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THE PERCEPTION OF AIRBNB IN
AMSTERDAM AND UTRECHT

Marjes ter Schegget ▪ s2774305 ▪ supervisor dr. Xiaolong Liu
Bachelor thesis ▪ Human Geography and Planning ▪ Faculty of Spatial Sciences

ABSTRACT

Airbnb in Amsterdam and Utrecht is a much discussed topic in the media. This paper explores how the citizens of Amsterdam and Utrecht perceive Airbnb, its effects and the implemented regulations. Not much research has been done on Airbnb in Dutch cities which makes this paper one of the first to touch upon this complex subject. In addition, the research might help policy-makers with regulations for Airbnb. For the purposes of this paper, Airbnb will be discussed as part of the sharing economy. The research makes use of empirical data, obtained by surveys and interviews with citizens and other stakeholders. The paper concludes that Airbnb's effect on the housing supply and on livability are perceived as the most important downsides. Airbnb in general is still mostly perceived as a positive phenomenon in both cities. There is a difference in the experienced nuisance and in the perception of regulations. Citizens of Amsterdam are mostly content with the regulations but want them to be maintained more thoroughly and most citizens of Utrecht are not familiar with the regulations.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Airbnb was founded on August 2008 in San Francisco. The company was originally called air bed and breakfast because two students offered overnight stays on air mattresses at the time of a conference in San Francisco (Guttentag, 2015). Airbnb was founded to enable tourists to bypass expensive hotels and have a more local experience (New York Magazine, 2014).

Airbnb describes itself as *'a social website that connects people who have space to spare with those who are looking for a place to stay'* (Airbnb, 2017). Airbnb makes it possible for people to list their spare rooms or homes on the website for a certain price. In return, Airbnb derives revenue from every reservation, both from the side of the hosts as from the side of the guests (Zervas et al., 2014). Airbnb has become a very popular online platform that has over 200 million guests in more than 65.000 cities and 191 countries (Airbnb, 2017). Airbnb has already surpassed the Intercontinental Hotels Group and Hilton Worldwide as the biggest accommodation service provider (Henten and Windekilde, 2016). The rapid growth of Airbnb not only threatens the market share of the traditional accommodation sector, like hotels, it also adds pressure to the housing market and it creates nuisance in the neighborhoods where Airbnbs are situated (Oskam & Boswijk, 2016). Most complaints do not seem to be about noise or outrageous behavior of tourists, but about the perception of new people residing the premises each week (Richardson, 2015).

In Amsterdam, Airbnb had over 1.7 million bookings in 2016 (nu.nl, 2017). Right now, Amsterdam has 10392 active rentals. For the other Randstad cities, these numbers are much less. Utrecht has 1803 active rentals, The Hague has 1340 and Rotterdam only has 1065 (Airdna, 2017). Many inhabitants of Amsterdam are not happy about the rapid growth of Airbnb in their city. As a result, Airbnb has been a huge topic in the media the past few years (Nu.nl, 2017). As a reaction, the municipality of Amsterdam developed regulation specifically for Airbnb in 2014. These regulations determined that a host can rent his/her house or spare room to a maximum of 4 people for a maximum of 60 days each calendar year. Since 2014 Airbnb is also obligated to collect tourist tax in Amsterdam. Since 2017 these regulations include a duty to report every Airbnb rental (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2017). If these rules are not obeyed, one can risk a fine up to 20500 euro's (the Friendly host, 2017).

Utrecht has the second largest offer of active Airbnb rentals and hosts in the Randstad (Airdna, 2017) but has not implemented any specific regulation for Airbnb yet (Gemeente Utrecht, 2017). However, Utrecht is currently working on regulations similar to those of Amsterdam; they consider an annual limit and a limitation to the amount of guests allowed to stay in the Airbnb. Since Utrecht has the second largest supply of Airbnb but not any regulations specifically for Airbnb yet, this Randstad city was chosen to compare to Amsterdam. The aim of this paper is to understand how citizens of Amsterdam and Utrecht perceive the effects Airbnb has on their city and how they look at the current regulations. The central question to be answered in this paper is as follows *'Is there a difference in how Airbnb, with its effects and regulations, is perceived in Amsterdam and Utrecht?'* In this paper Amsterdam and Utrecht can be understood as the municipality of Amsterdam and the municipality of Utrecht, of which the position, area and population size can be seen in figure 4 of the appendix.

This research is an addition to society because it may help policy makers with regulating Airbnb. It also means to clarify the issues around Airbnb in Amsterdam and Utrecht and to demonstrate that what is talked about in the media is not always accurate. This research is an addition to science because none of the research papers about Airbnb are solely focused on Dutch cities. Some of the research papers do mention Amsterdam, but have a much wider focus. Since Airbnb is such a new and specific phenomenon, there are many more papers regarding *'the sharing economy'* (Frenken & Schor, 2017; Koopman et al. 2015). In addition, many papers talk about one specific externality of Airbnb instead of targeting them all. For instance Zervas et al. (2014) discuss the influence of Airbnb on the traditional accommodation sector and Lee (2016) discusses the influence of Airbnb on the

housing market and the housing prices. Some research papers do target multiple externalities, but do not say much about Amsterdam or Utrecht (Gurran & Phibbs, 2017; Guttentag, 2015; Oskam & Boswijk, 2016). To better understand and regulate Airbnb in Amsterdam, Utrecht and other Dutch cities, more specific research is needed.

The remaining of this paper is structured as follows. First, in chapter 2, the theoretical framework of the paper will be discussed. It talks about the sharing economy, what it means and how it has evolved. Thereafter it discusses whether Airbnb is assumed to be part of the sharing economy or not, and why this is the case. Then it examines what the positive and the negative effects of Airbnb are, followed by a discussion on what regulations can be advised. In chapter 3 the methodology of the research is explained; what research methods were chosen and why. In chapter 4 the results of all the different research methods will be discussed and linked to the literature. The paper ends with a conclusion in chapter 5.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 THE SHARING ECONOMY

A sharing economy means that several human and physical resources that used to be provided by firms are now provided by people. The concept of sharing goods and services is ancient but has grown rapidly due to the rise of the internet (Zervas et al., 2014). What is new about the sharing economy is the phenomenon called 'stranger sharing' (Frenken & Schor, 2017). People used to share goods and services with people within their social networks. What we have been seeing lately, is that more and more people share with strangers. Frenken and Schor (2017) define the sharing economy based on the presence of three characteristics: consumer-to-consumer interaction, temporary access and a physical object. In this theory it is important that the object is owned by a consumer, and not by a company.

