though the new model is rooted in the specifics of senior tourism, its applicability may go beyond this particular population and also show validity to other age groups.

The thesis provides deeper understanding of constraints and facilitators because it goes beyond a simple description of these factors. Integrating constraints and facilitators with an ecological perspective allows a finely graded exploration of, in particular, psychological meaning and social contexts. To date, tourism constraints research has focused mainly on structural levels.

At a greater level of abstraction, the findings of the research illustrate how tourism is used in old age as a vehicle to sustain physical and mental health, cope with stress, and sustain social roles and interaction. In doing so, the study establishes linkages between tourism behaviour and theories borrowed from gerontology, such as activity, continuity, selective optimisation with compensation, and innovation theory.

The thesis has addressed a number of calls for further research in tourism psychology (Pearce & Packer, 2012), anti-touristcentricity (Franklin, 2007), social experiences of aging (Pennington-Gray & Kerstetter, 2001), participatory and cross-disciplinary enquiries (Sedgley et al., 2011) and biographic research (Sedgley, 2007).

8.2.3 Implications for the tourism industry

Travelling is a very popular activity among seniors. Retirees and semi-retirees are largely unconstrained and those who enjoyed travelling in previous years will transfer this habit to post-retirement age. Some studies even support an increase of travelling after retirement. Even when a senior is financially comfortable, this does not imply

that they will spend more money on a single trip; instead travels are perceived not as a single event but rather in terms of a portfolio across the year. For this reason, value for money can be a significant factor in decision-making processes. The travel industry may see opportunities here in creating products that go beyond single travels.

Tourism behaviour and tourist practices continue into old age until constraints set in. There is market potential for tourism businesses that develop tourism products that enable seniors to travel by overcoming these constraints. In terms of deteriorating health, tourism businesses and destinations have already recognised and often anticipated the importance of accessible tourism products. Accessibility, however, is more just than senior-friendly accommodation and providing disabled car parking. Accessibility needs to encompass the complete travel process including the planning stages (digital and written information), transportation, and services at the destination. In particular, carrying luggage often appeared as a constraining and uncomfortable issue for seniors whose strength is diminishing. The development and marketing of a complete senior-friendly product with a senior-friendly transportation chain can help overcome constraints experienced in old age.

The thesis found that it is more likely that seniors stop leisure travelling because they are constrained rather than because they have lost their general interest in tourism. Specialised senior tourism products, however, are still a niche market and are often provided by humanitarian institutions such as the Red Cross rather than tourism specialists. The older-senior tourism market is largely ignored even though demographic trends suggest this segment will become increasingly significant. The demand for specialised tourism products will grow in the future as more older-seniors

with extensive tourism experience are affected by multi-morbidity. This combination suggests that it will be the lack of appropriate tourism products that provide assistance, medical services and other supports within the product rather than the willingness of seniors to continue travelling that will cause the end of tourism activities being undertaken by these older seniors.

It is not only health that prevents a senior from travelling but also their deteriorating social environment. Social participation in old age becomes a factor for individual well-being. In terms of tourism, lost travel partners need to be replaced. A common strategy is membership of associations and clubs which not only may arrange travel activities but are also viewed as a source of potential travel partners. These are places where new travel groups, patterns and decisions are formed. Appropriate products may be placed and advertised in an environment where these generic travel decisions are made.

Another implication relates to domestic tourism markets. With increased age, domestic destinations become more popular among the elderly, for a number of reasons. It is important to note that this may gain in particularly relevant for economical linkages between tourism and local industries (Milne & Ateljevic, 2001). VFR, for example, is a much undervalued tourism market but is particularly relevant for those whose leisure travel activities are constrained. Tourism businesses might start looking for future customers at their own doorstep, which has the potential to strengthen local economies.

Finally, the thesis echoes what other studies and marketers found: The senior market is heterogeneous in nature but the variety of older adults is overshadowed by a dominating stereotype of seniors. This finding is particularly important when considering a marketing approach to elderlies. The public image lags behind the subjective perception of age and seniors in their 60s might not view themselves as old people (Sellick, 2004). This needs to be considered when businesses approach seniors who associate themselves as being fit, healthy, active and free. These seniors enjoy the freedom to arrange their life around the benefits of retirement.

Future old seniors will be well-experienced tourists and will know what they can expect from a trip. At the same time, the elderly show great experience in purchasing products and services which suggests that these future customers will need to be taken seriously. This relates to not only advertising but also the interpersonal communication at all levels of the tourism service product.

8.3 Study limitations and future research directions

The thesis fills in several gaps identified in the literature and hence advances the body of methodological and theoretical knowledge. However, the thesis also features some limitations associated with research design and methodology. Being a qualitative study, the thesis relies on only a small number of cases, which gives little room for generalisable inferences. Future research may look to apply quantitative tools to allow a broader generalisation of the phenomenon. Even though the thesis enhances the understanding of the tourism behaviour of German seniors, future empirical studies

are needed to test the validity of the developed theoretical model that is derived from the explorative inquiry.

Tourism and aging are relatively young phenomena with a relatively limited research tradition. Both phenomena have been subject to significant transformations over the last century which suggest they are worthy of the ongoing attention of social scientists and tourism scholars. It will be of particular interest how the baby boomers, the first cohort that has travelled extensively, negotiate their tourism behaviours through constraints when they reach 80 years and older.

Without undermining the emphasis of the thesis on the heterogeneity of the senior population, future studies should at least consider a more deliberate age classification, segmenting seniors as a cohort into younger seniors and older seniors. The critique of existing studies becomes even more significant when it is realised that the fastest growing population over the next few decades in Germany, as well as in other industrialised countries, will be those in the old-senior age cohort. Other classification criteria may relate to employment status (full-time versus non-full-time employee), deteriorating health (health affects travel behaviour or not) or relationship status (single or not-single).

Future research may also focus on not only tourism behaviour but also tourist practices. To date there has been little research on how senior tourists design their stays at a destination. In addition to this thesis, which focuses strongly on constraints and facilitators of tourism behaviour, more research is needed that focuses on the destination site and tourist practices.

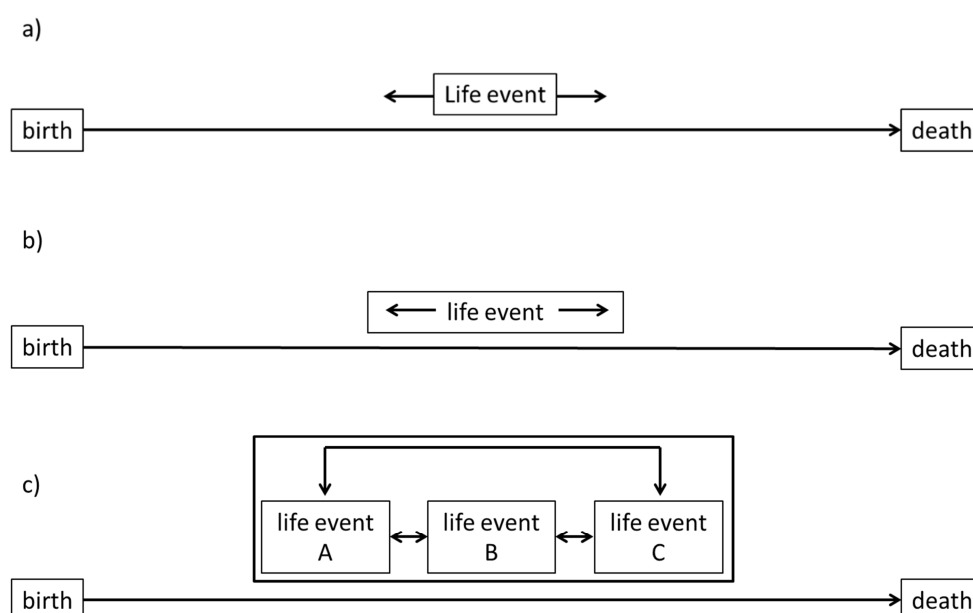
The concept of aging tends to highlight cultural differences. The thesis investigates the travel behaviour of seniors in Germany as an exemplar of a population in a Westernised world. Comparative studies across countries could reveal both similarities and differences among seniors' tourism behaviour in varying cultural settings. Life events that relate to social transformations might be more culturally influenced than other life events. Health-related watersheds as well as structural circumstances might have similar consequences for travelling across different countries and cultures. Understanding the socio-cultural meanings of growing old becomes increasingly important as countries with emerging economies, such as China or Brazil, provide potentially significant senior tourism markets.

Culture is relevant not only on a global scale but also at the local level. Even though the life events approach may have universal applicability to understanding tourism behaviour in specific cultural settings, socio-demographic variables such as gender, educational background or urban/rural living environments may create variations in this regard. This requires further investigation. The author invites other researchers to enhance the understanding of socio-demographic, cultural and geographic differences in seniors' tourism behaviour.

From a life events point of view, further research is required in different contexts that are not limited specifically to the senior population. Many life events may apply not only to older adults but also to younger age groups. This implies that life events take different sequences in the life course and differ in their expectancy of timing. Widowhood in old age might have different meanings and consequences on travelling compared with losing a spouse in younger years.

This uncovers another field of future exploration with regards to the theoretical nature of life events. Figure 8.1 illustrates how life events can vary in their appearance across the life course. The concept is a neglected field in the tourism domain. Thus, future research should increase the understanding of how life events impact on travel behaviour. This includes an improved understanding of the effects of the timing (Figure 8.1 a), duration (Figure 8.1 b) and sequence (Figure 8.1 c) of life events in the life course. Little is known about why or why not and, if so, how any of those factors impact on tourism behaviour.

Figure 8.1: The a) timing, b) duration and c) sequence of life events



The thesis touches on many research areas that, to date, have not received much attention from tourism scholars. Since this study focuses largely on the theoretical understanding of life events in terms of senior tourism, a more detailed discussion on impacts of specific life events would have gone beyond its scope. The author invites other researchers to investigate further the life-events-based dynamics of an increase

or decrease of travel activities, distances and duration as well as qualitative changes in tourism behaviour such as tourism motivation.

Moreover, each of the described life events and constraints and facilitators categories are worthy of separate detailed examination. This relates not only to specific life events such as widowhood or grandparenthood but also to consequences for tourism behaviour. VFR, for example, was found to be a field highly affected by life transitions with much relevance for seniors. Only little is known about the relationships between distinct dimensions such distances, ICT, deteriorating health and VFR. Just recently P. Pearce (2012) uncoupled VFR from the social dimension by introducing a geographical component. Again, this appears to be a significant topic in senior tourism behaviour.

8.4 Final words

This thesis examined the travel behaviour of seniors, a topic which attracted increasingly attention within the last decade. The research set out to develop a greater understanding of the impact of real-life conditions on tourism behaviour by applying a life events approach. The strength of the thesis lies in its concise set of theoretical, methodological and analytical frameworks which resulted in a stringent study design.

The conceptual framework builds on linkages between constraints and facilitators and ecological systems theory and is informed by gerontological theories. The thesis concludes that seniors' tourism behaviour is exposed to multiple contextual life events which can be understood within the concept of constraints and facilitators, operating on intrapersonal, intrastructural, interpersonal, microstructural and macrostructural levels.

The thesis offers insights into how seniors cope with interacting constraints and facilitators as they relate to their tourism behaviours. The thesis provides support to the view that tourism can contribute to a successful aging process, until constraining factors associated with life events rule out ongoing participation in travel.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Consent form

page 1 of 1

Consent Form


AUT
UNIVERSITY
TE Kōwhiri Wānanga o Tāmaki Makaurau

Project title: *The impact of life events on the tourism behaviour of seniors in Freising, Germany*

Project Supervisor: *Simon Milne (NZ)*

Researcher: *Dominik Huber*

☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated dd mmmm yyyy.

☐ I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.

☐ I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.

☐ If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.

☐ I agree to take part in this research.

☐ I wish to receive a copy of aggregated results from the research (please tick one): Yes ☐ No ☐

Participant's signature:

Participant's name:

Participant's Contact Details :
.....
.....
.....
.....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on type the date on which the final approval was granted AUTEK Reference number type the AUTEK reference number

Note: *The Participant should retain a copy of this form.*

Participant Information Sheet



17 August 2011

Research project: The impact of life events on the tourism behaviour of seniors in Freising, Germany

Dear Sir or Madam,

As PhD student of the Auckland University of Technology (AUT) I would like to invite you to participate in my research project about the travel behaviour of seniors. The purpose of the study is to gain a better understanding of seniors' travel behaviour and to explore constraints and barriers to your travel activities. I am from Neufahrn near Freising, studied Geography in Munich and Berlin and do now my doctorate at the New Zealand Tourism Research Institute at AUT in New Zealand. I undertake this research project with the assistance of the senior centre Heiligegeistspital-Stiftung Freising, which helped me to deliver this participation sheet to you.

The study is separated into the two phases of individual interviews and focus groups. Right now the study is in the first phase and I want to ask for your participation in an individual interview. The outcome of the study shall be used to improve tourism products and shall raise awareness of the needs of seniors when they are travelling. Results of the study will be published in form of my doctoral thesis and will be presented at relevant conferences. If you wish I will provide you with some aggregated results after I have finished my research project.

