Large Housing Estates in the Netherlands

Overview of developments and problems in Amsterdam and Utrecht
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RESTATE report 2e

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RESTATE
Restructuring Large-scale Housing Estates in European Cities: Good Practices and New Visions for Sustainable Neighbourhoods and Cities

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Faculty of Geosciences, Utrecht University
**RESTATE**

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Introduction

1.1 RESTATE: a general overview

Cities and their regions are the dynamos of the European economy, enabling the European Union (and potential member states) to maintain a strong position in the global economy. When these cities contain large areas that are not faring well, it is important to find out how best to change them in order to remove the dysfunctional characteristics. Large-scale housing estates built in the three or four decades after the Second World War are often seen as problem areas in many cities all over Europe. Here, economic decline goes hand in hand with physical and social decline.

All over Europe massive numbers of people live in these post-WWII large-scale housing estates. The estates were carefully planned, but now often manifest a multitude of problems. They house large numbers of low-income households, the unemployment rates are above average and in some countries they have become concentration areas for ethnic minorities. Many estates are becoming increasingly associated with crime and social exclusion. The circumstances on the estates and policy initiatives associated with these are the focus of the RESTATE project. An important part of the project is the exchange of experiences and solutions between policymakers and scientists.

RESTATE is the acronym for ‘Restructuring Large-scale Housing Estates in European Cities: Good Practices and New Visions for Sustainable Neighbourhoods and Cities.’ All participants in this project share the basic underlying conviction: if the problems of these large-scale housing estates are not resolved, they will increasingly hinder the good economic functioning of the cities. The study draws on estates in ten European countries: France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

The project has the following objectives:

• to identify and to clarify the social and economic changes which have occurred in large post-WWII estates and particularly to identify general and specific factors triggering and influencing the emergence of problems and patterns of decline in these areas;

• to develop a checklist of items that have proved to be important in successful and less successful policy responses with respect to these estates;

• to draw conclusions about the potential for cross-national transfer of knowledge and experience and for cooperation in strategic planning for these areas and in area and estate management;
• to produce a comprehensive and practical handbook in which forward-looking scenarios and new visions for large post-WWII estates in Europe are associated with examples of evidence-based best practice to achieve sustainable future development of these areas;
• to build for practitioners and researchers a user-friendly database containing details of the nature, successes and failures of present policies aimed at improving the position of large post-WWII estates and their inhabitants;
• to consider whether and how European level policy could contribute to more effective responses to problems associated with these estates.

The primary objective of RESTATE is to deliver evidence-based knowledge drawing on the experience in cities in all parts of Europe. The methods used in the research are literature research, statistical overviews, interviews, a survey and discussions with urban representatives. The proposed handbook that will be written at the end of the research period will set out best practices for future sustainable developments of these areas and for effective policy implementation. It is hoped that the results will be useful for policymakers seeking to find out the contexts in which measures have been, or can be expected to be, successful in improving large-scale housing estates in cities.

Case studies are the heart of the project. Each study:
• establishes general information about the estate: its characteristics, history, demographic, social, economic and physical development and problems;
• identifies the philosophy and aims of the policies that are being promoted in the estates, how policies have matured over time, what the effects of the policies are and how all this can be evaluated.

It is important to know what we mean by a large-scale housing estate. Following Power (1997), we could define a large-scale housing estate as a group of buildings that is recognised as a distinct and discrete geographical area. We add one element to this definition: we see large-scale housing estates as developments planned by the State or with State support. With respect to size, we confine our attention to housing estates with at least 2,000 housing units. The focus on the project is on estates built in the second half of the 20th century. Taking these elements together, this project is concerned with large-scale housing estates built in the second half of the 20th century that can be defined as groups of at least 2,000 housing units that are recognised as distinct and geographical areas, planned by the State or with State support.¹

1.2 The contents of this report

In a first report of the RESTATE project (Murie et al., 2003), we concentrated on the structural and other factors that explain the difference between the success and failure of large post-war estates in Europe. The present report deals specifically with large housing estates in two cities in the Netherlands: Amsterdam and Utrecht. The basic question addressed in this report reads as follows:

¹ In the rest of the report we refer to these estates as large housing estates.
What types and combinations of problems have been identified in the large housing estates in Amsterdam and Utrecht (the Netherlands) and what factors are associated with them?

In order to identify the specific problems of each estate we first needed a detailed description of the development of each estate and the cities and countries to which they belong. The research has therefore focused on the following variables:

- physical structure (quality, tenure, price and type of the dwellings, quality and character of the environment);
- demographic developments (age structure, income distribution, household and ethnic composition);
- economic developments (employment and unemployment, number, type and size of firms);
- socio-cultural developments (changing values and norms within the estate, changing cultural identity).

On completion of this general description, an inventory was made of the problems and problematic developments in the estates.

In chapter 2 we give some general background information on the Netherlands. We are of the opinion that these general developments reported there might influence the situation of cities and their large housing estates. Chapter 3 provides a general overview of the city of Amsterdam. An understanding of the large housing estates in this city requires information on the economic, demographic and socio-cultural developments at the urban level. Chapters 4-7 describe the housing estates in Amsterdam. Chapter 8 gives some background information on the city of Utrecht, the second Dutch city in the RESTATE project. The large housing estates in Utrecht are described in chapters 9-12. Finally, chapter 13 gives some conclusions.

This report is concerned with the Netherlands; the same kind of information for estates in other countries in the RESTATE project can be found in the parallel reports.
Similar to other countries in Western Europe, the Netherlands has been confronted with several socio-cultural, demographic, economic and political changes. These changes have affected the number of low- as well as high-income households, their housing and labour market opportunities and their standard of living. In this chapter, the main trends and some of their effects in the Netherlands will be briefly reviewed.

2.1 Economic developments

In the last three or four decades the Dutch economy has gone through a process of profound restructuring. The Netherlands was in a period of economic growth in the 1960s and early 1970s. The number of jobs was increasing so much in those times, that people from abroad were asked to come temporarily to the Netherlands: they became the first generation of guest workers (see later). But especially in the late 1970s and early 1980s, many industrial workers became redundant; in that period many plants closed down, while others migrated to other countries. An economy based for a significant part on manufacturing made way for a service-based economy. Computerization and automation led to a further decline in the industrial workforce.

![Figure 2.1 – Increase of the gross national product of the Netherlands, 1988-2002](Image)
Since the second half of the 1980s, the Dutch economy has developed in a very positive way. Some years even showed economic growth figures between four and five per cent of the gross national product. Growth has slowed down in the beginning of the 1990s, but this was followed by a boom in the second half of that decade. Currently, however, especially in 2002, economic developments showed the lowest increase of the past 20 years (0.2 per cent) (figure 2.1).