The sharing economy made products and services available on the market that, in their present form, were previously unavailable (Oskam & Boswijk, 2016). The goods and services shared with strangers are often quite intimate, following the example of Airbnb; someone's home. The internet created an opportunity for many businesses to provide services that lower transaction costs (Hansen et al. 2016). Platforms on the internet have made stranger sharing less risky because of lowered transaction costs that are a consequence of the information on users via ratings and reputations (Overgoor et al., 2012). These so called reputation mechanisms are very important for the existence of Airbnb, but they have an impact on the traditional accommodation sector as well. Another way Airbnb generates trust is by the ability to directly message through the user's profiles, which also includes a photo and some personal information about the users (Guttentag, 2015). Without the lower transaction costs, millions of transactions that happen now, would not have taken place (Benkler, 2004).

Whether Airbnb is part of the sharing economy is debatable. This is mainly due to the dub definition of the sharing economy. Researchers do not agree on whether there is a sharing economy when there is a monetary exchange (Hamari et al., 2016). Koopman et al. (2015) see the sharing economy as a marketplace that brings people together to share otherwise underutilized assets. For them, it does not matter if this includes a monetary benefit. Frenken and Schor (2017) agree on this view and define the sharing economy as: *'consumers granting each temporary access to under-utilized physical assets (idle capacity), possibly for money.'* In the case of Airbnb this would mean that if you are on vacation or own a spare room, this counts as an asset that is not utilized. However, if a house is rented out to tourists the entire year, or a long period of time, this would not count as idle capacity, making it not a part of the sharing economy. Oskam and Boswijk (2016) do not think Airbnb is part of the sharing economy, because they believe it is not sharing when there is money involved.

In conclusion, most researchers consider Airbnb to be part of the sharing economy. Especially with the regulation for Airbnb implemented in Amsterdam and to, probably, be implemented in Utrecht. This regulation makes it impossible to rent longer than 60 days each calendar year, which makes the residences only temporarily accessible. If the residence is made available for Airbnb when the owners are on vacation or have a spare room, this would count as an under-utilized. This is in line with most definitions for the sharing economy (Frenken & Schor, 2017; Koopman et al., 2015; Zervas et al., 2014). It is important to determine whether Airbnb is part of the sharing economy because there is a lot more research done concerning the sharing economy than there is for Airbnb specifically. Since this paper considers Airbnb to be part of the sharing economy, papers about the sharing economy are thoroughly examined to help deepen this research.

2.2 THE EFFECTS OF AIRBNB

The effects Airbnb has on cities can be roughly divided in more negative and more positive effects.

2.2.1 NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF AIRBNB

The sharing economy, including Airbnb, has negative externalities for those who do not participate (Zervas et al. 2014). Researchers are very negative about the consequences Airbnb has on its living environment (Frenken & Schor, 2017). The growth of Airbnb threatens the market share of the traditional accommodation sector, adds pressure to the housing market and creates nuisance for neighbors and decreases the livability of a city (Oskam & Boswijk, 2016).

Even though Airbnb lacks many characteristics most important to tourists booking a hotel accommodation, such as service quality, the friendliness of staff, the hotel's reputation and security (Chu & Choi, 2000), Airbnb is growing rapidly. This is probably due to Airbnb being cheaper and offering other benefits. Such benefits are for example a full kitchen, a washing machine and a more local experience (Guttentag, 2015). This, and the economic effect of Airbnb, have made Airbnb a disruptive product for the traditional hotel sector (Oskam & Boswijk, 2016). Airbnb can be much cheaper than the traditional accommodations because hosts can set their price very competitively. This is mainly because the primary costs are already covered, there are hardly any costs of labor and the hosts are not entirely reliant on the revenue of the Airbnb (Guttentag, 2015). Hotels speak of unfair competition because Airbnb does not have to pay taxes and does not have to meet the strict rules concerning fire safety and hygiene (Lee, 2016). However, in Amsterdam, Airbnb accommodations do have to meet strict fire safety regulations of the municipality. Also, hosts and guests of Airbnbs in Amsterdam have to pay taxes in the form of income tax and tourists tax (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2017).

Research in Texas has shown that 1% increase in Airbnb's market share led to 0.05% decrease in the total revenue of the hotel business (Zervas et al. 2014). This research also showed that the low-end hotels, often without conference space, are the ones most vulnerable for the new competition from platforms like Airbnb. The median Airbnb price for an entire home is mostly less than that of a four or five star hotel. The median Airbnb price for a private room is approximately comparable to that of one and two star hotels (Guttentag, 2015). Some hotels, trying to cope with the competition of Airbnb, have adopted new elements. They try to create a more personalized, unique experience for their guests. They realize this with a more unusual design, use of existing buildings and a more personalized attention for guests (Oskam & Boswijk, 2016). Oskam and Boswijk (2016) expect a new brand of hotels to emerge that will offer 50 micro hotels with around 15 rooms instead of one hotel with 400 rooms. These micro hotels will remain centrally managed and fully serviced, which are the main advantages of hotels over Airbnbs.

According to Guttentag (2015) the growth of Airbnb might stagnate in the future because Airbnb only appeals to a niche market, meaning the market is more or less exhaustible. A number of tourists will be discouraged by security concerns and a number of tourists will go for a more predictable accommodation, like the traditional accommodations. Also, Airbnb is not for everyone because it acquires some technological skills, time and effort, to book an Airbnb. The platform therefore mostly appeals younger, technologically comfortable, budget conscious tourists. This corresponds to the research of Fraiberger and Sundararajan (2015) which has shown that platforms like Airbnb mostly benefit the below-median-income consumers. Thus, one can question if Airbnb operates on the same market as the traditional accommodations. One may also doubt whether Airbnb will at any point be big enough to really impact the traditional accommodation sector. In the first half of 2012, hotels in the United States had sold 500 million nights whereas in almost the same period of time Airbnb had only sold 5 million nights, worldwide (Guttentag, 2015).

Homes that are rented out to tourists all year round, have a huge impact on the property stock of a city because it makes them unavailable for citizens. This decreases the housing stock of a city which then leads to higher housing prices because of the basic demand-supply theory. These higher housing prices push people out of the city (Guttentag, 2015).

As long as the property owner can make more money renting to tourist than to city residents, there will be a huge incentive to 'hotelize' entire buildings which would decrease the housing supply (Lee, 2016). When housing markets are tight, a small reduction in housing supply will increase rents, mostly because supply is not easily adjusted. Another consequence is that you now have to bid against the extra profits Airbnb can bring. In neighborhoods with a high concentration of Airbnb listings, this rent-increase is quite noticeable. This leads to an increasing number of residents being priced out of their neighborhoods (Lee, 2016). This can then lead to the gentrification of these neighborhoods.