As you are 60 years or older I would like you to share with me your experiences of your travelling over your life course. If you don't fall within this age segment I would be pleased if you could forward the information sheet to the circle of your acquaintances that fall into this age group.

The interview would take place ideally at your private home, or if you wish at facilities of the Heiliggeistspital-Stiftung Freising. The interview will last approximately 1.5 – 2 hours and will be tape recorded. Participation in the study is absolutely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time prior to the completion of the data collection. Any information you give to me will be accessible only to me for this particular study to ensure confidentiality. Within the study I won't use your real name or any other real name mentioned in the interview.

If you are interested to participate in this study please sign the attached consent form. It is of importance of the study to reflect the variety of living circumstances of the senior population. To inform myself about your living circumstances I also would like you to complete the enclosed questionnaire and to send it back together with the consent form using the provided addressed and stamped envelope.

I will give you feedback as soon as possible by phone call, email or letter to schedule with you the interview session and to answer questions of any concern. If there are many responses on my research project there might be the possibility that I can't consider you as interviewee but in any case I will contact you.

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Simon Milne, smilne@aut.ac.nz, 0064 9 9219245.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary, AUTEK, Dr Rosemary Godbold, rosemary.godbold@aut.ac.nz, 921 9999 ext 6902.

Researcher's contact details:

Dominik Huber
Mohnweg 10
85375 Neufahrn
E-Mail: dhuber@aut.ac.nz

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics
Committee on *type the date final ethics approval was granted*,
AUTEK Reference number *type the reference number*.



If you have agreed with the consent form please answer the following questions:

1. Are you older than 75 years?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Are you retired?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Do you have a grandchild?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Who do you live with?	On my own <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/> (please specify)
5. Have you been born in a country other than Germany?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
6. Do you consider undertaking a travel of at least 5 days in the future?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
7. Do you own the house where you live or do you pay rent?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix C: Initial interview guide

1. Can you please tell me a little about yourself?

- a) What was/is your occupation?
- b) What are your hobbies?
- c) What is your educational level?
- d) How old are you?
- e) Are you married?
- f) Where did you grow up?
- g) Did you move house?
- h) Where and when did you move?
- i) Do you have children?
- j) Do you have grandchildren?
- k) Ecomap

I will now provide you with a pencil and a blank ecomap on which you are able to record your relation to your personal environment. Please indicate the strength of the relationship between you and another person of importance with either one (low), two (medium) or three (strong) lines.

2. I will now explore your experience with travel/tourism prior to the age of 60.

- a) What was your first travel experience that you can remember?
- b) What travels did you undertake when you were a teenager?
- c) What travels did you undertake when you were in your 20s and 30s?
- d) What travels did you undertake when you grew older (40, 50 years)?

- e) What travels did you undertake when you were traveling the first time alone?
 - f) What travels did you undertake when you started a family?
3. Has your travel experience changed since you turned 60?
- a) How did your travel behaviour change?
 - b) Why did your travel behaviour change?
 - c) Why don't you travel anymore?
 - d) What barriers to travel did you experience?
 - e) Do you find that your health has any influence on your travel behaviour?
 - f) Did you find that retirement has any influence on your travel behaviour?
 - g) Did you find that the birth of grandchildren has any influence on your travel behaviour?
 - h) Did you find that changes in your social environment have any influence on your travel behaviour?
 - i) Did you find that changes in your living/housing situation have any influence on your travel behaviour?
 - j) Did you find that migration had any influence on your travel behaviour?
4. What is your most recent travel experience?
- a) With whom did you travel?
 - b) When did you travel?
 - c) Where did you travel?
 - d) How long did you travel?
 - e) What activities did you undertake while you were travelling?
 - f) What mode of transport did you use?

- g) What type of accommodation did you use?
 - h) Why did you travel?
 - i) Was it the first time you were travelling to this destination/hotel?
 - j) Did you enjoy your travel?
 - k) Did you experience any constraints on your travel?
 - l) What constraints did you experience?
 - m) What strategies do you consider to overcome these constraints when you will travel the next time?
5. Do you consider undertaking a travel in the future?
- a) Why you won't travel anymore?
 - b) Would you consider traveling again/more often if the travel industry would provide appropriate offers?
 - c) Where will you travel?
 - d) Why will you travel?
 - e) With whom will you travel?
 - f) How long will you travel?
 - g) What activities will you undertake while you are travelling?
 - h) What mode of transport will you use?
 - i) What type of accommodation will you use?

Appendix D: Detail of Mrs Bauer's travel period/dimension matrix

Travel indicators	Travel to vacation home in youth before moving to Freising	Travel to vacation home in youth after moving to Freising	Travels with husband	Ski trips	Travels with new partner I → included in ski travels	Travels with new partner II
What travel destinations did you visit?	Holiday home in Rotenburg, northern Germany (one round trip in Germany with father)	Holiday home in Rotenburg, northern Germany	Yugoslavia, Italy, Spain, Portugal, several times England (also because husband studied English), Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Rhodes (2x), Menorca, Jersey	Austria, Italy (Wolkenstein) and France (Alp d'Huez); later on with friend, also Switzerland	Switzerland and Austria, Bavarian Alps	Austria, Denmark and Italy
Travel period (e.g. 2000–2010)	1958–1979	1979–2001 (until mother passed away, cottage was sold)	1962–1983	1974–1994	1984–1991	1991–1998 (beginning of relationship)
Travel season	Spring, summer + birthdays of family members	At least twice in spring, summer (May and August)+ birthdays of family members	Summer (dependent on school vacations – husband was teacher)	Winter	Winter (in summer only, holiday home in northern Germany)	Summer (didn't like skiing)
How long was the travel?	Weekend	One week (had to take holidays)	3–4 weeks but also weekend trips	At least two weeks (second partner didn't like skiing and Mrs Bauer went alone with friends)	One holiday for two weeks and day trips	Two weeks

Appendix E: Mrs Schroeder – divorce and inheritances in senior age

Gender: female | Age: 88 | Year of birth: 1923 | Place of birth: Bavaria | Future travel intention: no | Employment status: retired | Marital status: divorced | Relationship status: single | Parental status: three children, several grandchildren and great-grandchildren | Housing situation: assisted living

Travel activities:	Mrs Schroeder increased her travel activities in senior age. She travelled overseas to Canada, and travelled to Mediterranean islands and countries such as Norway, Ireland and Bulgaria. She also made short trips to the European Alps. Apart from VFR, Mrs Schroeder is not travelling anymore.
Travel motivation:	Sightseeing and culture, hiking, seeing children
Travel partners:	Friends, travel group, alpine club
VFR:	Visiting her daughter is her last remaining travel activity
Information:	Newspaper, brochures, travel agencies
Type of transport:	Aeroplane, train, car, cruise ship
Type of accommodation:	Hotels, private accommodation
Constraints:	Nursing obligations, physical abilities, moving to Freising and losing the social network in Coburg
Facilitators:	Divorce from husband, inheritance from her aunt

Summary

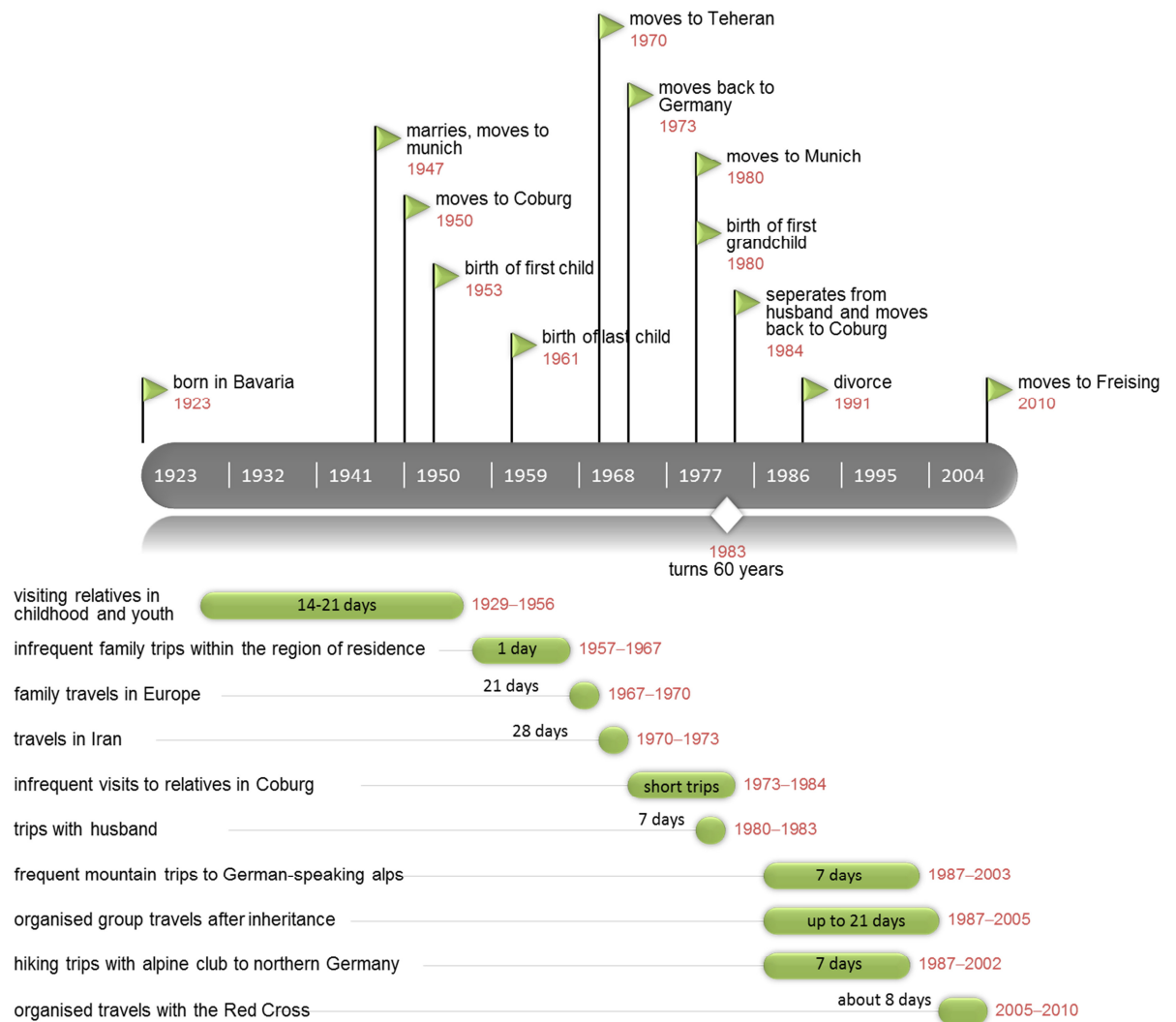
After her husband left her when she was 61, Mrs Schroeder moved back to her home town in Coburg, northern Bavaria and started a new life. To connect with other people she joined an alpine club, which involved hiking tours in the area and also in the

Bavarian Alps. Mrs Schroeder nursed her aunt for a few years, and after her passing she inherited money and property.

Mrs Schroeder used the money to travel and she also started to book more expensive organised trips with a travel agency (see Figure A.1). Since Mrs Schroeder had always wanted to see the world, she travelled to European countries such as Ireland and Bulgaria, Mediterranean islands including Mallorca, Crete, Malta and Sicily, and also further afield; for example, to Canada. Once she went on a cruise ship tour in Norway. She travelled with different friends but also had a permanent travel partner who was also a single widow. Sometimes Mrs Schroeder booked as a single on organised group travels and met people during the trip.

When she was 82, Mrs Schroeder ceased hiking tours with the alpine club for health and mobility reasons. After Mrs Schroeder had had several major surgeries she required assistance to continue her travel activities so, together with a friend, she started to travel with the Red Cross. This organisation offers travel assistance for seniors and disabled people; for example, it provides a pick-up and drop-off service, medical support and luggage transport. Mrs Schroeder travelled to Mallorca and the Czech Republic with the Red Cross. Because of her deteriorating health, Mrs Schroeder moved into an assisted-living retirement home in Freising, which is close to her son's family. She ceased travelling with the Red Cross because the Freising section of the organisation does not offer assisted travels. However, she still travels to visit to her children. Being fragile, Mrs Schroeder cannot travel by train anymore but she still takes aeroplanes to see her daughter in Frankfurt.