These ups and downs are clearly related to the general economic restructuring process and also to waves in the world economy. The Dutch economy is a very open economy, which makes it very vulnerable to negative developments in other countries. However, it is at least remarkable that between 1994 and 2001 the number of people working in the industrial sector (including the building industry) still increased somewhat. The biggest increases could however be found in the service sector (commercial services, as well as non-commercial services) (table 2.1).

The workers made redundant in the manufacturing industry could not always find a new job in the expanding service sector; skills required were generally different and frequently higher. Due to economic growth unemployment started to decline in the second half of the 1980s. The lowest unemployment figure (2.0 per cent of the labour force) was reached in 2001. Since then, for the first time in about a decade, figures started to increase again (figure 2.2). The Dutch welfare system influences these figures as well; about 1 million people (992,800) depend on the Act for individuals who are unfit for work [WAO: Wet op de arbeidsongeschiktheidsverzekering] (www.cbs.nl, visited in June 2003). Although these people are not qualified as unemployed, they don’t participate in the labour market as well (to some extent we can speak of ‘hidden unemployment’).

The booming economy has provided a lot of households with high and growing incomes. This has been especially true for all kinds of specialists (for example in the IT-branch). Those living in a two-earner household, with a partner with a more or less equally well-paid job, are sometimes enjoying very high incomes.

These developments of course raise the question whether the Dutch society is confronted with dualization, polarization, or a growing inequality. The developments may result in a society

| Table 2.1 – Economic sectors in the Netherlands: number of people working (x1,000) |
|--------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Agriculture and Fishing Industry    | 237   | 207   | 189   |
| Industry and Building Industry     | 1,439 | 1,520 | 1,571 |
| Commercial Services                 | 2,184 | 2,561 | 2,801 |
| Non-commercial Services             | 1,845 | 2,122 | 2,247 |

Source: www.cbs.nl, visited in April 2003
divided in haves and have-nots. In general it can be concluded that there are indeed discernible
trends towards unequal developments for different groups, creating growing income gaps.
This can be seen in particular when comparing the situation of those without a job or the low
skilled employed and the affluent double-income households (Burgers, 1996). Figures referring
to income developments partly confirm these thoughts; although the average annual income of
all households (both the low and high income groups) increased 30 per cent the past decade,
households that already enjoyed the highest incomes took more advantage than those in the
lowest category (an increase of almost 32 and 13 per cent respectively) (www.cbs.nl, visited in
April 2003). The declining welfare state is part of this development (see below).

2.2 Demographic and socio-cultural developments

Until the late 1960s, independent households in the Netherlands were constituted mainly of
families where the husband worked outside of the home and earned the money, while the
wife worked inside the house and took also care of the children. A recent research programme
carried out in the Netherlands (WRR, 2000) has shown that this so-called 'traditional'
household only dominated for a very small period of time: just before and some decades after
the Second World War.

After the mid 1960s, many people started to develop divergent ideas about marriage, family,
the number of children and independence for wives as well as husbands. Living together
without being married and without children, at least for a longer period than before, became
the ideal for a growing number of young couples (the introduction and acceptance of new
contraceptives made this a lot easier). Two earners in a household gradually became the
norm. Equally, living alone – without parents or without a partner – became more and more
acceptable for young people, males and females alike.

These socio-cultural developments resulted in a rising number of singles, two-person
households and dual earner households on the one hand, and a declining number of families
with a husband earning the money and a wife taking care of the children, on the other.
Changes with respect to living arrangements, dwelling and the living environment can be seen as important effects of a general process of emancipation and individualization active in most European countries, including the Netherlands. The fact that this especially holds for the largest cities may be connected to a greater level of tolerance compared to for example smaller cities and rural areas (Van Kempen and Teule, 1989) and to the availability of suitable dwellings.

The prosperous economy of the 1960s affected the values and norms with respect to dwellings and residential environments. Rising standards of education and increasing incomes made it possible to realize new ideas and ideals; the spending power of many households rapidly increased. The choice between an old three-room apartment in a declining neighbourhood and a four- or five-room single-family dwelling with a garden, built outside the city in a green suburban area was easily made for those who could afford a move and were looking for a less urban environment. Suburbanization was the result as many households decided to move to the suburbs and to the government planned growth centres. Between 1960 and 1980, Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague, the three largest cities in the country, lost over half a million of their inhabitants, a quarter of their total population (Jobse, 1986).

The total population of the Netherlands has increased steadily since the Second World War. While in 1960 the country counted only 11.5 million inhabitants, in the year 2000 almost 16 million people lived in the Netherlands (table 2.2). This is an increase of more than 30 per cent. The number of households increased even more: while in 1960 the number of households in the Netherlands was almost 3.2 million, in 2000 this number had increased to 6.8 million, a relative increase of about 114 per cent within 40 years (www.cbs.nl, visited in April 2003).

The process of individualization and emancipation has caused the number of small households to increase, while at the same time the number of ‘traditional’ families declined. While in 1960 only 387,000 households consisted of one single person, this number amounted to 2.3 million in 2000. This is one of the most prominent demographic trends in the Netherlands, if only because it caused an enormous rise in housing demand and increased competition on, specifically, the urban housing markets. Forecasts also suggest that this trend will continue; by 2050 the number of one-person households is expected to be 3.4 million, an increase of almost 35 per cent, while the number of persons who live together (including the married couples) is predicted to rise just 6.0 per cent (www.cbs.nl, visited in April 2003).

The number of single-parent families in the Netherlands also increased in the past decades, partly due to the socio-cultural developments. While a small part of this increase is the result of free choice, the main cause is divorce. A substantial number of the Social Welfare Act [ABW: Algemene Bijstandswet] recipients in the country, particularly in the large cities, are single-parent families. These households have little perspective of income growth in the future.

Also the changing age structure has had an influence on the household structure. A very significant demographic trend in the Netherlands is the aging of the population. At least in part, the increase of elderly has to do with improved medical facilities. One significant implication of this development, is that many dwellings cease to become vacant; people not only die at a later age, but also tend to live in the same house for a longer period of time instead of moving to a retirement home. Despite the increasing importance of pensions in the Netherlands, still many elderly (both singles and couples) are dependent on an elderly benefit
as their only income. This partly explains the large number of elderly belonging to the low-income groups.