Another negative effect of the growth of Airbnb is the nuisance it causes in some neighborhoods, which effects the livability of those neighborhoods. The complaints from residents are not only about noise or scandalous behavior, but also simply an outflow of the idea of a new person or a new group of persons occupying the premises each week. Resident owners of apartment buildings have more specific complaints concerning the garbage disposal, parking facilities and the violation of security-fire- and safety protocols (Richardson, 2015). There is a growing concern about tourists in apartment-buildings and residential neighborhoods, especially when hosts are not present and/or when the residence is rented on a regular basis (Gurran & Phibbs, 2017).

2.2.2 POSITIVE EFFECTS OF AIRBNB

Airbnb also has some very positive effects on cities. Both the hosts, who earn money by renting properties through Airbnb, as the guests have an obvious advantage of Airbnb but there is also a bigger advantage. Airbnb created a supply of relatively cheap accommodations that can increase tourism and thus overall spending, which would make Airbnb a net creator of new jobs (Zervas et al., 2014). Also, the rise of Airbnb ensures more dispersion of tourists over the city. Whereas hotels are often located in the center, Airbnb is much more spread out. Airbnb therefor generates economic activity for the whole city, instead of only for the city center (Guttentag, 2015). The economic benefits in the non-tourism areas however remain limited, according to the empirical study of Boswijk (2016). Oskam and Boswijk (2016) conclude that the main beneficiaries are the Airbnb hosts themselves.

The sharing economy, such as Airbnb, also gained some popularity because it was seen as sustainable. Consumers would obtain cheaper goods by renting or lending them, which would make them less dependent on ownership, leading to fewer products being produced. In the case of Airbnb this would mean that less hotels have to be built to accommodate tourists (Botsman & Rogers, 2010). Airbnb accommodations are very adequate to absorb an accommodation demand spike. Using hotels to meet this demand would be unsustainable (Guttentag, 2015). Also, the sharing economy often leads to face-to-face meetings, which leads to the emerge of new social ties (Botsman & Rogers, 2010).

2.3 THE REGULATION OF AIRBNB

When a market fails, because its practices lead to inefficient or unequal outcomes, regulation can be implemented for correction (Cohen & Sundararajan, 2015). The negative effects of Airbnb have been highlighted a lot in the media, leading to municipalities to strive regulations (Koopman et al., 2015). However, regulating Airbnb is difficult because Airbnb is an online company. It is difficult for users to determine if they are obligated to follow local regulations. For this reason, regulations specifically for online companies should be developed (Cohen & Sundararajan, 2015).

O'Regan and Choe (2017) stress that the imperfect technological and entrepreneurial dynamism in combination with the vague rules and tax evasion will lead to Airbnb continually facing legal issues. There is a need for new, innovative regulation that meets the needs of the population. Examples of such regulations are sharing the host data with authorities, implementing an annual limit for renting out entire homes, banning listings from neighborhoods that cope with too much tourism and only allowing the use of Airbnb for those that are legal accommodation providers (O'regan & Choe, 2017). Lee (2016) also suggests an annual limit for Airbnb, mainly to protect the housing stock. In addition, he suggests regulations with assigned permits and to limit the number of permits per neighborhood. Another solution he suggests is to only allow Airbnb in buildings that meet an affordability target, for example 30% of the units must be affordable. However, this would be difficult to enforce. Nevertheless, regulating Airbnb might lead to a decrease in the growth of the sharing economy. This could be a reason not to regulate Airbnb too much (Cohen & Sundararajan, 2015). Regulations might also make it harder for new companies to develop in the sharing economy (Koopman et al., 2015).

In order to answer the main research question, a conceptual model was constructed. As seen in figure 1, the research starts with determining what the effects and the regulations are specifically in Amsterdam and Utrecht. Thereafter will be looked at how these are perceived. Following, these perceptions will be compared to examine if there is a difference in how both cities perceive Airbnb.

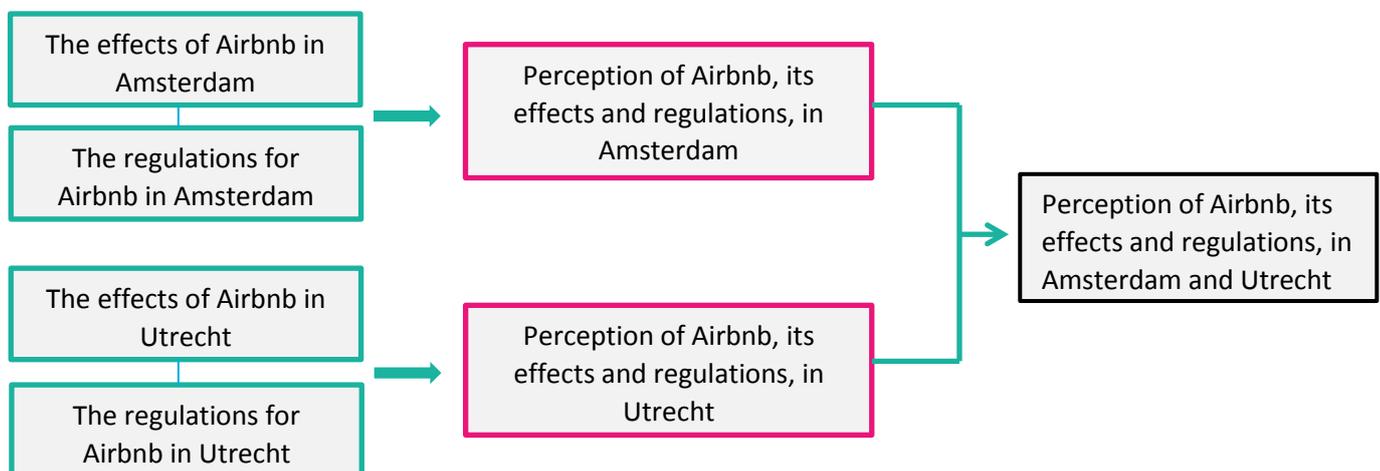


Figure 1: the conceptual model

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 THE SURVEY

A survey was conducted to get insight into how the citizens of Amsterdam and Utrecht perceive Airbnb, its effects and its regulations. The survey contained mostly open questions, similar to a small interview. This method was chosen to obtain the exact opinion and observations from the citizens. This led to a diverse output, in which opinions are divided. This made the analyzing part somewhat more difficult, since the categorizing of divergent responses can be difficult and risky. The survey for this research was posted on several platforms. It was shared multiple times on the following Facebook pages: Pretpark Amsterdam, Airbnb Hosts Amsterdam, UTRECHT! and Utrecht Mijn Stad. The survey was also posted on LinkedIn, Couchsurfing and the blog Community with Airbnb. This leads to a mostly random sample, but might be biased because of the absence of much response above the age 65. This is expected because the survey was solely shared through online resources. Posting the survey was not always allowed which made creating a random sample more difficult¹. In total, the survey received 129 responses of which 79 responses were for Amsterdam and 50 for Utrecht. For the analysis of some subcategories, such as the reasons respondents object to Airbnb, this led to insufficient response to accomplish scientific conclusions. The surveys were conducted a 100% anonymously through the website enquetesmaken.com. The survey was available in Dutch and English and could only be completed once.