Figure A.1: Mrs Schroeder's travel history



Appendix F: Mrs Becker – a campsite as parallel world

Gender: female | Age: 74 | Year of birth: 1937 | Place of birth: Bavaria | Future travel intention: yes | Employment status: retired | Marital status: widowed | Relationship status: single | Parental status: no children | Housing situation: single household

Travel activities:	In the summertime Mrs Becker spends two weeks a month at a campsite on Lake Staffel, which is about one hour's car drive away from Freising. Apart from that there are only minor other travel activities, visiting occasionally her brother or other family members.
Travel motivation:	The motivation to spend half of the summer at a campsite is to meet her friends. The campsite represents a parallel world, a second home where she pursues an everyday life routine. She wants to see something different and to relax on the lake side.
Travel partners:	Single, meeting friends at the campsite
VFR:	Infrequent trips to see family in northern Bavaria
Information:	-
Type of transport:	Car
Type of accommodation:	Caravan
Constraints:	Availability of travel partner for shorter day trips at the campsite, financial resources, health conditions
Facilitators:	Retirement

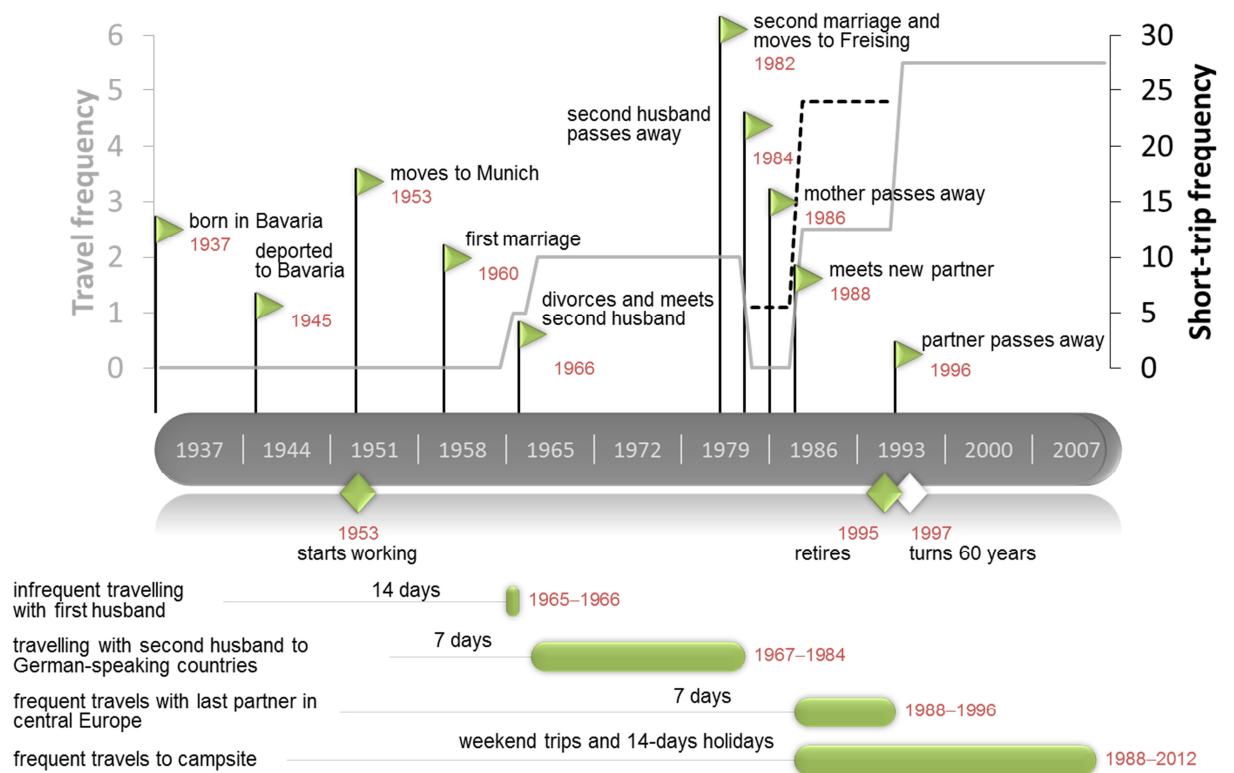
Summary

Mrs Becker's travel history shows inconsistency and for most of her life her travel was largely dependent on her husband's and partner's preferences. Since the late 1980s she has spent her holidays at a campsite at Lake Staffel, which is located in the foothills of the Bavarian Alps (Figure A.2). It was Mrs Becker's partner at that time who showed

her the campsite, and when he passed away he left her his trailer. She continued to travel as a single to the campsite and since she retired she spends half of the summer at Lake Staffel. There, she has friends and a daily routine. Weather conditions have no impact on these trips and she only returns to her home in Freising to organise her life and look after her house and garden. After her retirement, Mrs Becker was working part time as a cleaner because of her small retirement income. Since she quit the part-time job, Mrs Becker has had to budget her money.

Mrs Becker likes to relax at the campsite but she also is escaping from a noisy airport that is located near Freising. She used to go on day tours with a friend from the campsite to the surrounding areas. These day tours have decreased since her travel partner passed away and, because of deteriorating mobility, Mrs Becker has almost stopped these tours. Another constraint related to her health condition is an intestine surgery she had, which constrains day trips because she needs to be close to a bathroom. Mrs Becker used to often visit her family in northern Bavaria but due to personal problems she has reduced the frequency of these trips.

Figure A.2: Mrs Becker's travel history



Appendix G: Mrs Bauer – the impact of a pet

Gender: female | Age: 67 | Year of birth: 1944 | Place of birth: Northern Germany |
Future travel intention: yes | Employment status: retired | Marital status: divorced |
Relationship status: single | Parental status: no children | Housing situation: single
household

Travel activities:	Mrs Bauer makes no more than about three short trips a year; these trips are with a group of friends to destinations in Bavaria or with a theatre club to European cities. Occasionally she joins friends on trips; for example, in 2010 she went with friends on a short holiday to Lake Garda in Italy. Mrs Bauer joined a hiking club and wants to join trips to the mountains in the future.
Travel motivation:	Theatre plays, sightseeing, hiking
Travel partners:	Friends, theatre club, hiking club
VFR:	Since her parents passed away, only minor VFR; mainly family members come to visit
Information:	Travel guides, magazines
Type of transport:	Bus, train (special offers, group tickets), car
Type of accommodation:	Hotel, private accommodation
Constraints:	Pet, travel companion (divorced), financial resources

Summary

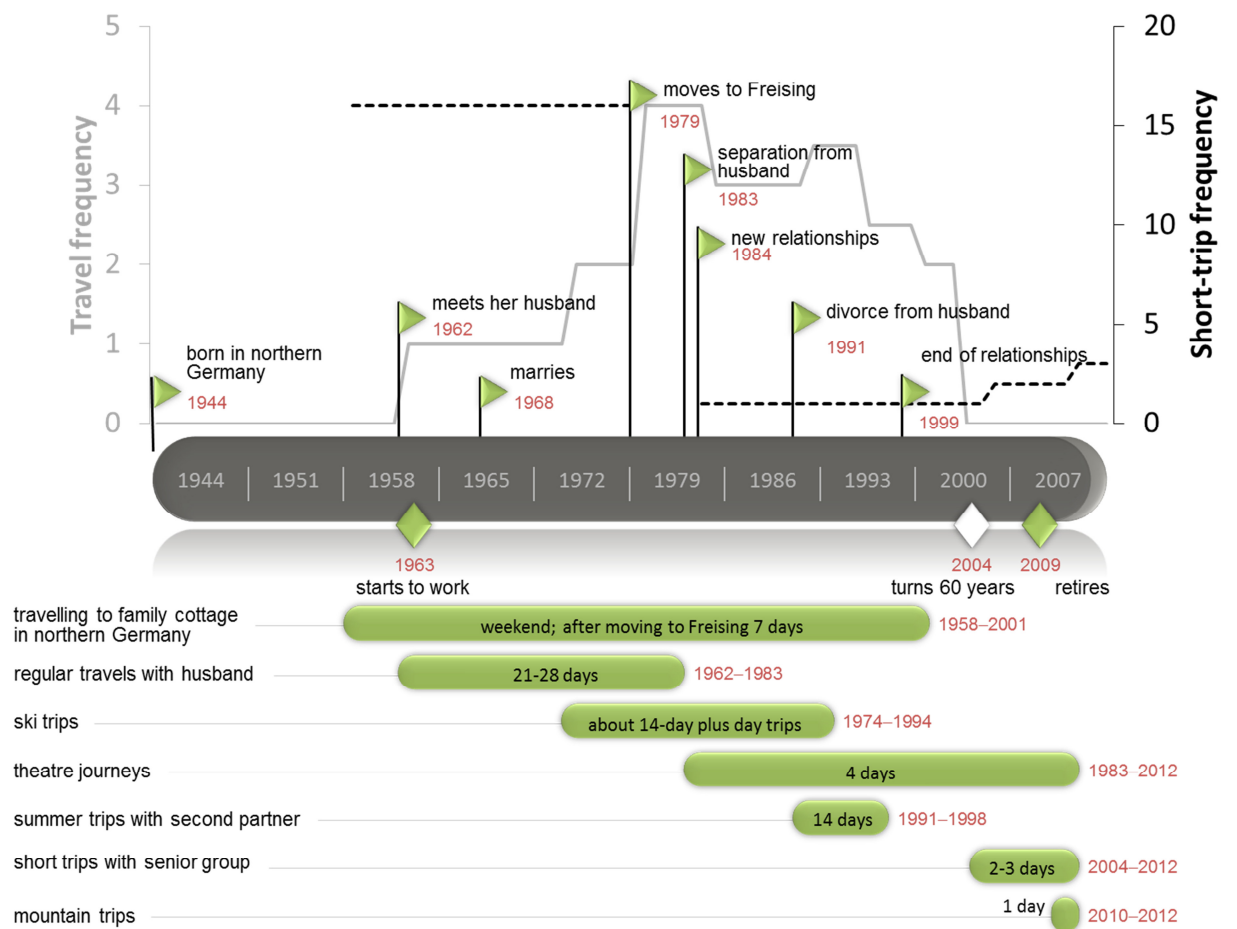
Mrs Bauer reduced her travel activities after she became single, at 54 years old (Figure A.3). Her travel patterns show only shorter trips, mainly to German destinations but also to European cities with cultural relevance. A significant life event was Mrs Bauer's divorce from her husband when she was in her late 40s. She had to reduce her summer travels to be able to afford the rent for the large house she lived in. She

continued to have ski holidays into her early fifties, and then they became too exhausting. After her divorce Mrs Bauer joined a theatre club and once a year they have a short bus trip to European cities to see plays and operas and to sightsee. Her husband was never interested in these cultural activities. She considers these guided bus travels very comfortable.

Since Mrs Bauer retired in 2009 she has more flexibility to travel. Due to her reduced income, she had to move to a smaller apartment. Mrs Bauer has to budget her money and so she uses travel bargains if possible. Mrs Bauer keeps a cat, which restricts her travel activities. Her pet is very important and she has to organise a sitter while she is away. For that reason she would not consider trips longer than five days. Her parents used to look after her cat but since they passed away Mrs Bauer had to reduce her travel activities.

Being single, Mrs Bauer wouldn't travel alone but neither would she travel with a married couple. Mrs Bauer has a short trip with friends within the Bavarian region once a year. When she was 66, Mrs Bauer joined an alpine club and sometimes she joins organised hiking trips. Apart from that she has spontaneous trips when friends ask her to join them. Travelling is not a high priority for Mrs Bauer and she would not take the initiative to organise a trip by herself. She has no specific desires to travel because of her extensive travel history – she has already seen many countries in her life either on her business trips or when she was travelling with her ex-husband. She dislikes packing luggage and she is happy to stay at home because she had a busy life.

Figure A.3: Mrs Bauer's travel history



Appendix H: Mrs Richter – the influence of illness

Gender: female | Age: 67 | Year of birth: 1944 | Place of birth: Bavaria | Future travel intention: no | Employment status: retired | Marital status: widowed | Relationship status: non-single | Parental status: one child | Housing situation: sharing a flat