After the post-WWII baby boom, the number of children has started to decline after 1970. The baby boomers have now reached the age category 20-44 and from table 2.2 it can be seen that this age category has shown a steady growth for decades.

Migration is another significant demographic development. This development has been common in the Netherlands for a long time. The colonial legacy, as well as international labour migration (arrival of guest workers), has made the Dutch population increasingly diverse (Van Kempen, 1997). In the 1950s, many Dutch citizens of mixed ethnic stock were repatriated form the East Indies (Indonesians), accompanied by some 20,000 ethnic Moluccans. During the 1960s and 1970s, the immigration of guest workers started. First they were recruited from Northern Mediterranean countries like Spain and Italy. Later they came from more remote countries like Turkey and Morocco. At that time the temporary guest worker was seen as the solution for the then present labour market shortages (Penninx et al., 1993).

While most people from Spain and Italy indeed only stayed for a brief period, many Turks and Moroccans decided to settle in the Netherlands. A process of family reunion therefore followed immigration of the male workers. In 1960 only about 100 Turks lived in the Netherlands. In 1990, this number had risen to 191,500. For the Moroccan population the figures are comparable: 100 in 1960 and 148,000 in 1990. Due to nationalization (and some return migration), the number of people with the Turkish or Moroccan nationality has gradually declined since 1990.

Due to the availability of work, the guest workers often settled in cities and despite the fact that many of their original jobs have disappeared nowadays, the city remained their place to live. For a large part this is the consequence of the availability of cheap dwellings. However, some may prefer the city because of the presence of fellow-countrymen, specialized shops and other facilities like mosques. The families of the guest workers have, in combination with migration from the former colony of Surinam, definitely contributed to housing demand and housing competition in the largest cities. This especially holds for the cheapest segments of the urban housing stock; many households belonging to these categories have low incomes, either because they are unemployed or because they have a low paid job, often without any career perspective.

Today, migration of this form is less significant. The concept of ‘guest worker’ has long been abandoned, and family reunion has almost been completed. Currently, many though definitely

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Source: www.cbs.nl, visited in April 2003

Table 2.2 – Age categories in the Netherlands (%), 1960–2000

...
not a majority of the people migrating to the Netherlands, are refugees and asylum seekers. As the result of Dutch (housing) policy with respect to these people, they are spread all over the country and do not, at least initially, concentrate in cities.

2.3 Housing policy and housing market developments

The early post-war period
After the Second World War, there was a severe shortage of housing in the Netherlands. Hundreds of thousands of homes had been destroyed or damaged and very few new homes had been built. Out of necessity many families had to move in with others. A baby boom aggravated the shortage of housing. This led to a new phase in the history of social housing. Ever since the Second World War, the Dutch central government took the lead in public policies, including housing. Although the most important housing agencies, the housing associations or housing corporations, were privately regulated institutions, they became increasingly subject to public regulation (Salet, 1999). Thus, social landlords dominate rented housing. Landlords are considered as being in the social housing sector if they are approved as ‘social’. The Netherlands has about 700 housing corporations managing more than two million dwellings.

In practice the housing corporations became branch offices of government in that (1) central government determined rents, and set very detailed building requirements through subsidies and loans, and (2) local government determined the choice of architect, the manner in which contracts were tendered, and also handled supervision during construction. Local government also took charge of housing allocation (for more details, see Bazlinton, 1999; Dieleman, 1999). During this period, solving the quantitative housing shortage was a number one priority and object subsidies were a natural ingredient of this policy (Aalbers, 2003). In order to reduce building costs, attention was given to increasing efficiency, normally achieved by mass prefab production which resulted in a great deal of mid-rise construction.

The re-regulation of the housing market
The government’s role changed in the 1980s. The belief that a society could be governed down to the smallest detail by regulation was dropped. Growing central government deficits led to cutback after cutback. Because of a slowly declining housing shortage, social housing received a lower priority. With the policy document/white paper Housing in the Nineties (1989), government took some steps in withdrawal from the housing market. By several changes in the 1990s the housing corporations were cut loose from central government. The most important change was made by the Brutering or Operatie Balansverkorting (1995) by which the exploitation subsidies for years to come were cancelled out against government loans. Although after the Brutering, only a few financial ties between the government and the housing associations remained, there are still a lot of hidden subsidies involved.

While subject subsidies (for both the social rented and the private rented sector, and recently also for some owner-occupants) should solve the affordability problem for low- and moderate-income people, both suppliers of housing and housing consumers got more freedom: freedom of contract and negotiation, but also freedom of choice. Solving the quantitative housing shortage was no longer a major issue, while solving the qualitative housing shortage (the gap
between the demand for and supply of housing amenities) was. The basics of this policy were strengthened in the 1990s and will be carried on in the years to come, as the next major policy document/white paper on housing (2000) has the following major purposes: (1) deregulation of the housing market, (2) more resident control and more choice for housing consumers, and (3) the promotion of homeownership and the selling of parts of the social housing stock.

In comparison with other European countries fewer people in the Netherlands own their homes. Recent years, however, have shown a dramatic expansion of homeownership, which now stands at around 55 per cent, up from 42 per cent in 1981. A number of factors have encouraged this trend. First, a low interest rate, secondly the banks’ policy of accepting higher risks on home mortgages, thirdly the favourable national tax structure and finally the role of government; landlords are asked to consider selling their rental dwellings to individuals. A small subsidy is available to give tenants an incentive to buy if the opportunity arises.

This structural shift in the housing system, in turn, helped to stimulate the long market boom. Prices on the owner-occupant market have been rising very fast in the 1990s: the average rise for the country was 81 per cent between 1990 and 1998, this is the second highest within the EU (prices in Ireland rose by 90 per cent in the same period). Moreover, especially in the Utrecht and North-Holland (including Amsterdam) provinces owner-occupant units are relatively expensive: while the average price for owner-occupant units was 188,000 euro in 2001, the average for the regions Utrecht and North-Holland was 225,000 euro (www.kadaster.nl, visited on the 26th of May 2003).

Compared to other European countries the private rented sector in the Netherlands is rather small. There are very many small private landlords and although they already own just a small number of dwellings, this number is declining. One reason for this is the purchase of private property by housing corporations, which renovate or replace them with new buildings in urban renewal schemes. Another reason is that some units are sold when a vacancy occurs, or sold to the sitting tenant. Next to the small private landlords, private investors such as pension funds and insurance companies own a large number of dwellings, mostly fairly new high-rise complexes and with relatively high rents. Maintenance of these dwellings is often contracted out to an agent or other local intermediary.