3.2 THE INTERVIEWS

In addition, interviews with actors that have different views on the subject were conducted. The respondents, locations and dates of the interviews can be seen in table 1. 'BnB Service Utrecht' and 'Bnbmanager Amsterdam' provided information on the situation in Utrecht and Amsterdam and gave a good insight into the standpoint of the hosts. The municipality of Utrecht gave some great intel on their policy making process so far and what challenges they face. Unfortunately, the municipality of Amsterdam was not able to participate in an interview.

One must be aware that 'BnB Service Utrecht' and 'Bnbmanager Amsterdam' are businesses that depend on the existence of Airbnb. This influences their opinion on Airbnb and on the regulations. After all, the fewer days Airbnbs can be active, the less money they make. However, both are very well informed and very up to date. In addition, they have great intel on problems and ideas that cannot be reached through research papers or online sources.

The interviews were roughly transcribed to make the analysis more convenient. The respondents of the interviews will be discussed as deputies of the company or municipality they represent in order to protect their privacy.

Respondent	Date	Location
Manager Bnbservice Utrecht	20-11-17	Utrecht
Account manager Hotels Municipality Utrecht	24-11-17	Utrecht
General manager Bnbmanager Amsterdam	15-12-17	By phone

Table 1: interviewed stakeholders including date and location

¹ Platforms have certain audiences. Posting the survey on only a few platforms can lead to a distorted response. To create a more random sample it is necessary to post the survey on a great number of different platforms, so the survey can reach as many different audiences as possible.

3.3 OTHER SOURCES

In addition to the interviews and the survey, the databases of Airdna and Centraal Bureau Statistiek (CBS) were used. The CBS was used for data concerning the traditional accommodations. CBS does not provide data about Airbnb, since Airbnb did not give out numbers until very recently. For this reason Airdna was used to provide data concerning Airbnb. This data is very limited and has been established by a data scraper, a program that makes a dataset of all the data on the Airbnb website. At what time the data was extracted from the website of Airbnb is of great importance. Therefore it could be that the data is not a 100% representative for the whole year. However, it gives a good impression of the actual numbers and is the best available data for this research.

4 RESULTS

4.1 PERCEPTION OF AIRBNB IN AMSTERDAM AND UTRECHT

Concluding from the survey, 67% of the respondents from both cities experience Airbnb positively. For Amsterdam this is 64,6% and for Utrecht 70%. However, as seen in table 2, there is a significant difference in the perception of Airbnb in Amsterdam and Utrecht.

From table 3, where the difference between the amount of objections to Airbnb in Amsterdam and Utrecht is tested, cannot be concluded if there is a difference between both cities. This could be a consequence of how the question is asked, because there is no difference or insufficient responses. The reasons for the respondents to object to Airbnb can be found in figure 1. The decreased housing supply, the nuisance and the decreased livability are perceived as the main negative effects of Airbnb. This corresponds to a big extent with the effects found by other researchers (Gurran & Pibbs, 2017; Guttentag, 2015; Lee, 2016; Oskam&Boswijk, 2016; Zervas et al., 2014).

	Value	Degrees of freedom	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.739 ^a	2	.034
Likelihood Ratio	7.671	2	.022
N of Valid Cases	129		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.59.

Table 2: the chi-square tests testing the null hypothesis: there is no difference between the perception of Airbnb in Amsterdam and Utrecht

	Value	Degrees of freedom	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.475 ^a	1	.491
Likelihood Ratio	.478	1	.489
N of Valid Cases	119		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 15.73.

Table 3: the chi-square tests testing the null hypothesis: there is no difference between the objections to Airbnb in Amsterdam and in Utrecht

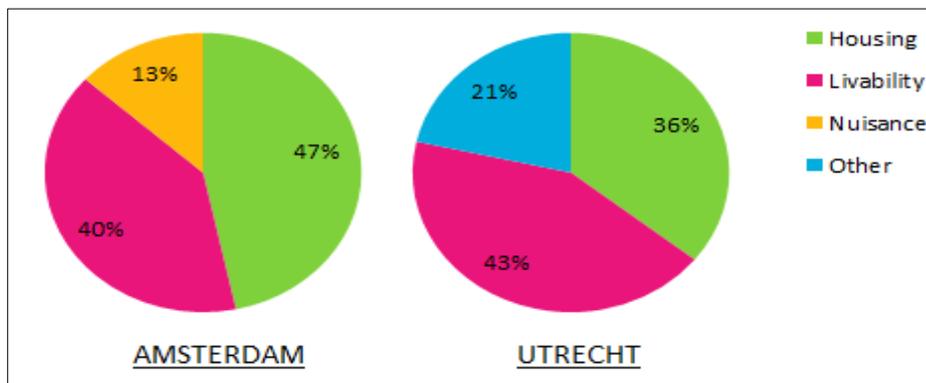


Figure 2: for Amsterdam 30 respondents objected to Airbnb, which was 16 for Utrecht. The reasons they objected can be seen in this figure.

4.1.1 PERCEPTION OF EFFECTS AIRBNB IN AMSTERDAM

As seen in table 4, there is a significant difference between nuisance experienced in Amsterdam and nuisance experienced in Utrecht. Included in nuisance are specific complaints, such as loud and scandalous behavior. In Amsterdam, 25% of the respondents have experienced nuisance caused by Airbnb. It is however questionable if the nuisance respondents experience is in fact caused by Airbnb, or just by tourism in general. The respondents of Bnbservice and Bnbmanager feel as though many negative stories are linked to Airbnb, that are just a consequence of tourism. They stress Airbnb is only responsible for 10% of the tourists in Amsterdam. The respondent of Bnbmanager explains that *'People living in Amsterdam see people with suitcases and think of it as a consequence of Airbnb, that causes nuisance, when those people with suitcases might as well have come from the hotel around the corner.'* Both respondents think the media has aggravated this to a big extent.

	Value	Degrees of freedom	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	25.164 ^a	3	.000
Likelihood Ratio	28.209	3	.000
N of Valid Cases	129		
a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.59.			