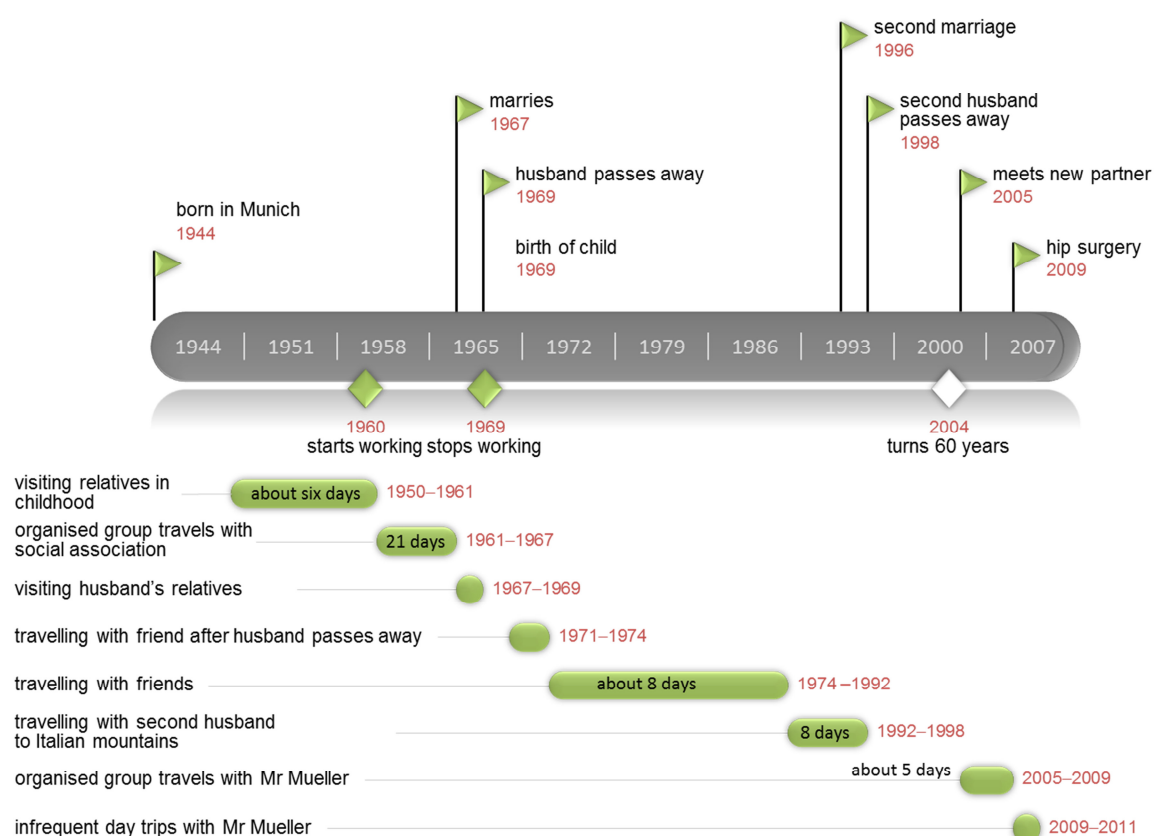
Travel activities:	Before Mrs Richter had surgery, she and her partner travelled to European destinations for about one week at a time. They also had day trips and short trips within Germany.
Travel organisation:	Organised group travels, travel agencies, private
Travel motivation:	Sightseeing, to see something different
Travel partners:	Senior club, partner
VFR:	Son lives nearby but comes for visits
Information:	–
Type of transport:	Bus
Type of accommodation:	Hotels
Constraints:	Health conditions, mobility

Summary

Mrs Richter, who is 67 years old, shows conservative attitudes. She considers homework her hobby, is involved in church organisations and has always lived in the Munich region. With about EUR 600 retirement pay, her income is relatively low. Mrs Richter has been widowed twice and lives now with her partner, Mr Mueller, in Freising. Across her life course she has shown only minor travel activities, a low level of activity which continues in her senior age (Figure A.4). Since she met her partner, the

couple have gone on about one organised bus tour a year, to Switzerland, Spain and Monaco. Neither holds a driver's licence and they are restricted to taking trains or booking on organised bus tours. Between 2000 and 2009 Mrs Richter had three surgeries on her knee and her hip. Since the last operation she has had major mobility difficulties, which restrict her travel capabilities. She has difficulty following the sightseeing tours with travel groups and for this reason she would rather stay at home. Remaining travel activities are infrequent day trips with her partner in the region, depending on Mrs Richter's health. Mrs Richter has limited contact with her family and relatives – only her brother and her son come from time to time for a visit.

Figure A.4: Mrs Richter's travel history



Appendix I: Mrs Schmitz – seeing the world in senior age

Gender: female | Age: 70 | Year of birth: 1941 | Place of birth: Bavaria | Future travel intention: yes | Employment status: retired | Marital status: divorced | Relationship status: single | Parental status: two children, four grandchildren | Housing situation: single household

Travel activities:	Mrs Schmitz travels once a year for several weeks overseas to America, Asia or Oceania. She makes shorter city trips in Europe and also travels to hiking and cycling destinations in Europe. Mrs Schmitz goes on annual ski holidays for up to one week and has also frequent day ski trips.
Travel organisation:	Tour operators, private
Travel motivation:	Since Mrs Schmitz separated from her husband in 1982, she has developed an interest in sightseeing and culture. A main theme in Mrs Schmitz's travel behaviour is physically active travelling, such as hiking or cycling. Sport activities on her travels help her to socialise with people. Relaxing while travelling is not important to Mrs Schmitz.
Travel partners:	Since Mrs Schmitz is divorced she prefers to travel with friends. If no one is available then Mrs Schmitz joins travel groups and meets people on the trip.
VFR:	Minor family-related travels
Information:	Travel agencies, travel literature, internet
Type of transport:	Train, aeroplane, few travels by car
Type of accommodation:	Hotels
Constraints:	Availability of appropriate travel partner, physical abilities, extended travel experience
Facilitators:	Divorce, inheritance, retirement

Summary

Mrs Schmitz divorced when she was 47 years old, and travelling has become increasingly important to her in her senior years (Figure A.5). After her divorce Mrs Schmitz had to readjust her life and rethink her travel behaviour. There was no very pronounced circle of friends and for this reason Mrs Schmitz joined several clubs and organisations. Mrs Schmitz developed an interest in seeing new countries since she split with her husband and their children left the parental home. Because Mrs Schmitz started her family at a young age, she did not collect many individual travel experiences before the arrival of her children. Now she wants to see the world; family travel, relaxation and beaches are no longer important motivations anymore. Mrs Schmitz can relax at home and seeks physically active travel experiences, namely cycling and hiking, which also helps her to socialise with other travel participants.

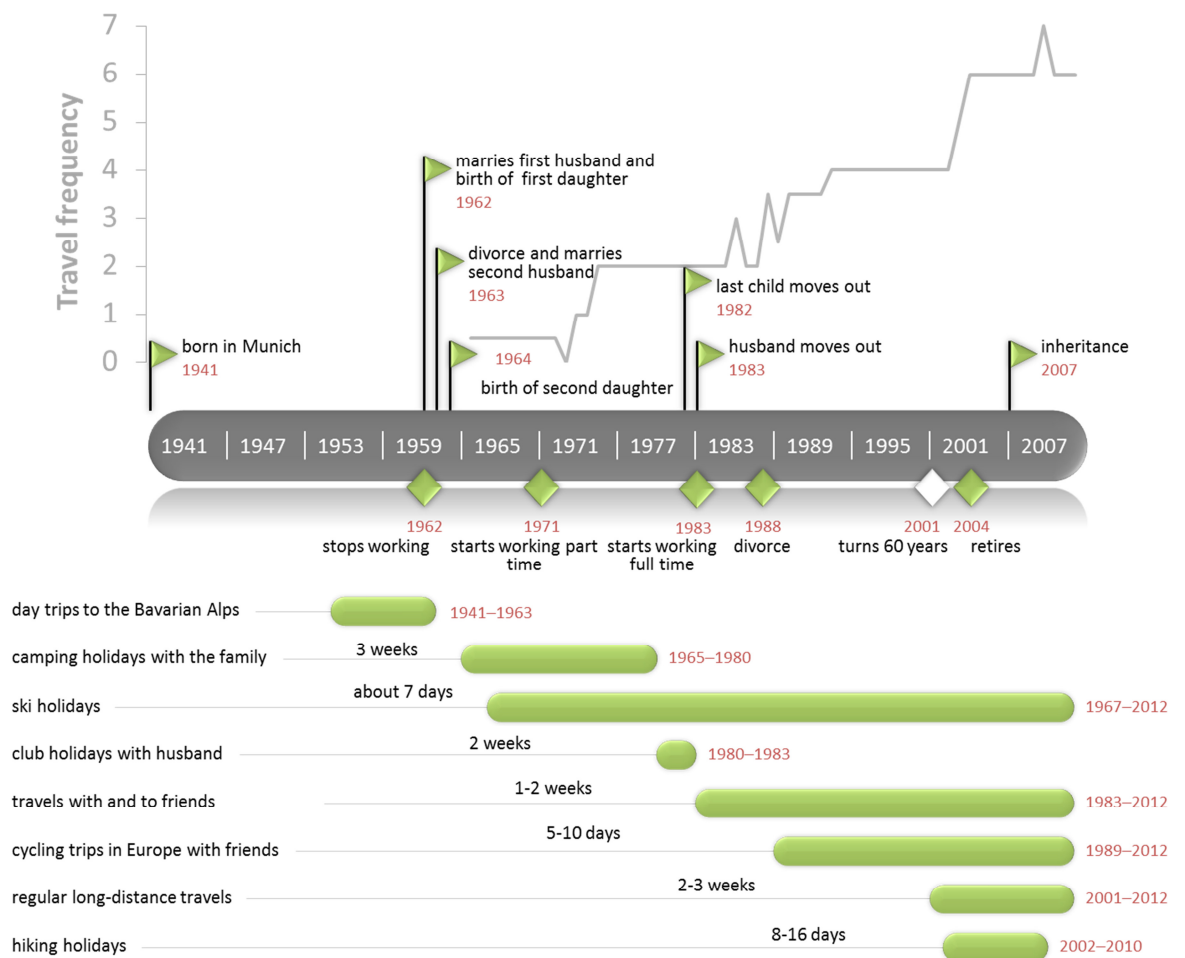
Since she turned 60, Mrs Schmitz has had one long-distance travel experience a year with a friend; for example, to New Zealand, Mexico and Thailand. Since her retirement in 2004, Mrs Schmitz has the opportunity to be more spontaneous with her travel – before she was bound by working hours and paid vacation days. Her retirement has enabled her to increase the number of short trips she takes. Mrs Schmitz takes up to six longer trips a year. In 2004, for example, she travelled to Paris, Austria, Mexico, northern Italy, Portugal and Rome. Mrs Schmitz has had annual ski holidays since the late 1960s, but in 2009 she had surgery and has had to forego skiing holidays.

In recent years, Mrs Schmitz has experienced difficulty finding a travel companion with similar travel interests and suitable financial capacity and health. She considers

travelling with couples difficult and prefers single travel partners. Depending on the availability of a companion, Mrs Schmitz would also book group travels to meet new people on the trip. Since an inheritance in 2007, Mrs Schmitz has had more money available for travel. She travels often with more-expensive travel tour operators and there is no need to book a shared room on group travels anymore. She likes the comfort of organised luggage transport.

Family is not a major priority in Mrs Schmitz's life, which is one of the reasons why she has never travelled with her grandchildren. Visiting her family is not very important either. Mrs Schmitz wants to travel as long as possible but when she becomes limited in her mobility she would also consider quieter bus travels and cruise ships. She might also focus on closer destinations in Germany.

Figure A.5: Mrs Schmitz's travel history



Appendix J: Mr and Mrs Braun – experienced travellers in old age

Sex: male, female | Age: 86 (Mr Braun), 77 (Mrs Braun) | Year of birth: 1925 (Mr Braun), 1934 (Mrs Braun) | Place of birth: Bavaria (both) | Future travel intention: yes | Employment status: retired (both) | Marital status: married | Relationship status: non-single | Parental status: four children, ten grandchildren | Housing situation: family household without children

Travel activities:	After Mr Braun's retirement the couple travelled frequently to Spain until their son's divorce. Since the mid-90s they have visited friends in Italy once a year; in the beginning for three to four weeks, more recently for only two weeks. They have started to book trips, for example, to the Mediterranean and closer destinations such as South Tyrol. Another travel pattern is trips with a community group; for example, to Israel or Italy. In recent years the couple's travels have become shorter in distance and less frequent. The couple travel with friends or by themselves.
Travel organisation:	In the beginning self-organised, later preferably booked
Travel motivation:	Sightseeing, relaxing, wellness, socialisation
Travel partners:	Couple, friends, members of the community
VFR:	Extended travels to their son in Spain, immediate family live nearby, visiting friends in Italy
Information:	No extensive travel information, travel agencies, friends
Type of transport:	Aeroplanes, train, car (in the future, no car anymore)
Type of accommodation:	Campervan (not anymore); later hotel, private accommodation (friends)
Constraints:	Health conditions (change from car to aeroplane), pet, availability of travel partners
Facilitators:	Retirement, independence of children

Summary

Given the advanced age of Mr and Mrs Braun, the couple are still travelling a lot (Figure A.6 and Figure A.7). Since the children left the parental home, Mr and Mrs Braun have more money available for travel. The retirement payment of the couple is also good but due to their extensive travels they need to budget their money. They are looking for travel bargains because they want to pass on some money to their children after their death.

After the period of family holidays the couple's travel behaviour was constrained by their dog. They did not experience their first air travel until after their pet had passed away. For this reason they continued to use a campervan, which they bought for their family travels. Because their son moved to Spain, the couple had extensive travels to the Iberian Peninsula to help with the renovation of his house. They combined these trips with sightseeing tours in Spain and to Portugal. These trips to Spain ceased when their son got divorced and sold the property in the beginning of the 2000s. The couple also continued to travel to friends in Austria, whom they had visited frequently since the mid-1950s, until they passed away in 2010.

In the mid-1990s the couple started to visit friends who lived in Italy once a year. Initially they travelled by car to remain flexible and so they could tour around the surrounding area. Because the long drive to Italy became too stressful for Mr Braun, they changed to taking aeroplanes. The travel duration has decreased from about four weeks to two weeks.

When Mr Braun was about 70 years old, the couple sold their campervan and stopped having round trips because they preferred the comfort of a hotel. Mr and Mrs Braun also began to book more comfortable holidays to destinations in South Europe, such as Crete or Sicily, and North African countries, and to have wellness trips and ship cruises. They had these trips with another senior couple with whom they are friends. Relaxation became a driving motive in this period of time. Because of the advanced age of their friends and increased health problems, Mr and Mrs Braun have decreased their travel activities. Ship cruises concentrate now on domestic river cruises so they are closer to the familiar German health system.