To summarize, we see two main shifts: from a suppliers’ market to a consumers’ market and from a renters’ market to a buyers’ – or, better, owner-occupant’s – market (Aalbers, 2003). This is further enhanced by the liberalization of the social housing regime and the selling off of social housing. As only one-fifth of the 36 per cent of social housing is planned to be sold off, this will not result in a completely marginalized social housing sector.

**Housing allocation**

This large social housing sector is highly regulated: the main criteria for housing allocation and residential differentiation are income and household composition. The considerable state intervention in the Dutch housing market is even more fierce in the major cities, especially in Amsterdam. This state intervention has three major directions: a large amount of social housing; regulation in housing assignment by a variety of rules, up till very recently even

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² This was very common in the 1980s and early 1990s, but although funding for this has decreased in recent years, housing corporations still buy deprived private rented housing.
involving properties outside the social housing stock; and, quite significant, rent subsidies (see Kesteloot and Cortie, 1998: 1842-1844).

Within the social housing sector households can apply to certain units (depending on certain allocation criteria like income and households size). All vacant units are advertised in weekly papers which are available for free in many neighbourhood centres and stores all-around the city and, most of Amsterdam’s neighbouring municipalities. People can apply to a maximum of three units every week, and for each dwelling the one with the longest period of registration or of settlement at the current dwelling has the first pick, but is not forced to accept the apartment.

As guest workers, in the early 1970s, were not allowed to live in a social rented dwelling, they were more or less obliged to rent in the private rented sector or forced to buy a house. Later, once this situation changed, many newcomers often did not know the procedures to take possession of such a dwelling. Moreover, because social rented dwellings were scarce, they had to wait for at least a few years before such a dwelling was allocated to them. For these reasons, the mass in-migration of non-Dutch into the large housing estates we will discuss in this report only took place since the early 1980s. As both income and the size of a household are important allocation criteria, the relatively large and payable dwellings in some of these estates are allocated to the lowest incomes with large families, often non-Dutch households.

Changing urban renewal policies
Since the 1960s, the policy of the Dutch government on urban renewal has been subject to three approaches, each one different from the others (Vermeijden, 2001). Up until the early 1970s, the accent was on the expansion of the function of the larger cities as economic centres. The expansion of the inner city for that purpose proceeded at the expense of the residential function of the built-up area. In the late 1970s and 1980s, the main goal was just the opposite: attention was turned to the quantitative and qualitative reinforcement of the urban residential function of the city centre and its surrounding urban residential neighbourhoods. Under that approach, the accent was placed on improving the housing conditions of the ‘sitting’ residents. Accordingly, the construction program consisted for the most part of social housing that was extra inexpensive.

At the end of the 1980s it was realized that pure economic goals were harming the necessary social cohesive forces in society. Policy concentrating on areas with multiple problems (problem accumulation areas) and in a later stage the policy of social renewal had to repair this; civic society had to be activated. The role of the policy was to increase participation in society, via the labour market, but also via all kinds of social relations. Because all kinds of social relations can be found and/or activated in the neighbourhood, it was considered to be an important vehicle in this respect.

Only since the early 1990s was the concept of urban revitalization elevated to a prominent position at both the reflective and the practical level of the policy discourse. Government interventions were intended primarily to improve the operation of the market mechanism in the Netherlands and to give the country a competitive advantage in the international economy. The support given to the relatively deprived was considered justified as long as its disruptive effect on the market mechanism is kept as small as possible and as long as the support is geared to (re)entry and integration into the market economies. The policy to help disadvantaged groups catch up with the rest of society was legitimated with reference to the presumably
negative effect that deprived neighbourhoods would have on the economic base of urban amenities.

In the 1990s the Big City Policy I, that exists side-to-side with the urban revitalization program, concentrated on so called ‘income-neighbourhoods’, a euphemism for areas that are homogeneous with respect to income. That is to say, the policy concentrated on urban neighbourhoods where a relatively large share of the population had a low income. The policy aimed at fighting this sort of segregation, because especially the rise of ‘income ghettos’ was feared. Therefore, the policy concentrated at restructuring the urban housing market at the level of neighbourhoods: low cost accommodation had to be destroyed and replaced and mixed with more expensive houses in order to attract more well-to-do households to the neighbourhood. In Big City Policy II the aim changed somewhat from attracting new well-to-do households to offering better chances for the existing residents of the neighbourhood to find accommodation for a housing-career within the same area, i.e. preventing the need to go to another neighbourhood for finding other and better accommodation (for more details, see Musterd et al., 2003; Van Kempen, 2000).

2.4 State of the housing stock

In the 1990s the Netherlands has seen a modest rise in the share of social housing units, a somewhat stronger increase in owner-occupied units (currently 53 per cent) and a halving of the share of private rented units (from 23 to 11 per cent) (see table 2.3). Although the regions (provinces) that host the four major cities have a similar tenure profile, the four major cities do not: they all have higher shares of social rented and private rented units and lower shares of owner-occupied units. While the smallest of the four cities, Utrecht, still resembles the Netherlands to a large degree, the tenure profile of the three largest cities and in particular

Table 2.3 – Netherlands’ housing stock by tenure (%), 1986–2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owner-occupied</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private rented</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social rented</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number</td>
<td>5,384,000</td>
<td>5,802,000</td>
<td>6,191,900</td>
<td>6,589,700</td>
<td>6,649,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of VROM, ABF Woningvoorraadbestand

Table 2.4 – Netherlands’ housing stock by tenure, spatial breakdown (%), 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number (100%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owner-occupied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private rented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social rented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hague</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hague</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of VROM, 2001, ABF Woningvoorraadbestand
Amsterdam is very different from that of the country (see table 2.4). Buildings also tend to be older in the four major cities than in the country as a whole (see table 2.5).

**Type of buildings and affordability**

The share of multi-family dwellings in the Dutch housing stock has been very stable in the post-WWII period: it was 29 per cent in 1947 and has not been lower since. The share of these dwellings is higher in the more densely built regions in the west of the country than in some of the more rural regions (e.g. 44 per cent in the North-Holland South-province and 12 per cent in some of the northern provinces respectively). The average number of inhabitants per dwelling (both single- and multi-family) has dropped from 3.51 in 1970, to 2.56 in 1990 and 2.41 in 2000; it is expected to drop to 2.30 in 2010 (source: website Ministry of VROM).