Table 4: the chi-square tests testing the null hypothesis: there is no difference in the experience of nuisance from Airbnb in Amsterdam and Utrecht

Secondly the decreased livability was appointed as a negative effect of Airbnb. This includes the loss of social cohesion because of tourists instead of neighbors living in the neighborhood, the feeling of unease as described by Richardson (2015) and the overall tourist pressure. This is perceived as a more important negative effect of Airbnb than nuisance, as can be seen in figure 2.

Around 47% of the respondents that object to Airbnb in Amsterdam object because of its effect on the housing supply. The past few years there has been a shortage of housing in Amsterdam, at the beginning of 2017 this was around 10680 houses (Vastgoedactueel, 2017). This could be partially due to Airbnb, that provides conditions for illegal hotels which leads to housing withdrawal (Lee, 2016; Rtlnieuws, 2017). The concerns of the citizens are not solely because of shortage of housing, but also because of the increased housing prices. As Lee (2016) described in his paper, a small change in supply can have a lot of influence on rents in a tight market, like that of Amsterdam.

Another important negative effect of Airbnb did not come forward much in the surveys, but does come forward in the interviews, the contemporary media and the academic literature. As seen in figure 6 of the appendix, over 30% of the traditional accommodation providers in Amsterdam experience competition from online platforms like Airbnb. However, we also see that the overnight stays in hotels keep growing (figure 11 of the appendix). In Amsterdam the amount of hotel guests has increased with 61% between 2005 and 2016 and the amount of hotels with 31% between 2007 and 2016 (SEO, 2017). This indicates that, regardless of Airbnb, the tourism sector in Amsterdam is growing.

Nevertheless, there is also a good 71% of the respondents that do not have an objection to Airbnb in Amsterdam. The reasons not to object can be seen in figure 3. The most important reasons are because they rent Airbnbs themselves when visiting other cities and because they never experience any problems caused by Airbnb. Other reasons not to object are because they view Airbnb as a good source of income or because they believe Airbnb is good for their city. Another 9% of the citizens of Amsterdam believe Airbnb is not the cause of the problems.

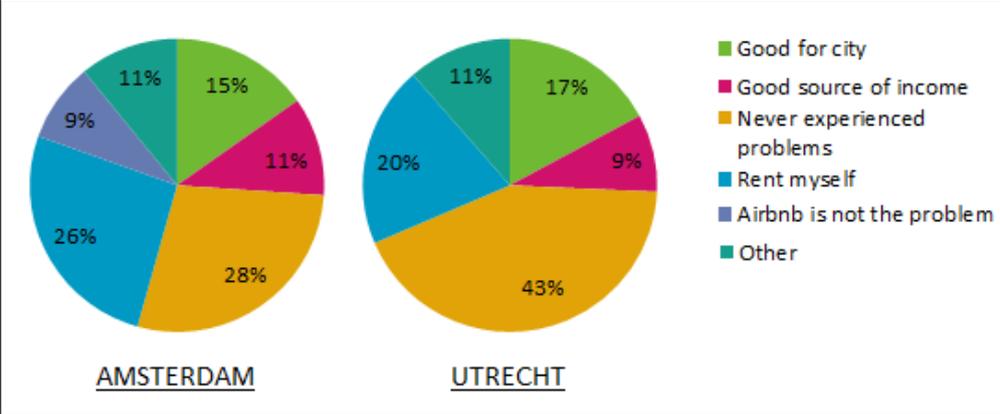


Figure 3: reasons not to object to Airbnb in Amsterdam and Utrecht

4.1.2 PERCEPTION OF EFFECTS AIRBNB IN UTRECHT

In Utrecht, only 16% has experienced nuisance from Airbnb, of which only 2% experienced nuisance regularly. Not one of the respondents objects to Airbnb because of nuisance but, 12% of the respondents do object because of Airbnb's effect on the livability of their city. This is mainly because they experience Utrecht as too busy and too touristic.

Of all the respondents from Utrecht, 10% objects to Airbnb because of its effect on the housing supply. Similar to Amsterdam, Utrecht has a shortage of housing of approximately 7120 (Vastgoedactueel, 2017). According to the respondent of the municipality of Utrecht, there is some housing withdrawal as a consequence of Airbnb in Utrecht. Exact numbers are not publically known but the respondent guesses that around 600 accommodations are rented through platforms like Airbnb for longer than 60 days a year, which is seen as housing withdrawal. He adds that this problem is much bigger in Amsterdam as a consequence of the much higher revenue available on accommodations in Amsterdam. In 2017 the average price per night in Amsterdam was €152, whereas in Utrecht this was only €87 (Airdna, 2017). Listing a spare room or home in Amsterdam is therefore more profitable.

Slightly more than in Amsterdam, accommodation providers experience competition from Airbnb in Utrecht. Nevertheless, the amount of overnight stays in hotels in Utrecht is growing, which can be seen in figure 12 of the Appendix. After the year 2015 a small decrease of overnight stays in hotels can be seen. This decrease is probably due to the extra tourists in Utrecht in 2015, that came because of the event the 'Tour de France'. One might say this event led to a spike in demand, which could be well supplied by Airbnb (Guttentag, 2015). The respondents of the municipality of Utrecht and of Bnbservice both believe Airbnb forms an addition to the supply of accommodation. They stress Airbnb supply is important for a city because some tourists specifically go to Airbnb accommodations and would not come if there were only hotels available.

71% of the respondents from Utrecht did not have an objection to Airbnb. Their main reasons not to object are because they do not experience any problems and because they rent themselves. The other reasons were mentioned less often, as seen in figure 3. 17% of the respondents that do not object to Airbnb do so because they believe it is good for the city, 9% thinks it is a good source of income and another 11% has other reasons. Within the category 'good for the city' some economic benefits for the city were mentioned, but not which economic benefits. These benefits could be dispersion of economic activity as mentioned by Guttentag (2015) or the revenue for the hosts as mentioned by Oskam and Boswijk (2016). Unfortunately, this remains unclear. Airbnb (2017) itself talks about an estimated economic activity for Utrecht of 33 million euros. One can conclude Airbnb locations are more dispersed than hotel locations (figure 9 and 10 in the appendix), but Oskam and Boswijk's (2016) research pointed out that the economic benefit of dispersion is very limited and that Airbnb mostly only benefits Airbnb hosts.

Other positive effects, like the emerging of social ties and Airbnb being sustainable (Botsman & Rogers, 2010), were not mentioned by the respondents of Utrecht, nor Amsterdam. This could indicate that these effects are not considered very important by citizens of Amsterdam and Utrecht.