Due to their friend's health problems, travels with other people have become more important to the Brauns. Together with members of the local community, they have organised travels with some religious educational background; these trips have been to Italy, the Czech Republic, Israel and Poland. There are also shorter bus trips over the weekends with the parish to German destinations and to Austria. Mr and Mrs Braun will continue to travel as long as they are able to do so. In the future they are planning to have one or two larger trips and a few short trips a year and they will travel less often by car.

Figure A.6: Mrs Braun's travel history

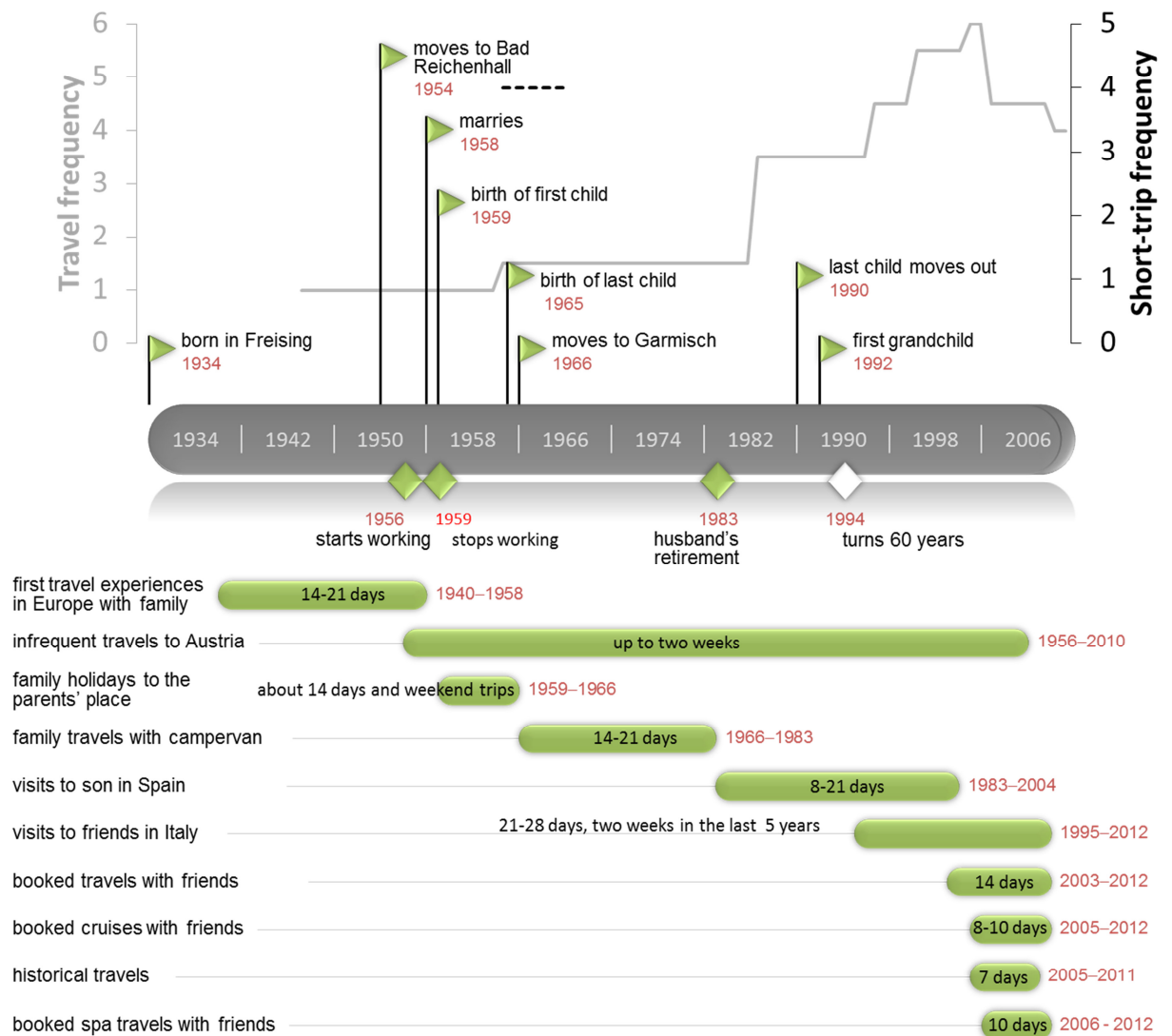
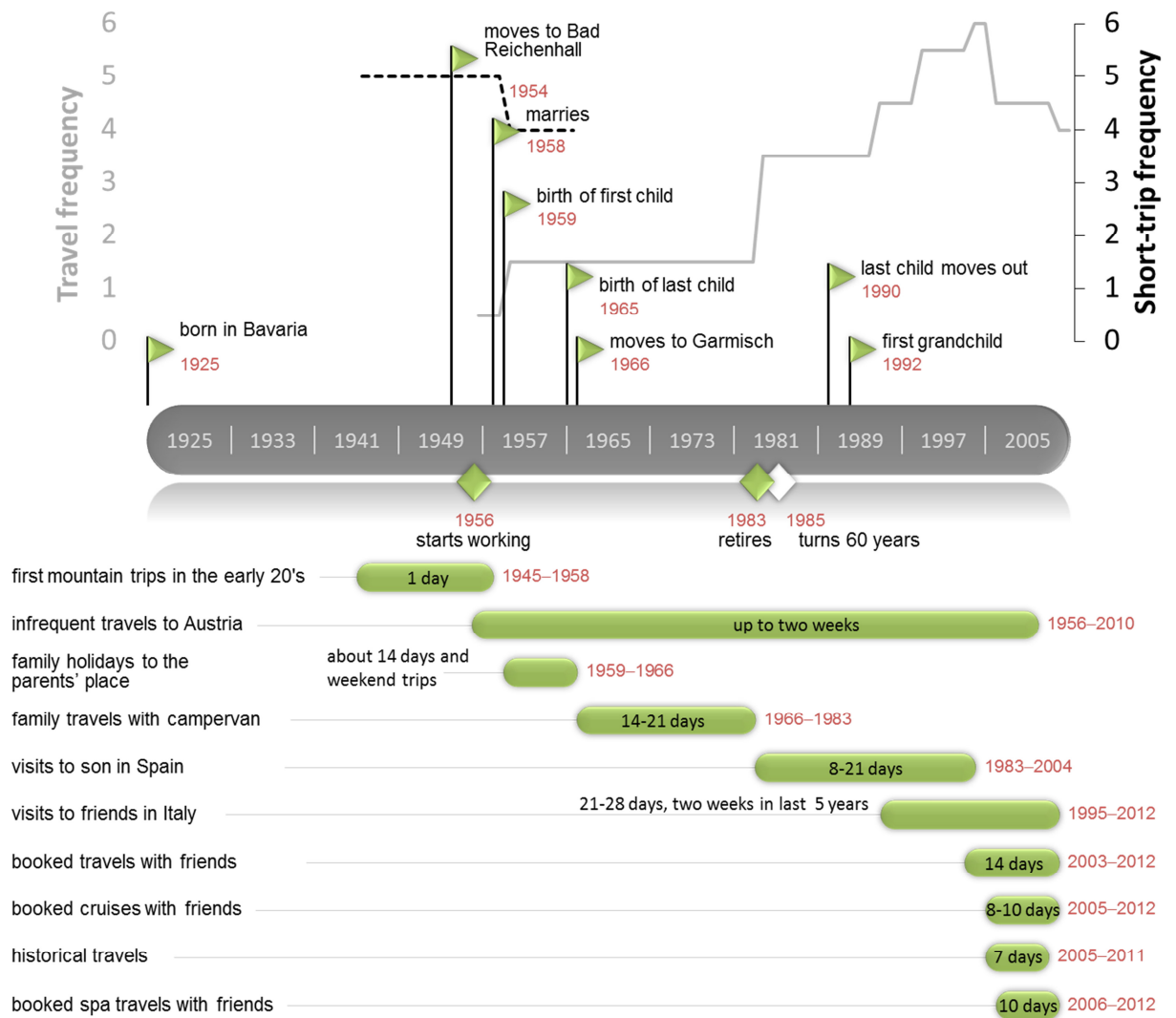


Figure A.7: Mr Braun's travel history



Appendix K: Mrs Klein – frequent travels of a single woman

Gender: female | Age: 72 | Year of birth: 1939 | Place of birth: Bavaria | Future travel intention: yes | Employment status: part-time | Marital status: divorced | Relationship status: single | Parental status: two children | Housing situation: sharing a flat

Travel activities:	In senior age Mrs Klein started to travel to Mediterranean islands such as Tenerife and Crete for about one to two weeks once a year. Since the mid-1990s she travels once a year for about two weeks to the North Sea island of Amrum. She has about five multiple-day trips a year to a friend who lives about one hour's car drive away. Mrs Klein travels once a year with a group of friends to mainly cities in the south of Germany, such as Regensburg and Passau. Since the early 2000s Mrs Klein has gone on annual hiking holidays with an alpine club for one week. On weekends during the summer Mrs Klein has frequent hiking day trips.
Travel motivation:	Physical activities, culture, sightseeing, nature
Travel partners:	Friends
VFR:	Visits friends, minor VFR activities because family lives nearby
Information:	Extensive travel information, internet, travel literature, travel expos
Type of transport:	Aeroplane, bus, car
Type of accommodation:	Hotels, guest houses, private accommodation, mountain huts
Constraints:	Financial situation, fear of flying, stress and effort
Facilitators:	Children moving out, retirement

Summary

Knowing about Mrs Klein's family history is important for understanding her travel behaviour in her senior age. In 1987 Mrs Klein got divorced, and when she was in her late 50s her children left the parental home. After paying off her house, Mrs Klein started to travel with friends more frequently (Figure A.8). Since her divorce, Mrs Klein has had to look for other travel partners. The suitability of potential travel partners depends on their relationship status, travel preferences, physical abilities and financial resources. Mrs Klein is flexible when it comes to travelling and she is prepared to adjust her travel habits according to her travel partner. For larger holidays Mrs Klein has two close friends, who are also single (widowed and divorced). In the late 1990s Mrs Klein joined a theatre club, which included an organised short trip each year to European cities with cultural relevance.

In 1999 Mrs Klein gave up full-time employment and started to work only part time. Since then Mrs Klein she has had more time and flexibility to travel but less money to spend on the trips. Money is scarce and Mrs Klein has to budget her holidays and prioritise her trips, even though she would like to travel much more. Budgeting and prioritising will become increasingly important in the future because she quit her part-time work in 2012. Mrs Klein changed her priorities and gave up the theatre trips, which became too expensive. The same happened to her annual skiing holidays which, likewise, had become too costly and were also becoming too arduous. Instead Mrs Klein joined an alpine club and she began to focus on physical activities and sightseeing during her journeys. She has frequent short trips and annual hiking holidays to the mountains; in 2011 alone, she went on more than 15 of these short trips.