Due to the large share of social housing in the Netherlands, affordability is less of an issue than in many other countries. The average rent rose from 272 euro in 1995 to 339 euro a month in 2001; in Amsterdam it rose from 231 to 295 euro. The rent increases in Utrecht were more dramatic: from 259 euro in 1995 to 368 euro in 2001. However, because many people who can afford more expensive dwellings live in these affordable units, and because of the rising prices for owner-occupant housing, this does not mean there is affordable housing for all who need it. About 5 per cent of the low- and moderate income households lives in housing that is considered too expensive for them; a larger share of middle- and high-income people is living in housing that is considered too cheap. Although ‘living too expensive’ is considered to be a problem, ‘living too cheap’ is less.

The overall quality of the housing stock is very high in the Netherlands; it is among the highest in the world. Low-maintenance and to a larger extent, small size (often multi-family

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**Table 2.5 – Netherlands’ housing stock by building period (%), 2001**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utrecht city</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotterdam</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hague</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABF Woningvoorraadbestand, 2001

**Table 2.6 – Netherlands’ size of the housing stock in number of rooms (%), 2001**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of rooms</th>
<th>1 or 2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6 or more</th>
<th>Total number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>6,649,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utrecht city</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>111,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>373,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotterdam</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>284,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hague</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>216,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABF Woningvoorraadbestand, 2001
dwellings) are considered to be the biggest problems. Both dwelling types are over-represented in the pre-WWII and early post-WWII stock in the large cities (see table 2.6). Also, the quality is lower for rental units, especially those owned by small private landlords.

2.5 Conclusions

Developments in large housing estates are at least partially influenced by developments on other spatial scales. In this chapter we have paid attention to developments on the national scale. Some changes that will particularly affect the situation of our estates are summarized below:

• Like every (western) European country, the Netherlands have experienced structural changes in the economy in the last few decades. Because of the economic growth in the 1960s and early 1970s guest workers from Mediterranean countries were invited to fill the vacancies on the job market. Many of them preferred to stay in the Netherlands for a longer period of time. Negative economic developments in the second half of the 1970s and early 1980s made a lot of workers redundant (among them many of the former guest workers). The booming economy of the last decade resulted in more job opportunities and decreasing unemployment again. Only in the last two years economic growth has declined. It will become clear later in this report that these developments not only have a direct influence on the unemployment rate in our research areas, but affect the social situation as a whole as well.

• The number of people and the number of households has constantly increased in the Dutch post-WWII period. This resulted in an increasing pressure on the housing markets. Especially the growing number of small households, as a consequence of processes of individualization and emancipation, has increased the demand for housing. Furthermore, the growing number of two-earner households resulted in a growing interest in more expensive dwellings, especially in the owner-occupied sector. Immigration of Mediterranean countries and from the ex-colonies added to the growing demand for housing as well, especially in urban areas. When the post-WWII housing estates became accessible for these households, an increasing number of immigrants pursued their housing career in these areas, as will further be developed in later chapters.

• The Netherlands are famous for their social rented sector. The share (36 per cent), as well as the quality of this part of the housing stock is considered to be high. Because of these characteristics, many households with middle-incomes like to stay in such a dwelling as well. This especially holds for the (larger) cities in the Netherlands. Here the share is even higher. Private rented housing has become relatively unimportant, while the owner-occupied sector increased enormously (currently 53 per cent).

• Since the 1980s, the Netherlands has evolved from a situation in which central government took the lead in all public policies towards a gradual retreat of government. This also happened in the field of housing. More and more other parties, especially the housing corporations, have become responsible for housing low-income households. This does not mean that no subsidies exist anymore. An elaborate system of rent subsidies gives low-income households the opportunity to live in very decent housing.
Amsterdam: a general overview

3.1 General description of Amsterdam

Short history of the city
Amsterdam is the capital of the Netherlands and with 718,000 inhabitants it is also the largest city. The city developed round a dam in the Amstel River at the end of the 12th century. The period 1585-1672, the Golden Age, was the hey-day of Amsterdam’s commercial success. At the time Amsterdam was the staple market of the world. During this period the characteristic Amsterdam cityscape developed; the 1613 and 1663 urban expansions still determine the city’s characteristic appearance. The year 1672 was a year of disaster for the Dutch Republic with

Picture 3.1 – Singel. Characteristic Amsterdam cityscape with a canal and canal-houses (Photo: Manuel Aalbers)

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the French and English attacking simultaneously. The Golden Age had come to an end. Nevertheless, Amsterdam managed to consolidate its prosperity during the period 1672-1795 (the Silver Age) in spite of the predicament the Republic found itself in. The city remained a major staple market and managed to retain its position as the financial centre of Europe. The large number of dwellings built in the Golden and Silver Age, both simple ones and rich canal houses, reflect the city’s prosperity.

In 1795 the government of the patrician oligarchies was overthrown and the old Republic ceased to exist. Soon the French were to occupy the country. During the period 1795-1813 Amsterdam suffered badly from the economic recession, a state of affairs reflected by the stagnation of the demographic development. Many houses were vacant and some even collapsed for lack of maintenance. The period 1813-1940 is marked by economic recovery and, from 1870 onwards, by expansion. The increasing wealth brought about a rapid population growth. This development was primarily the result of the Industrial Revolution which triggered off a New Golden Age. The city now ventured into the area beyond the Singelgracht. Large poorly built working-class neighbourhoods were built.

The period 1920-1940 was a time of economic recession. Therefore it is all the more remarkable that the so-called Ring 20-40 compares favourably to the 19th century jerry-building. This was also the period of large damage to the historical city centre; canals were filled in and new traffic breakthroughs were realized. During the post-war period the city’s population only grew modestly, but the urban area dramatically increased. Moreover, Amsterdam acquired an international reputation, both culturally and economically.

**Economic profile and role**

Many tourists are attracted by the museums which are now renowned far outside the Netherlands (such as Van Gogh Museum, Rijksmuseum and Stedelijk Museum), and because of its pretty canals and interesting architecture the city centre is very popular in particular

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Industry (and agriculture)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publishing and press</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale and distributive trade</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail trade</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel and catering industry</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation and telecom</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banks and insurance</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business services</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government, public sector</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education, university</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health, welfare, environment</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social services, culture, sports, recreation</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other services</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others/unknown</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Kamer van Koophandel, 2002
the historical wealth of this part of the city is still tangible. At least as important is the liberal image of Amsterdam which is – for tourists – mainly connected to the city’s red light district and its policies on the use of soft drugs. These cultural features make tourism an important source of income. However, the main thrust of the capital’s income comes from commercial services (banking and insurance companies), trade and distribution (the national airport Schiphol is located very close to Amsterdam and the city also has a large seaport). The city has a relatively high-educated workforce, mainly due to the presence of two universities and various polytechnics and colleges.