4.2 THE REGULATION AND ITS PERCEPTION IN AMSTERDAM AND UTRECHT

As seen in table 5 there is a significant difference in how the regulations are perceived in Amsterdam and in Utrecht. What regulations are currently applicable in Amsterdam and Utrecht can be seen in table 6 of the appendix. The citizens of Amsterdam are generally very positive about the regulations, especially the 60 days annual limit. However, they are dissatisfied about the way these regulations are maintained. They want the regulations to be checked more often and more thoroughly. A small number of the respondents are hosts themselves. They think the regulations should be more focused on illegal hotels instead of on all people using Airbnb. This was also on the agenda of the municipality of Amsterdam, which closed 284 illegal hotels in 2016 (NRC, 2017). The respondent of Bnbservice Utrecht and the respondent of Bnbmanager both believe that if the annual limit decreases further, for example to 30 days, it will become less appealing for people to list their home or spare room on Airbnb. This will lead to a decrease of supply of Airbnb listings. They both believe this will not solve the problem of nuisance and decreased livability, because that is mainly due to tourism in general. Following the idea of Botsman and Rogers (2010), a further decrease would be unfortunate for the overall sustainability of the accommodation sector, the emerge of new social ties and possibly the creation of new jobs (Zervas et al., 2014).

	Value	Degrees of freedom	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	25.532 ^a	2	.000
Likelihood Ratio	27.669	2	.000
N of Valid Cases	62		
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.03.			

Table 5: the chi-square tests testing the null hypothesis: there is no difference in the perception of regulations in Amsterdam and Utrecht

A clear result of the survey was that most respondent from Utrecht have no idea what the regulations for Airbnb are. The municipality of Utrecht's main reason for regulations is creating more transparency for the citizens. They believe that when the regulations for Airbnb are clearer, people will be more likely to make a complaint when regulations are broken. They, similar to Amsterdam, want to implement an annual limit for renting out entire homes, this will probably be a 60 days limit but this is not certain yet. These regulations follow O'Regans and Choe's (2017) ideas about what regulation is needed to a big extent. The regulations planned for Utrecht are different from the regulations in Amsterdam concerning the maximum guests that are allowed to stay in an Airbnb. In Amsterdam this is a maximum of 4 whereas in Utrecht it will probably be a maximum of 4, unless it is a family staying in the Airbnb. The municipality of Utrecht believes more than 4 guests will not increase nuisance for the neighbors when it concerns a family.

5 CONCLUSIONS

In this study, it is examined how citizens of Amsterdam and Utrecht perceive the effects and the current regulations of Airbnb. How the citizens perceive the effects and regulations of Airbnb were collected by means of surveys. The interviews provided more in-depth information.

The survey results indicate that even though there is a significant difference in how Airbnb is perceived in Amsterdam and Utrecht, the majority of the citizens from both cities experience Airbnb positively and do not have an objection to Airbnb. Mainly because they have never experienced any problems or because they like to make use of Airbnb themselves when visiting other cities. Other reasons not to object to Airbnb are because they believe Airbnb is good for their city, because they see it as a good way to earn money or because they believe the tourists are not more a consequence of Airbnb, than of the traditional accommodation providers. The decreased housing supply, the nuisance and the decreased livability are perceived as the main negative effects of Airbnb. The feeling of unease, the loss of social cohesion and the overall tourist pressure are valued as more important downsides of Airbnb than nuisance from loud tourists. All these effects are in line with what can be found in other researches. The amount of citizens objecting to Airbnb on account of nuisance is much bigger in Amsterdam than in Utrecht. This could be a result of more experienced nuisance in Amsterdam or because the tourists sector in general is much bigger in Amsterdam. The citizens of Amsterdam are content with the regulations for Airbnb in their city, but want the regulations to be maintained and controlled more. A substantial part of the citizens from Utrecht is not familiar with the regulations for Airbnb. The municipality of Utrecht wants to resolve this by implementing new, clearer regulations.

Limitations for this study were the absence of longitudinal data on Airbnb and especially on the regulations of Airbnb. It is still fairly early to study the perception of the regulations, since a substantial deal of the respondents are not familiar with the regulations. In addition, the survey results provided the ability to test whether there is a difference between Amsterdam and Utrecht, but not how big this difference is, nor, what this difference indicates. Longitudinal data could help future research examining if Airbnb in fact has an increasing effect on housing prices and if Airbnb leads to more dispersion of economic activity.

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8.1 GISMAP LOCATING AMSTERDAM AND UTRECHT



Figure 4: GISmap locating municipality of Amsterdam and municipality of Utrecht in the Netherlands
Source: CBS, 2017.

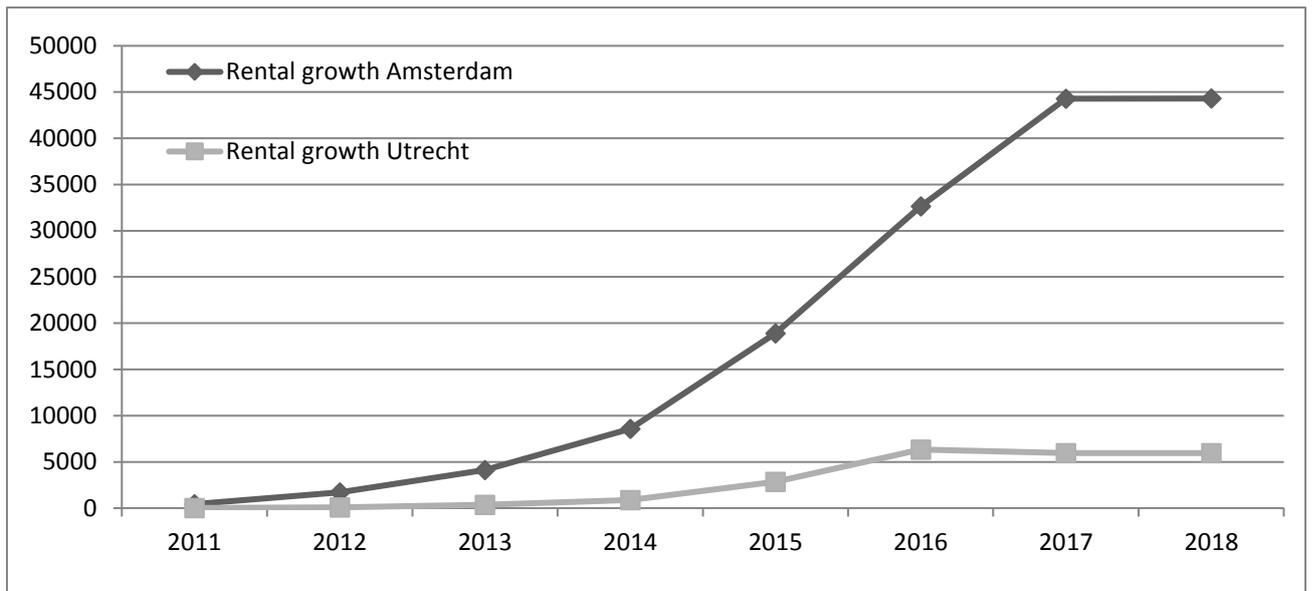


Figure 5: the growth of Airbnb in Amsterdam and Utrecht from 2010 to 2018
 Source: Airdna (2018)