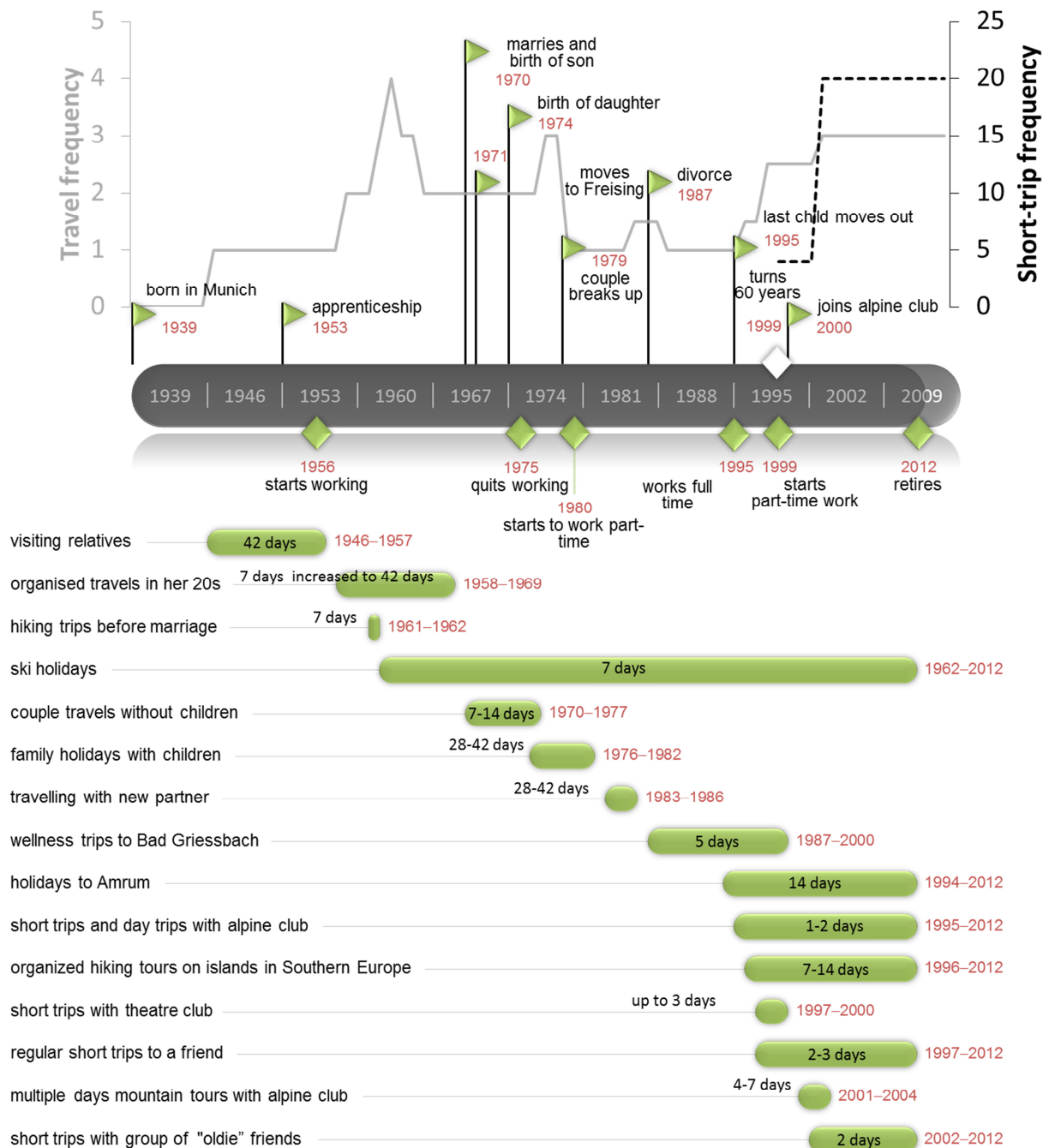
Since the early 2000s Mrs Klein has booked and organised an annual holiday to Mediterranean islands in south and southeast Europe, such as Tenerife, Mallorca and Crete. She travels with friends for one to two weeks and stays in hotels. The main activities on these trips are hiking tours and sightseeing trips. The trips include air flights even though she dislikes flying. For that reason she has never been travelled outside of Europe.

Mrs Klein visits a friend who lives a one-hour drive away about five times a year. Since she retired, the number of visits, which last only about two or three days, has increased. Once a year, a group of friends organises a short trip to nearby destinations in Bavaria and Austria. Usually they organise a bus and a travel guide for a weekend. A strong travel pattern is an annual trip to Amrum with a friend – since the mid-1990 Mrs Klein has travelled to Amrum with this friend once a year. For financial reasons they have changed accommodation over the years: instead of staying in a hotel they now rent a private apartment.

In senior age, travelling became very important to Mrs Klein and she relaxes at home from her extensive travel activities. She spends a lot of time researching and organising her holidays. She has a private travel library and keeps books about her travels. Mrs Klein spends time on the internet checking websites of travel companies and destinations. She is always up to date with the newest travel catalogues from her favourite tour operators. Mrs Klein has very specific ideas about her trips and she goes with a friend to travel expos to inform themselves about different trips available.

Being aware that her physical condition is deteriorating, Mrs Klein is away as often as possible. She wants to continue with her travel behaviour as it is today for as long as she can. Longer trips may become more appealing because Mrs Klein dislikes the frequent packing and unpacking of luggage for multiple short trips.

Figure A.8: Mrs Klein's travel history



Appendix L: Mrs Zimmermann – ceased travelling in old age

Gender: female | Age: 91 | Year of birth: 1920 | Country of birth: Poland (former Germany) | Future travel intention: no | Employment status: retired | Marital status: widowed | Relationship status: single | Parental status: no children | Housing situation: assisted living

Travel activities:	Mrs Zimmermann had holidays to Mallorca when she was about 70 years old. Later she had day trips in the region. Mrs Zimmer is not travelling anymore.
Travel motivation:	Relaxing
Travel partners:	Friend
VFR:	–
Information:	–
Type of transport:	Aeroplane, car
Type of accommodation:	Hotel
Constraints:	Age, fear of a negative health event, expenses

Summary

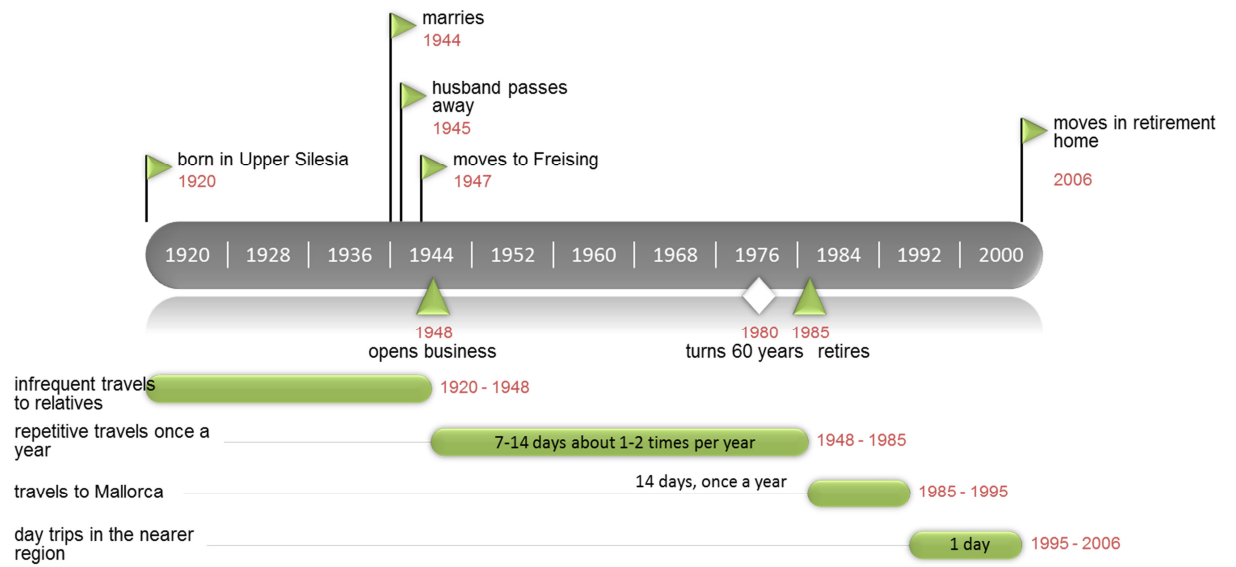
Mrs Zimmermann is 91 years old and not travelling anymore. Mrs Zimmermann was widowed early during World War II and ever since she only travelled with friends. Having a tailoring business, Mrs Zimmermann never had the time or financial resources for extended travelling. During her senior age and after she retired, she increased her travel activities and went once a year with a friend to Mallorca (Figure A.9). These were the first trips where she took aeroplanes; before, she mainly travelled in central Europe, in Switzerland and Spain. Mrs Zimmermann continued to spend her

annual holidays in Mallorca for the next ten years, and when her travel partner passed away, she had one last trip by herself.

In 2006 Mrs Zimmermann moved into a retirement home. Her health is deteriorating and she needs to use a walking frame. Mrs Zimmermann's travel activities have faded out in recent years and her last independent journeys were day trips to Munich and the nearby region. Relatives also took her on day trips to the foothills of the Alps. Mrs Zimmermann's few remaining relatives seldom come for visits. Once a year she still attends a day trip with an association where she is member.

Mrs Zimmermann lists several reasons why she ceased travelling. She has only a small retirement income and she needs to save her money – Mrs Zimmermann wants to have enough financial resources available in case she requires more intensive care. Mrs Zimmermann still feels healthy enough to travel but she considers travelling too risky at her advanced age. Mrs Zimmermann stated that she is satisfied with her life. She likes her retirement home and her living environment and travelling is not important for her anymore.

Figure A.9: Mrs Zimmermann's travel history



Appendix M: Mr Mueller – an unexperienced traveller in senior age

Gender: male | Age: 68 | Year of birth: 1943 | Place of birth: Bavaria | Future travel intention: yes | Employment status: retired | Marital status: widowed | Relationship status: non-single | Parental status: no children | Housing situation: sharing a flat

Travel activities:	Before his partner had surgery, the couple travelled to European destinations for about one week at a time. Since then Mr Mueller only has day trips and short trips in the nearby region with his brother and an association.
Travel organisation:	Organised group travels (by labour organisation, senior club) and individual trips with his brother
Travel motivation:	Walking, hiking, sightseeing
Travel partners:	Senior club, brother, labour organisation, partner (not anymore)
VFR:	Family lives nearby but comes for visits
Information:	TV, brochures
Type of transport:	Car, bus
Type of accommodation:	Hotels, group accommodation
Constraints:	Travel partner, illness, motivation

Summary

Mr Mueller shows only minor travel activities (Figure A.10). He has suffered from epilepsy since birth and this restricts his travel opportunities – he needs to be careful with the condition and only travel in groups. Due to his epilepsy, Mr Mueller does not have a driver's licence. Since childhood he has been involved in labour and church

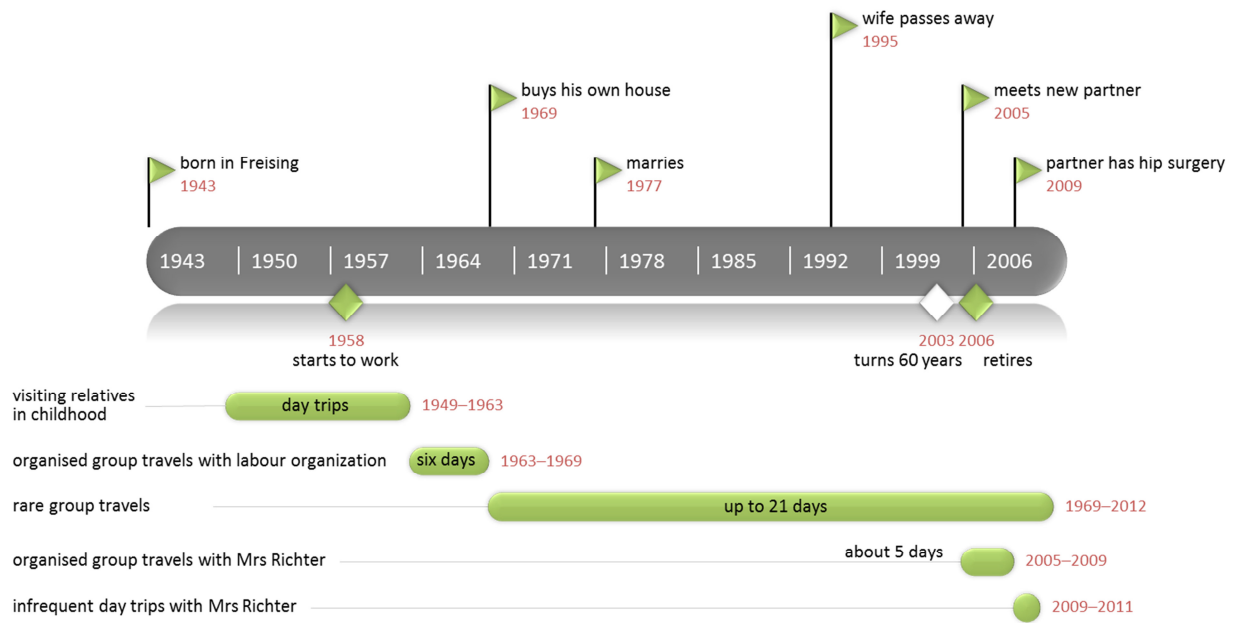
organisations and shows conservative attitudes. Mr Mueller is religious, grew up on the parental farm and has lived all his life in Freising.

Mr Mueller's pension is low and he needs to be careful with his income. Mr Mueller shares his apartment with Mrs Richter whom he met in his senior years. She is also widowed and, since a surgery, she has mobility difficulties. For this reason Mrs Richter only can undertake day trips. Before the surgery, the couple travelled once year for a few days with a bus tour operator; for example, to Monaco, Spain and Switzerland.

Nowadays Mr Mueller's travel activities are organised day trips with a senior club, short trips with a labour organisation, and day trips to the mountains with a brother. Short trips with labour organisations have been a common theme in Mr Mueller's life course. The only period when he travelled more frequently, mostly in Bavaria, was when he started working.

The social nature of travelling is very important to Mr Mueller and he only considers travelling without his partner if the social mix of the group is appropriate. He prefers to stay with other singles. Mr Mueller stated that he would like to travel more often but actually prefers to stay at home to have a nap or to play board games with his partner. He prefers watching travel shows on TV. Mr Mueller has no strong intention to find out about travel opportunities, but showed interest and asked the researcher for appropriate travel products.