Amsterdam has never had a uniform industrial profile as many other cities such as the second largest Dutch city, Rotterdam. On the contrary, the Dutch capital has always been characterized by a relatively strong financial sector, by the presence of quite some cultural industries and by tourists and other consumption related sections of the economy. Because of that, Amsterdam seems to have a better position to attract international service oriented and high-tech companies and migrants from richer countries. Also if we look at table 3.1 we see that Amsterdam has a strong post-industrial economic and employment structure.

Demographic structure and size

The Amsterdam population can be characterized by the fact that it is relatively young: there are many 25-39 year old persons who have come to the city for education or for a job. The number of senior citizens, on the other hand, is modest and has been decreasing during the 1990s (municipal estimates expect to witness a modest increase in the next years). Considering the

Table 3.2 – Age structure of the Amsterdam population, 1997-2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>1997</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>Increase 2001-2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-4 years</td>
<td>42,081</td>
<td>45,131</td>
<td>46,037</td>
<td>+906 +2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-19 years</td>
<td>102,337</td>
<td>106,343</td>
<td>107,093</td>
<td>+750 +0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-34 years</td>
<td>215,071</td>
<td>207,442</td>
<td>202,541</td>
<td>-4,901 -2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-49 years</td>
<td>167,905</td>
<td>180,570</td>
<td>183,221</td>
<td>+2,651 +1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-64 years</td>
<td>94,322</td>
<td>106,974</td>
<td>109,725</td>
<td>+2,751 +2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 years and older</td>
<td>93,347</td>
<td>88,080</td>
<td>86,711</td>
<td>-1,369 -1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
<td>715,063</td>
<td>734,540</td>
<td>735,328</td>
<td>+788 +0.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: O+S, the Amsterdam Bureau for Research and Statistics, 2002

Table 3.3 – Development of household sizes in Amsterdam (%), 1985-2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household size</th>
<th>1985</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One person</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more persons</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couple; no kids</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couple; kids</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 adult; kids</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: O+S, 2001
households, the share of single-person households is relatively large, especially as compared to the share of families with children. This is also related to the large share of students who live in the city. In addition, there are relatively many single-parent households (see table 3.2 and 3.3). Finally, the share of people from ethnic minority groups is high and the ethnic variety is impressive: Amsterdam houses about 173 different nationalities (see next subsection).

*Ethnic minority population*

Amsterdam has seen immigration for centuries. When the city was a thriving centre of global trade in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it naturally received large flows of immigrants. In the years following the Second World War Amsterdam’s immigrant population has vastly grown (see table 3.4).

Amsterdam’s disadvantaged ethnic groups (immigrants from non-industrial countries) are not extremely segregated, which is probably because Amsterdam is a mixed city with respect to housing types and because the social housing sector is not marginalized. Although immigrant groups in Amsterdam are not condemned to live in exclusive immigrant areas, some of them are clearly concentrated in certain sections of the city. The Moroccans are the only group that shows a steady rise in concentrations in the least popular areas of the city. However, these concentrations are nowhere near ghettos; there is not even one area which consists of more than 50 per cent Moroccans (Aalbers and Deurloo, 2003).

Both Turkish and Moroccan groups are over-represented in various pre-war and post-war neighbourhoods, mainly located on the west and to a lesser extent on the east side of the city. The differences within the Surinamese group are greater than within other groups: a fair number of Surinamese live in minority ethnic neighbourhoods in the Southeast district (the Bijlmer), but many live in areas where they are not over-represented.

Immigrants from other non-industrial countries are increasingly found in the Southeast district (the Bijlmer) as well. This part of Amsterdam functions as a gateway to the Netherlands. This not only has to do with the relatively easy accessible (social) housing (due to a low popularity of this area amongst the Amsterdam population), but also with the ethnic

| Table 3.4 – Absolute and relative size of ethnic groups in Amsterdam, 1994–2001 |
|-----------------|---|---|---|---|
|                 | 1994 |   | 1997 |   | 2001 |   |
| Surinamese      | 67,862 | 9.4 | 70,093 | 9.8 | 71,941 | 9.8 |
| Antilleans      | 10,569 | 1.5 | 10,619 | 1.5 | 12,033 | 1.6 |
| Turks           | 30,909 | 4.3 | 30,852 | 4.3 | 35,074 | 4.8 |
| Moroccans       | 46,111 | 6.4 | 49,000 | 6.9 | 57,093 | 7.8 |
| Southern-Europeans | 16,034 | 2.2 | 16,172 | 2.3 | 17,331 | 2.4 |
| Other foreigners: | | | | |
| from non-industrial countries | 56,973 | 7.9 | 61,277 | 8.6 | 76,280 | 10.4 |
| from industrial countries | 71,127 | 9.8 | 67,412 | 9.4 | 70,616 | 9.6 |
| Dutch           | 424,610 | 58.6 | 409,638 | 57.3 | 394,172 | 53.7 |
| Total population | 724,195 | 100.0 | 715,063 | 100.0 | 734,540 | 100.0 |

Source: O+S, 1994; 1997; 2001

* The largest nationalities among this group are the Chanean, the Egyptians, the Pakistani and the Indonesians.

** The largest nationalities among this group are the British, the Germans, the Americans and the French.
networks fostering new immigrants. The Ghanese, the largest immigrant group from other non-industrial countries, is highly concentrated in the Southeast district: 70 per cent of them live in this district. Immigrants from industrial countries, on the other hand, are concentrated in the most popular and more (not necessarily most) expensive housing. These immigrants are spatially concentrated in affluent, stable and popular neighbourhoods where they are surrounded by a majority of indigenous Dutch.

Migration and dynamics
As in any city, urban change is highly affected by and also affecting on (1) external (foreign) migration dynamics, and (2) internal (within the country) migration dynamics. Amsterdam is no exception. In this respect 1985 – when the city was at a low of 675,570 inhabitants – was a pendulum: since then the number of inhabitants in the city has been rising slowly but steadily to 735,320 inhabitants in 2002; there were only minor population drops in 1995-1997 (see table 3.5). Since the average household size decreased in these years, population increase has to be explained by other factors. The main ones here are new construction within the city borders and an increase in the number of housing units in urban renewal neighbourhoods (e.g. the Bijlmer in Southeast).