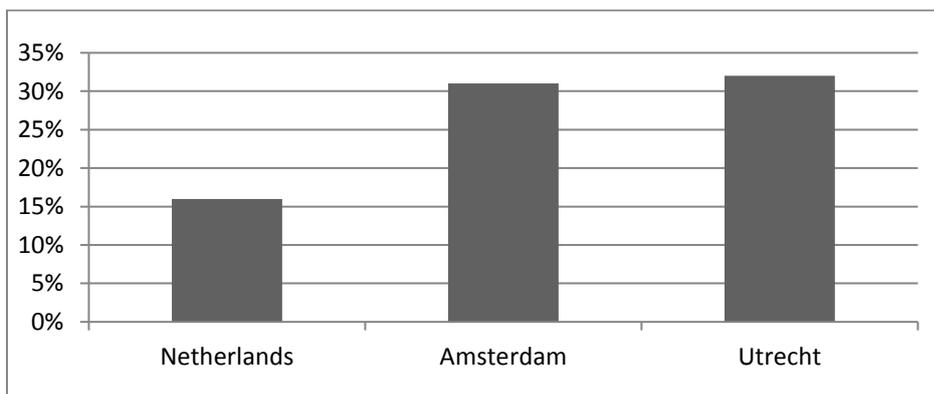


Figure 6: percentage accommodation providers that experience competition from online platforms like Airbnb in 2016
 Source: CBS (2017)

Regulation Amsterdam	Regulation Utrecht
<p><u>Renting one or more rooms:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Payment of tourist and income tax* - Max 4 persons* - Max 60 days per calendar year* - Notification night register - The one renting must be head dweller - Permission from VvE <p><u>Renting entire homes :</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Payment of tourist and income tax* - Max 4 persons* - Max 60 days per calendar year* - Reporting duty ** - The one renting must be head dweller - Home meets fire safety requirements - Permission from VvE - Only incidental renting <p>* since 2014 ** since 2017</p>	<p><u>Renting one or two rooms:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Payment of tourist tax - No permit needed - Notification of fire safe use when renting to more than 4 persons - Max 5 persons <p><u>Renting three or four rooms:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Payment of tourist tax - Permit needed - Notification of fire safe use when renting to more than 4 persons - Max 10 persons <p><u>Renting entire homes incidental:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Payment of tourist tax - No permit needed - Notification of fire safe use when renting to more than 4 persons <p><u>Renting entire homes structurally:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Payment of tourist tax - Environmental permit needed - Notification of fire safe use when renting to more than 4 persons - If WOZ value home is below €305.000: housing withdrawal permit

Table 6: Overview of the most important regulations for Airbnb in Amsterdam and Utrecht
Source: Gemeente Amsterdam (2017) and Gemeente Utrecht (2017)

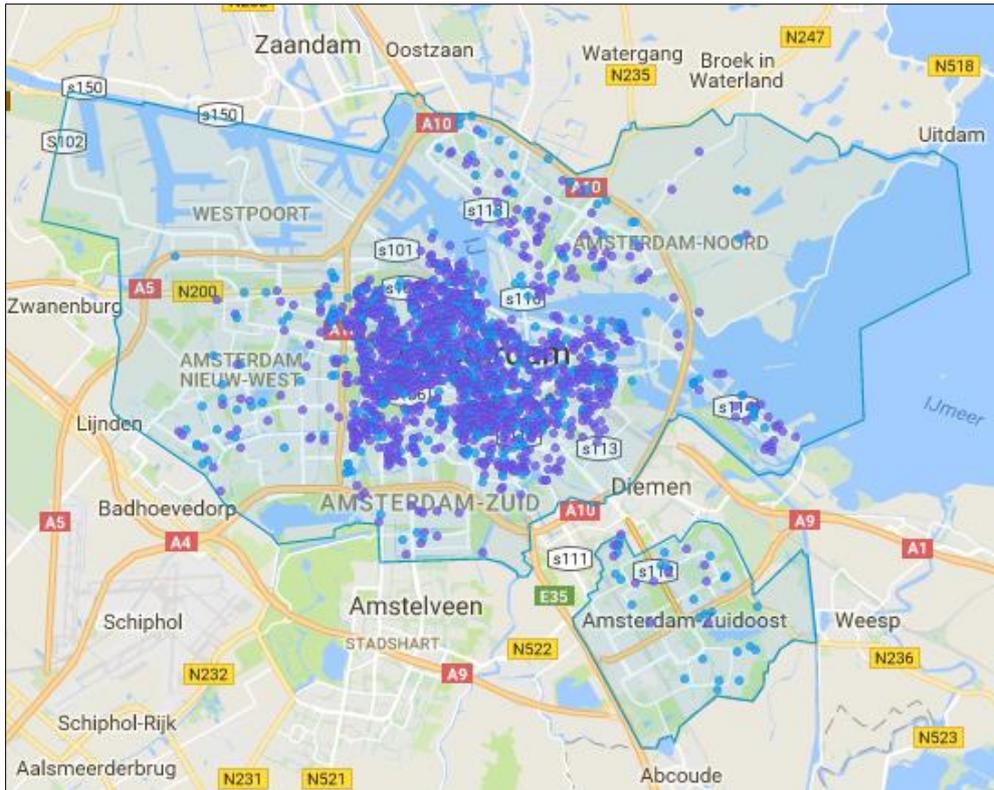


Figure 7: Dispersion of Airbnb addresses in Amsterdam
 Source: Airdna (2017)