Figure A.10: Mr Mueller's travel history



Appendix N: Mr and Mrs Hoffmann – a couple on the road

Gender: male and female | Age: 70 (Mr Hoffmann), 65 (Mrs Hoffmann) | Year of birth: 1941 (Mr Hoffmann), 1946 (Mrs Hoffmann) | Place of birth: Bavaria (Mr Hoffmann), Northern Germany (Mrs Hoffmann) | Future travel intention: yes | Employment status: part-time work (Mr Hoffmann), retired (Mrs Hoffmann) | Marital status: married | Relationship status: non-single | Parental status: two children, two grandchildren | Housing situation: family household without children

Travel activities:	Mr and Mrs Hoffmann make only short trips in Central Europe and Germany to cities of cultural importance, such as Dresden, Rome, Florence and Prague. In 2012 they made about ten of these trips, each of which is no longer than four days.
Travel organisation:	Bus tour operator, private
Travel motivation:	Sightseeing and culture, theatres, wellness, grandchildren, seeing something new
Travel partners:	Friends, grandchildren
VFR:	Children live close by, travelling with grandchildren, travelling with and to siblings
Information:	Internet, brochures from tour operators
Type of transport:	Mainly by couch or car because Mrs Hoffmann has a fear of flying
Type of accommodation:	Comfortable and luxury hotels
Constraints:	Pet, fear of flying
Facilitators:	Retirement, independence of children, grandchildren

Summary

Since his early retirement at 53, Mr Hoffmann has had more flexibility to travel. He started to work part time and this brings additional income to his retirement pay. When the children grew older, Mrs Hoffmann started to work again and she retired in 2006. During that period Mr Hoffmann developed single travel patterns; for example, walking trips with former colleagues. Once a year Mr Hoffmann still travels solo to a health resort for two to three weeks. When the children became independent, the couple had more money to travel than before. Comfort and luxury became very important to the Hoffmanns in their senior years and the couple always stay in good hotels.

Mrs Hoffmann has fear of flying, which restricts the radius of travel destinations. For this reason the couple have never travelled outside of Europe. Another constraining factor is the couple's cat, which is the reason why they are limited to shorter trips. To be able to have longer travels, they do not want to have another cat in the future.

Mrs and Mr Hoffmann pursue extensive travel activities together in their senior age (Figure A.11 and Figure A.12). Travels centre on short bus trips in Central Europe and Germany, which are organised and guided by a tour operator. Mr and Mrs Hoffmann started those trips when their two children became independent and could be left alone at home. Before that, they never did much sightseeing with their children. The couple developed an interest in cultural themes and especially in East German cities since the reunification of East and West Germany. Mr and Mrs Hoffmann focus on one specific tour operator who provides thematic travels and a good level of comfort and

service. If they enjoy a particular trip they repeat it, sometimes often; for example, they have been to Dresden six times. In their senior age, travelling for the Hoffmanns is all about sightseeing and culture; relaxing beach holidays do not interest them anymore.

The couple have also developed other travel patterns such as trips with a theatre club, wellness trips and regular short trips with friends or family. They began having wellness stays in Bad Griesbach, Bavaria since Mrs Hoffmann retired. The couple are very social and they have many ventures with their friends. Together with their grandchild, who is only two years old, they started to have farms stays. They want to extend these trips when the grandchildren become older. In the future, when they are less constrained, the couple want to travel more often and for longer periods. They are considering a ship cruise to Norway.

Figure A.11: Mrs Hoffmann's travel history

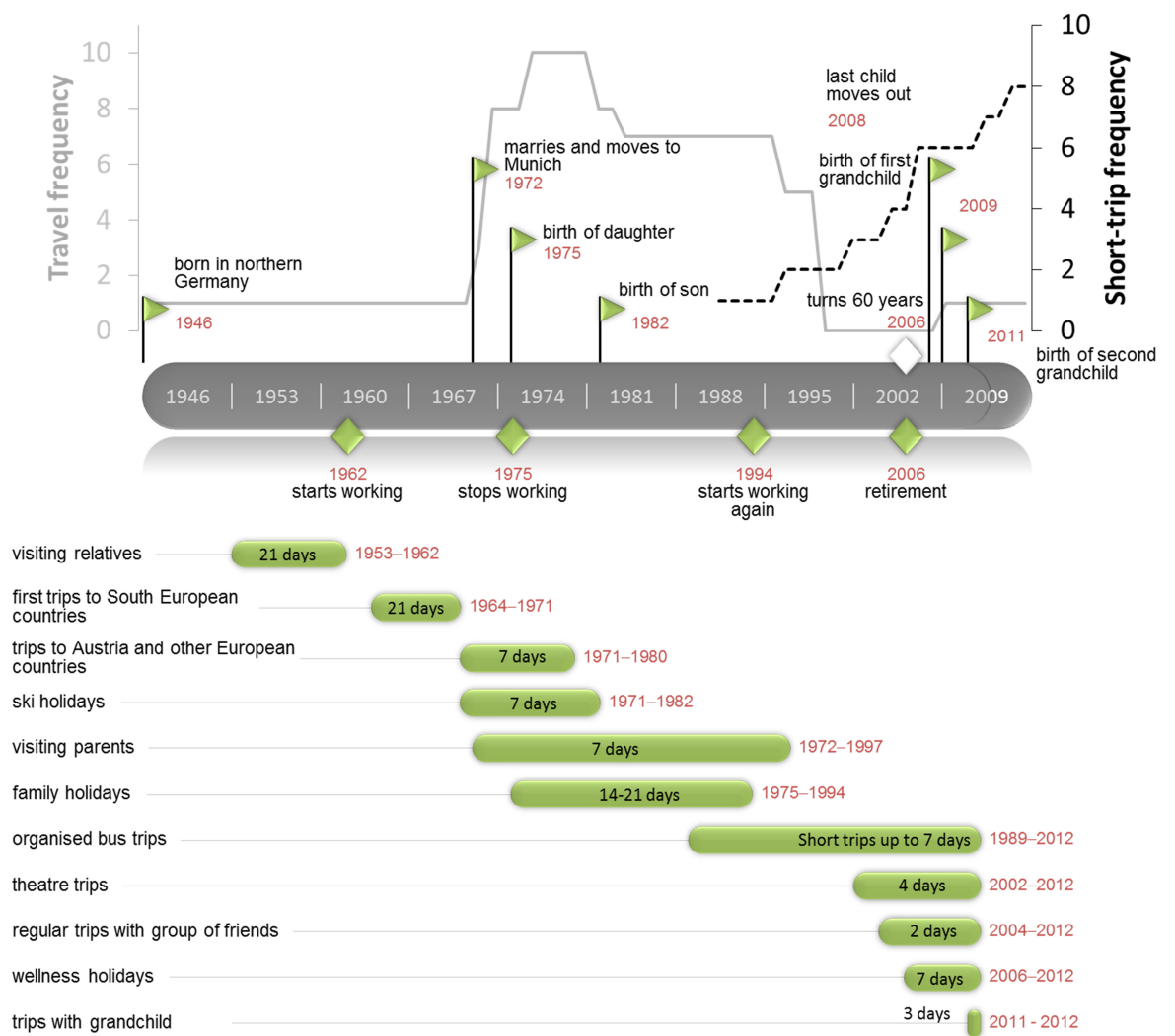
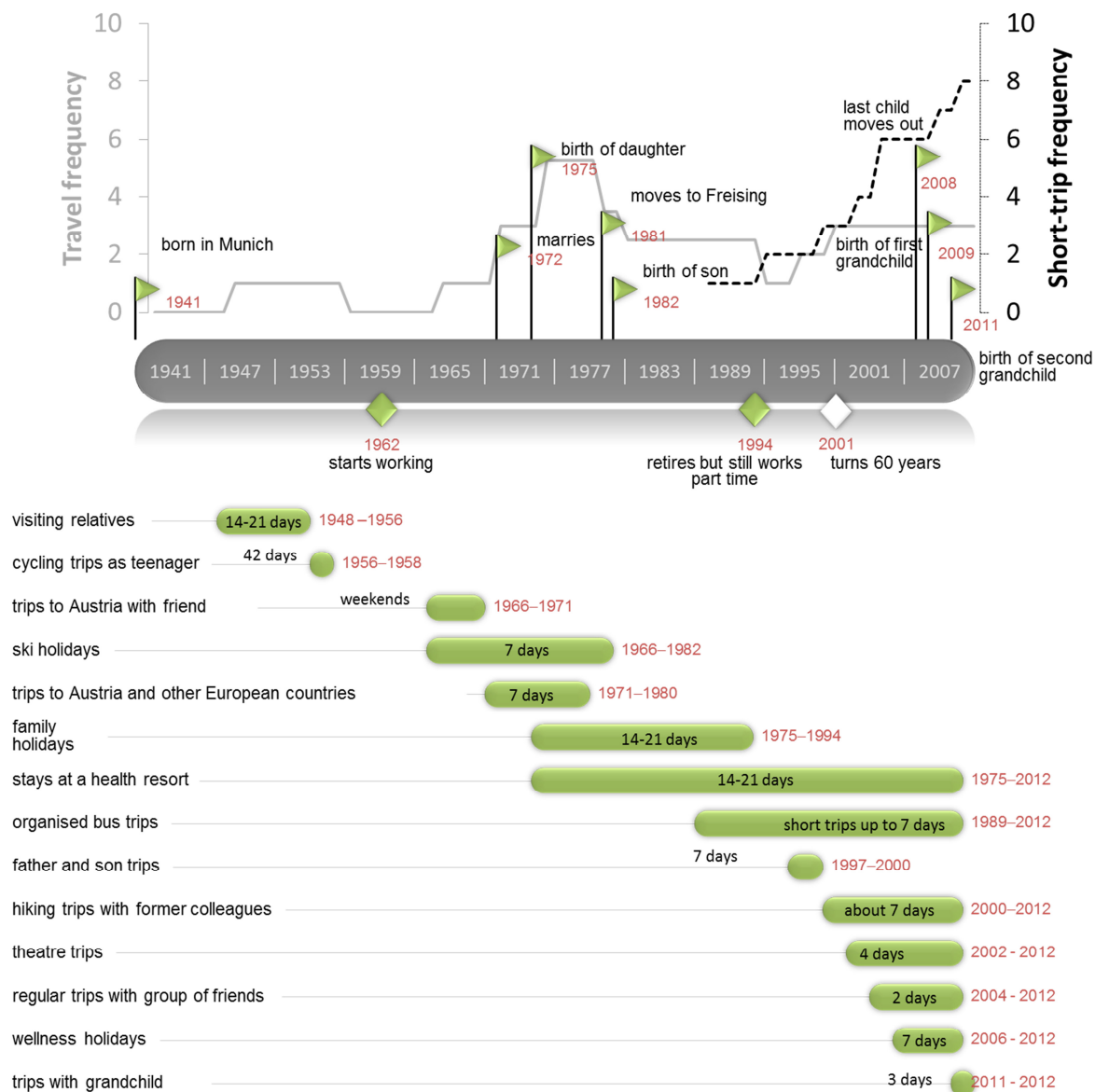


Figure A.12: Mr Hoffmann's travel history



Appendix O: Mrs Schaefer – travelling with the godson

Gender: female | Age: 87 | Year of birth: 1924 | Place of birth: Western Germany |
Future travel intention: no | Employment status: retired | Marital status: widowed |
Relationship status: single | Parental status: no children | Housing situation: single
household

Travel activities:	Travels to Ruhpolding, Bavaria for about two to three weeks once a year. Additional short trips in the same area.
Travel motivation:	Hiking, meeting people, sightseeing
Travel partners:	Godson
VFR:	–
Information:	–
Type of transport:	Car
Type of accommodation:	Hotels, guest houses
Constraints:	Availability of travel partner, health conditions

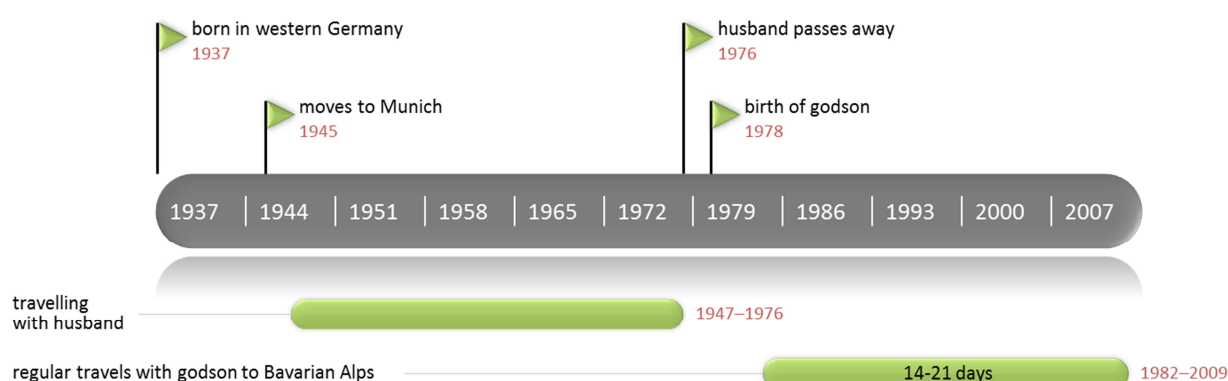
Summary

Mrs Schaefer is 84 years and does currently not travel. Her travel patterns in senior age were dominated by frequent trips to Ruhpolding (Figure A.13), which is a destination close to the Bavarian mountains. She has travelled there with her godson, her neighbour's son, since she was 55 years old. The neighbours have a painting company and Mrs Schaefer looked after the child from when he was a baby. Before, she travelled frequently with her husband to Ruhpolding and also other German destinations, until he passed away.