Since the 1970s the city has seen a very selective internal immigration and emigration. In general, middle-class families leave the city, while young single people enter the city.
Amsterdam, just like Utrecht, attracts many young people; students and young two-income households standing at the beginning of their living- and/or working career (see table 3.6). Likewise, migration dynamics are characterized by a settlement surplus of individuals between 18 and 22 years of age. Many students stay in the city after their graduation, and if they leave again, this is usually not directly after graduating, but mostly from their thirties on (often with kids aged 0-9). Elderly also leave the city more often then they enter it. Quite a large number of them moves to nearby municipalities since the more recent housing stock of those municipalities provides more dwellings that meet their wishes and needs. Furthermore, the city is now witnessing a slow suburbanization of some ethnic groups, notably the Surinamese. As in many cases however, this is a selective migration pattern since it is mostly (upper) middle class Surinamese that leave the city.

Although the suggestion of these patterns of selective emigration and immigration is that the city is becoming more-and-more a place for people in their twenties as well as for low-income people and less for households with kids, and people aged 30 and beyond, this is only true to a limited degree. The urban dynamics in the course of years also turn low-income young people into middle- or high-income people. Thus, although low-income move in the city and middle- and high-income people move out, this does not naturally imply an increased income polarization between the city and the areas of emigration from the city.

Relative deprivation

In the 1990s prosperity in Amsterdam has increased. During these years, employment for example has increased tremendously and altogether there are now almost 413,000 jobs (of 12

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4 Recently (2002) it seems that the age break between an immigration surplus and an emigration surplus, is no longer at the age of 30, but at the age of 25. The most logical explanation for this is that the tension on the housing market (shortages) has increased. Thus, it has become more difficult to find housing, especially for young people.
hours or more a week). This increase can to a large extent be attributed to the growth of the business service sector. On the other hand, considering the Amsterdam labour force, about two-thirds has an income based on work, whereas almost one-fifth has an income based on welfare and about 17 per cent does not have an income of one’s own at all. But unemployment has decreased in the course of the 1990s and also the number of people on welfare has declined (see table 3.7 and 3.8). More recently, however, with the economic downturn the numbers of unemployed and people on welfare have increased (O+S, 2003).

The city has experienced a thriving economy over the past decade. That resulted in the creation of wealth. But at the same time the relatively poor share of the population remained rather large as well. Poverty is not unrelated to migration. Unemployment figures of the Moroccans and Turks tend to be four or five times higher than for the indigenous Dutch. So, there is an economic and an ethnic dimension in poverty. That combined situation is reflected spatially, although not in an absolute way. There is socio-spatial and ethnic segregation; there are so-called concentrations of poverty and concentrations of certain population categories according to their country of origin. However, these are neither uniform nor stable nor inescapable. But in relative terms, these areas are regarded to be ‘problem-areas’, which should, according to many, require extra policy attention.

### 3.2 Neighbourhoods in Amsterdam

In the ‘Binnenstad’ (city centre) of Amsterdam many dwellings were built before 1870. Half of the housing stock in the inner city consists of one and two room apartments and many of them are privately rented. The city centre is a mixture in both functions and housing types, as well as in income groups (although large shares are heavily gentrified).

New extensions of the city fitted neatly round the old city centre, like a belt. These are the 19th century districts; the early-20th-century, pre-war districts; the early- and late-post-war garden cities (1946-1960 and 1961-1970) and finally, the neighbourhoods dating from the 1970s and after.

The typical Amsterdam social structure – relatively poor in sections of the North, East and West, and richer in the South – can be traced back to the era in which manufacturing

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Table 3.8 – People on social insurance benefits in Amsterdam on January 1, 1999–2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>abs.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General/industrial disablement act</td>
<td>42,586</td>
<td>42,932</td>
<td>43,952</td>
<td>+1,020</td>
<td>+2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disablement act for self-employed</td>
<td>1,699</td>
<td>1,652</td>
<td>1,639</td>
<td>-13</td>
<td>-0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dis. provision act for disabled from an early age</td>
<td>4,374</td>
<td>4,553</td>
<td>4,641</td>
<td>+88</td>
<td>+1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment benefit act</td>
<td>13,350</td>
<td>10,835</td>
<td>9,238</td>
<td>-1,597</td>
<td>-14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total benefits LISV</td>
<td>62,009</td>
<td>59,972</td>
<td>59,470</td>
<td>-502</td>
<td>-0.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: LISV, Landelijk instituut sociale verzekeringen, several years

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\[5\] See also: Musterd and Dukes (2001, pp. 13-14).
developed rapidly, starting in the 19th century; industries were located along the North, East and West banks of the IJ-river, and attracted many blue collar workers. As these workers had low incomes and had to live close to their jobs, many inexpensive and small dwellings were built in the area around the IJ. The better off, on the other hand, settled in the city centre and in the area to the south of the city centre. In that area the tertiary sector was located, where most of these people were employed.

The high status 19th century and pre-war zone, which stretches as a belt from the inner city to the south-west of the city, is characterized by expensive dwellings. The other 19th century neighbourhoods have quite a different character; these are mainly neighbourhoods with small and inexpensive dwellings in 4/5-storey buildings. In most of these areas urban renewal programmes were carried out from the 1970s and 1980s onwards. As a result of their proximity to the city centre, these neighbourhoods continue to attract higher income people.

Although dwellings belonging to early-20th-century neighbourhoods are generally characterized by a better quality than those belonging to the 19th century neighbourhoods, rents are rather low. The greater part of the housing stock can be characterized as multi-storey family dwelling housing. Over time, the combination of low rents and relatively many rooms has attracted many larger immigrant households to these neighbourhoods.
Starters on the housing market quite often make use of these dwellings. Next to these city extensions of 4/5-storey buildings, there were also several garden villages built in North and in the Watergraafsmeer section of East. In general these are very popular amongst low- and moderate-income indigenous Dutch.

The early-post-war neighbourhoods are mainly situated in the western part of Amsterdam. One of our case studies, the Kolenkit (part of the Bos and Lommer district), largely built between 1946 and 1950 and predominately consisting of social housing (95 per cent), is located in this area. Many dwellings in this area have three or four rooms and are located in mid-rise flats; although there are also quite some low-rise structures and a few high-rise buildings. As opposed to neighbourhoods built in previous periods, many of these areas consist of almost 100 per cent social housing (see figure 3.2). Although their number is declining, relatively many older people continue to live in this area. This also holds for the late post-war areas. In general, dwellings in the late post-war neighbourhoods are more expensive while, at the same time, they do not have more rooms. Most but not all of the late post-war areas have a rather good status, whereas the early-post-war areas are among the more problematic parts of the city, having the lowest status. An exception to this is, again, found in the southern part of the city where the
Buitenveldert early post-war area has a high status and a relatively low share of social housing. It also has the oldest population of all areas.