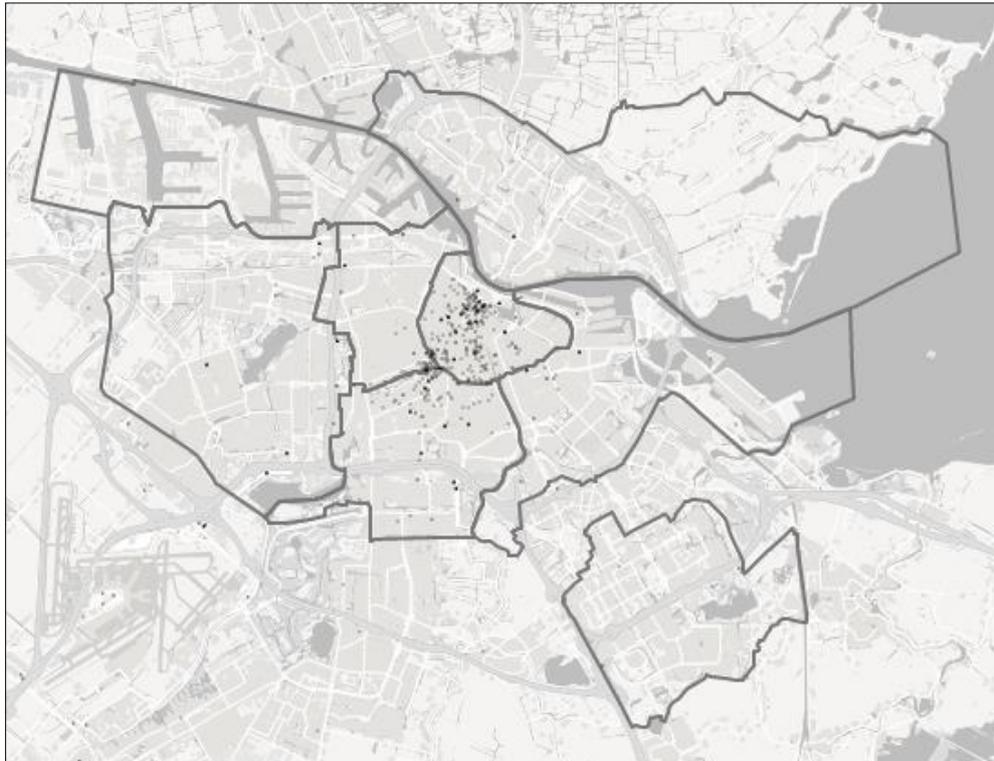


Figure 8: Dispersion of Hotel addresses in Amsterdam
 Source: Municipality of Amsterdam (2016)

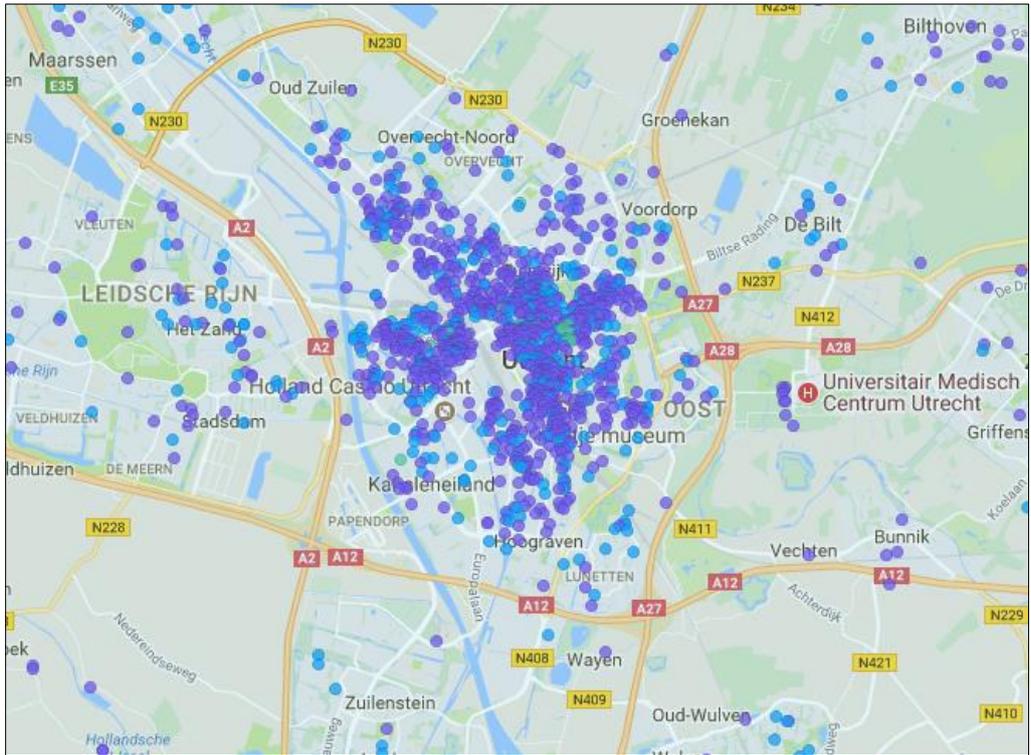


Figure 9: Dispersion of Airbnb addresses in Utrecht
 Source: Airdna (2017)



Figure 10: Dispersion of hotel addresses in Utrecht
 Source: Google Maps (2017)



Figure 11: The overnight stays in hotels for Amsterdam from 2012 till 2016
Source: CBS (2017)

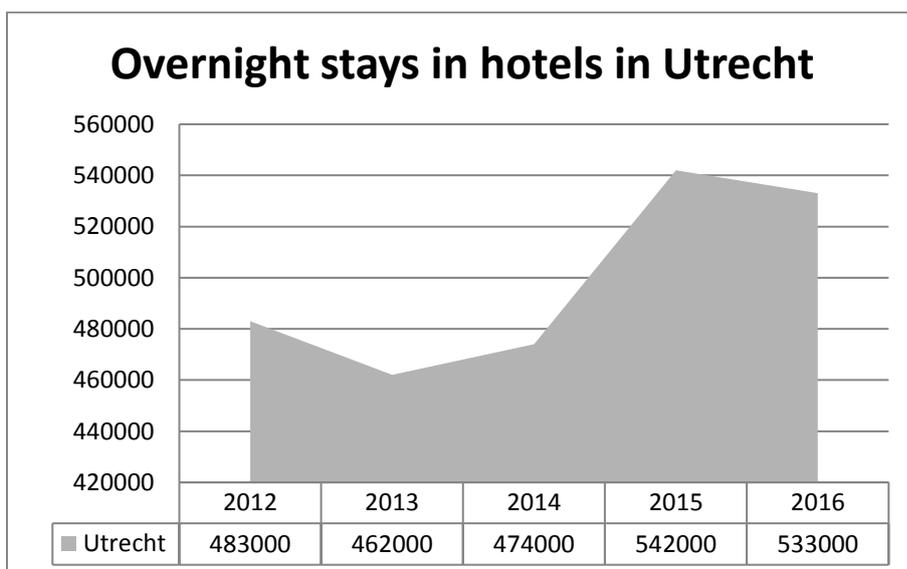


Figure 12: The overnight stays in hotels for Utrecht from 2012 till 2016
Source: CBS (2017)