Together with her godson, Mrs Schaefer went on holidays for about 2 to 3 weeks once a year. Her godson's parents never joined them on these travels because they were too busy with their business. Mrs Schaefer and her godson also had shorter trips during the year to the same area. A few times they travelled to other destinations in Germany for a change. They travelled very spontaneously, never booking in advance and touring around the area.

Mrs Schaefer does not have a driver's licence and in recent years she has become dependent on her godson as a chauffeur. Because she needs a wheelchair, his assistance is even more important. Mrs Schaefer's travels have ceased in the last two years because her godson has become too busy since he started working and has a girlfriend. Furthermore, Mrs Schaefer suffers from deteriorating health and she has had longer stays in hospitals. Mrs Schaefer's godson is still her one and only and she would like to travel with him as long as possible. She does not know if she will ever travel again because of her severe health conditions.

Figure A.13: Mrs Schaefer's travel history



Appendix P: Mr Weber – satisfied with few travel activities

Gender: male | Age: 73 | Year of birth: 1938 | Place of birth: Northern Germany |
Future travel intention: yes | Employment status: part-time volunteering | Marital
status: married | Relationship status: non-single | Parental status: two children, one
grandchild | Housing situation: family household without children

Travel activities:	Mr Weber makes mainly short trips in the nearby region and to Austria and France. Together with his wife, Mr Weber travels about twice a year to the North Sea island of Sylt, for one or two weeks each time.
Travel motivation:	Sightseeing, seeing nature, walking
Travel partners:	Wife
VFR:	VFR to family in Hamburg combined with travels to Sylt
Information:	No information needed because he know the places
Type of transport:	Car, train
Type of accommodation:	Hotel, private accommodation
Constraints:	Volunteering
Facilitators:	–

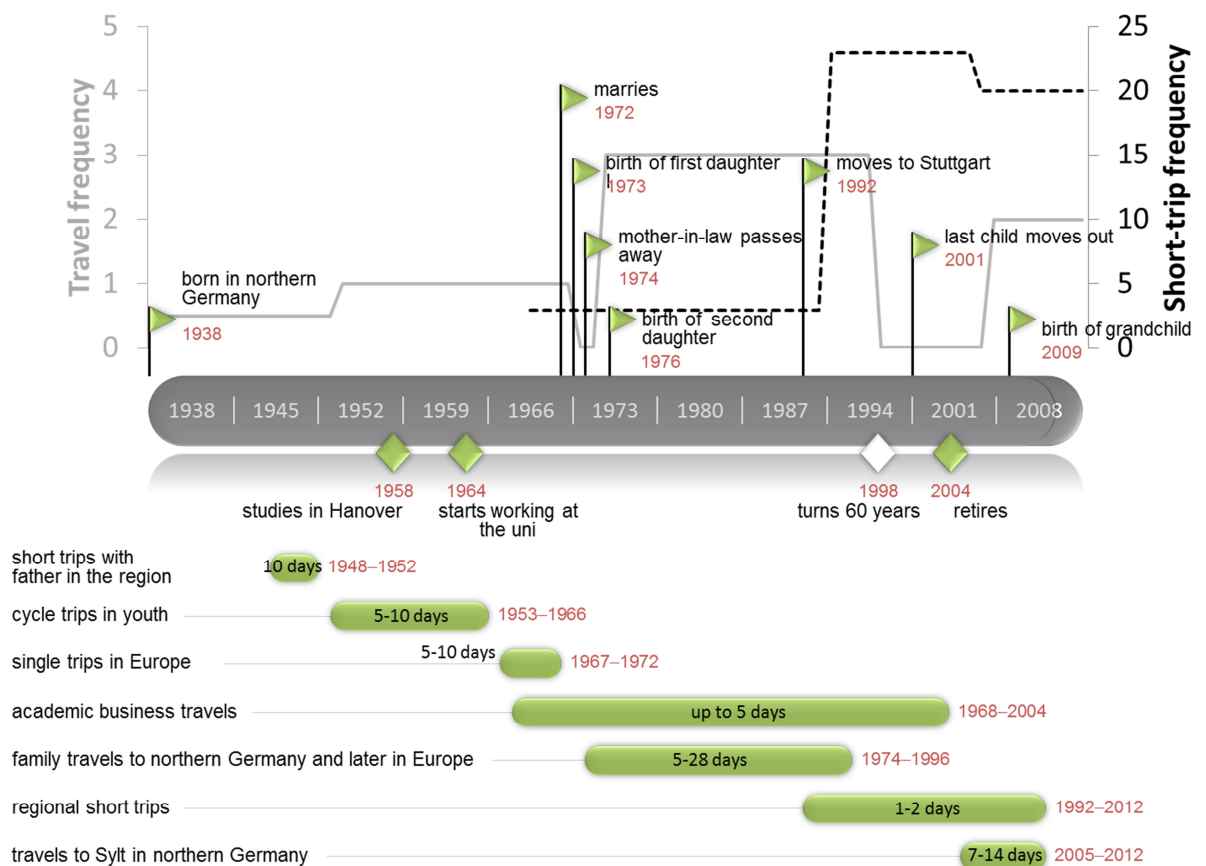
Summary

Mr Weber shows fewer travel activities in senior age compared with other periods in his life (Figure A.14). His travel behaviour focuses on regional trips and travels to northern Germany. He makes short trips and day trips to the Bavarian mountains, Austria and Alsace in France. Even though the couple seems to be in good health, Mr Weber states that they travel abroad less because of mobility problems. Mr Weber is

still busy with academic projects and voluntary work and has less motivation to travel. During his professional career as an academic, he attended many conferences in different countries and has no need to travel overseas anymore. Mr Weber always enjoyed his work and never needed holidays for relaxation or recreation.

The only consistent travel pattern he currently pursues is regular travels to the North Sea island of Sylt. Mr and Mrs Weber combine these travels with visits to their daughter who moved to Hamburg. In the future, the couple intend to continue with their present travel behaviour. They will not travel far away anymore because of concern about potential mobility problems. In 2011 the couple travelled to Istanbul, combining their holidays with a conference which Mr Weber attended.

Figure A.14: Mr Weber's travel history



Appendix Q: Mrs Schwarz – never travelled a lot

Gender: female | Age: 69 | Year of birth: 1942 | Place of birth: Bavaria | Future travel intention: no | Employment status: full time | Marital status: married | Relationship status: non-single | Parental status: three children, two grandchildren | Housing situation: family household without children

Travel activities:	Spontaneous and infrequent weekend trips to Austrian mountains
Travel motivation:	Being with grandchildren, hiking
Travel partners:	Grandchildren, husband
VFR:	Family and friends live close by, no VFR travels
Information:	–
Type of transport:	Car
Type of accommodation:	Hotel with swimming pool
Constraints:	Business, no travel experiences
Facilitators:	Grandchildren

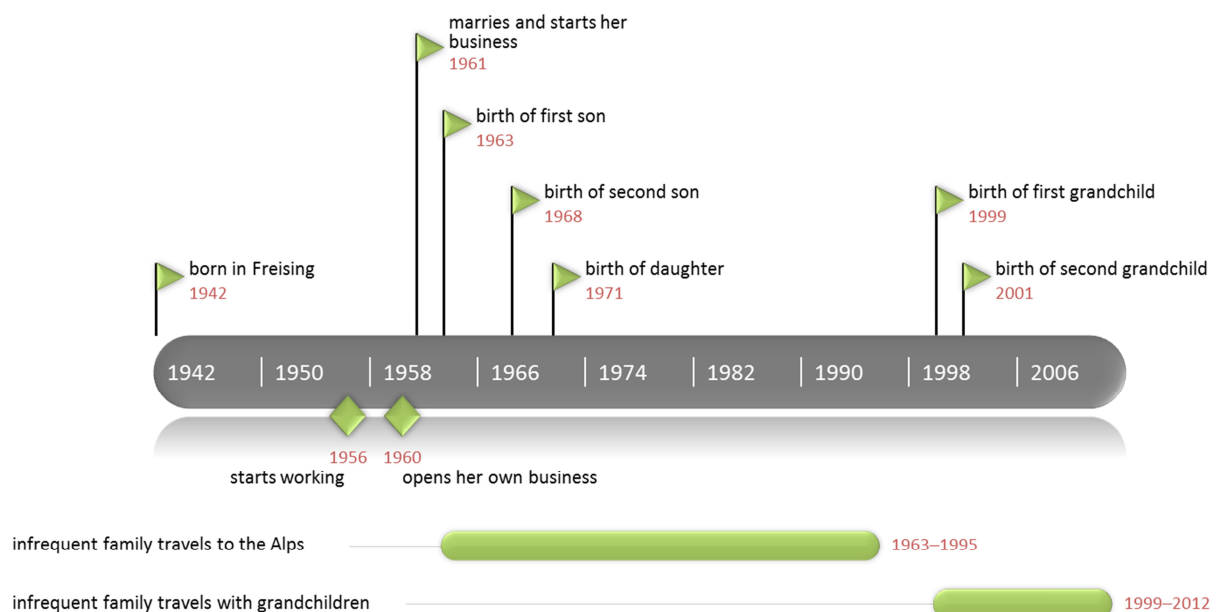
Summary

Mrs Schwarz does not travel much in senior age, which is consistent with her previous travel history across her whole life course (Figure A.15). Mrs Schwarz never travelled when she was young, and even once she started a family there have been only a few trips. Together with her husband, Mrs Schwarz has been running her own clothes shop for more than 50 years. She is very engaged in her business, which only allows travelling after the summer and winter sales. When her children were young, the

family only went for a weekend to a friend's hut in the Austrian mountains about once a year. Mr and Mrs Schwarz travelled abroad once only, to Italy, because her husband wanted to see the ocean.

Family is very important to Mrs Schwarz, but her relatives are settled in the same area in Freising and so VFR creates no travel activities. Since they had grandchildren, Mr and Mrs Schwarz have begun to take spontaneous trips to the Austrian mountains and spend a weekend in a hotel. During these trips a comfortable hotel is important to her. At 69 years old, Mrs Schwarz is still working and she has no desire to quit. There is no indication that she will change her current travel behaviour in the future.

Figure A.15: Mrs Schwarz's travel history



Appendix R: Mrs Krueger – travels of a busy senior woman

Gender: female | Age: 73 | Year of birth: 1938 | Country of birth: Poland (former Germany) | Future travel intention: yes | Employment status: voluntary part-time work | Marital status: widowed | Relationship status: single | Parental status: three children, six grandchildren | Housing situation: single household

Travel activities:	Mrs Krueger travels about once a year to destinations in the Middle East, the United States, Asia and Africa, each trip lasting two to three weeks. Due to social and family obligations, these travels have decreased in recent years. Mrs Krueger travels about twice a year to Lourdes, with a social organisation, for one week. She makes frequent short trips with friends and social organisations in Germany and neighbouring countries. She would make more than ten of these short trips and day trips each year.
Travel organisation:	Tour operators, private
Travel motivation:	Seeing friends, culture, broaden the horizon
Travel partners:	Friends, social organisations, community members
VFR:	Mrs Krueger's immediate family lives nearby and is very important to Mrs Krueger. She has not much time to visit her broader family.
Information:	Internet
Type of transport:	Aeroplanes, bus, car, train
Type of accommodation:	Hotels, private accommodation
Constraints:	Time (social and family obligations), physical abilities (low level)
Facilitators:	Voluntary work, social environment

Summary

Mrs Krueger was widowed when she was 48 years old, at a time when her children were still teenagers. During this time social support was very important for her recovery. She had to start working again and the income enabled her to go travelling. Her working hours were flexible and didn't affect her leisure activities. After her husband passed away, Mrs Krueger also began to volunteer in several social organisations, which is very time consuming and keeps her busy. She supports, for example, sick and invalid pilgrims in and on their way to Lourdes. Shortly after her husband passed away a friend encouraged her to go travelling together. They went on long trips to India, several trips to the United States, and also to Kenya (Figure A.16). In the same period Mrs Krueger began travelling with a travel group from her home town to the Middle East, Turkey and Russia. These thematic trips were organised by a specialised tour operator and had a religious and cultural background.

Voluntary work has become an integral part of Mrs Krueger's life and, because of the variety of her obligations, she had to cancel her last two long-distance trips with her friend. Short trips have become predominant in her travel patterns, as these give her more flexibility. Mrs Krueger makes about five short trips a year with friends, for up to one week, to German and European cities. Mrs Krueger likes sightseeing and, to her, travelling means widening her horizon. Mrs Krueger makes only day trips with her grandchildren. The family lives nearby and she does not want to intrude on her children's families.

Mrs Krueger's future travel behaviour will depend on her health and her obligations. She wants to travel in a more relaxed way, and to have one larger trip overseas a year. However, to remain flexible she might focus more on taking short trips. Because Mrs Krueger stopped working part time, she has less money available for travelling.

Figure A.16: Mrs Krueger's travel history