Finally, in terms of type of dwellings, the more recently built neighbourhoods at the edge of the city are characterized by a mixed housing stock. Recently built neighbourhoods have a relatively high share of owner-occupied units and are among those with the highest social status. In these neighbourhoods such as KNSM-island – a peninsula formerly used for harbour activities – relatively many owner-occupied dwellings can be found. Dwellings in our second Amsterdam case study, the Bijlmer neighbourhood (part of the ‘Zuidoost’ (Southeast) district of Amsterdam), on the other hand, are characterized by relatively high rents (although mostly within the social sector), but are inhabited to a large extent by people with low incomes. In these cases, individual rent subsidies bridge the gap between the rents and the incomes. Alternatively, many people rent out one or more rooms, often to people of the same ethnicity, sometimes even family members. The household structure in the Bijlmer is quite complicated, partly due to the different marriage and childcare structures that go back to the Caribbean culture of many Surinamese and Antilleans.

### 3.3 Conclusions

During its long history Amsterdam has developed into a city on a human scale, whose dynamism and vitality are due to the various colours of its inhabitants and those passing through. The historic city centre remains the scene where a variety of activities takes place.
alongside a striking amount of residential use; the ratio of jobs to resident workforce in the centre is about one-to-one, a unique phenomenon internationally.

In Amsterdam, the deindustrialization of the 1970s was followed by a major transition toward service industries and economic growth since the 1980s. While Amsterdam is also a city with poor immigrant groups, it is not a city where the spatial distribution of people and housing quality are simply a function of income and class. Thanks to a rather successful shift to a post-industrial economy the city of Amsterdam can be considered as rather prosperous with virtually no no-go areas.

The city has witnessed a very selective emigration and integration pattern: while the share of indigenous Dutch families and elderly decreased, the share of single and/or often young people as well as the share of immigrant households rose dramatically. Thus, the city now has about 55 per cent one-person households and about 45 per cent immigrants of the first or second generation. Both ‘new groups’ predominantly live in affordable rented housing units: the singles and young people are over-represented in small private rented units close to the city centre, while immigrants are over-represented in average and bigger size dwellings in the several areas dating from the 1920s to 1970s.

The economic prosperity of the city coupled with large numbers of immigrants and of students means an enormous pressure on the housing market – not only in the affordable segments, but in all segments and tenures. Vacancy rates are extremely low, especially in the pre-war areas. Although there are some pockets of deprivation in some of these pre-war areas, they are now all witnessing a certain level of gentrification or upgrading. Partly due to severe urban renewal schemes there is also very little physical decay in the pre-war city and there are no slums.

The post-war city tells a different story. It is often considered less popular because it is located further from the city centre, often without offering the advantages of suburbs. This is, however, a too fierce generalization because many city-dwellers are happy to live in the post-war city. But if we look at concentrations of deprivation we see that many of them are found in post-war large housing estates – notably in the Bijlmer, but also in parts of New West such as the Kolenkit and to a lesser degree in parts of Amsterdam-North. The Bijlmer is a specific case since it shows an unusual dynamic with fast population changes and high (although now declining) turnover rates. In the next chapters we will focus on two of these areas: New West – in particular the Kolenkit – and the Bijlmer.

The Bijlmer is arguably the most well-known collection of housing estates in the Netherlands; it has a reputation of urban despair, neighbourhood decline, and drug abuse and is often cited in newspapers as the Dutch ghetto. Although it is certainly true that the Bijlmer has had and still has lots of problems, its reputation is more frightening than reality and it can also be considered a place of social mobility.

The Kolenkit on the other hand, is hardly known beyond Amsterdam’s city borders. It is, however, also an area of ‘problem accumulation’ and its housing stock, but also its population score low(est) of the many large housing estates in the western part of the city.
As far as urban design and planning is concerned, the Second World War meant a huge break with the past in Amsterdam. The post-war extensions were the first to depart from the centuries-old concentric development of the city. After 1950, the still basically circular city was enlarged with two ‘lobe’-like protuberances to the west side named the ‘Westelijke Tuinsteden’ [Western Garden Cities]. At the same time the garden city of Buitenveldert sprang to the south, and together with the greatly enlarged adjoining municipality of Amstelveen this was to form a third lobe. The idea behind this development was that it would give the city more flexibility and make it easier for Amsterdam to cope with becoming a city of over a million inhabitants. The green ‘wedges’ (the recreational area around the Sloterplas in West and the Amsterdamse Bos in Southwest) between the lobs formed the mould which would shape the city’s contours and brought greenery within the reach of all the city’s inhabitants.

The original blueprint for ‘Nieuw West’ [New West] or the ‘Westelijke Tuinsteden’ dates back to the 1930s: it was one of the main planned extensions of the city in Van Eesteren’s ‘Amsterdam Uitbreidingsplan’ [AUP, Amsterdam extension Plan] of 1934 that envisioned all future expansions for the city up till the year 2000. As a reply to the densely populated neighbourhoods of the late 19th century, westward of the city a new housing environment of ‘licht, lucht en ruimte’ [light, (fresh) air and room/space] was designed according to the principles of the CIAM [Congrès Internationaux d’Architecture Moderne]. For the first time the ‘closed city’ was to make way for an open city. Instead of enclosed blocks of buildings, groups of flats were built in rows or sat at right angles to one another. The streets with their long uninterrupted rows of houses, which were the binding spatial element in the pre-war city, gave way to open spaces consisting of roads and green, interlinking squares.

In the 1950s and 1960s the area was built according to a revised and more austere plan. The 55,000 housing units were targeted above all at working men’s families and employees. The rents were low because the national policy was to keep wages low in order to energize the exportation position of the country. The ‘wederopbouw’ [post-war reconstruction] of the country and the construction of the Dutch welfare state meant the construction of thousands of almost identical housing units to cut expenses and to promote equality between citizens. In New West this came down to smaller units, less low-rise and more mid-rise buildings, and cheaper urban design solutions than envisioned in pre-war plans. The high amount of green space in the original plan was not cut. Today New West is still considered a very green city area.

It also meant predominantly social housing: almost all the building work was carried out by the housing associations and the Housing Department. After the areas of Bos and
Figure 4.1 – Location of New West, within the city of Amsterdam (A), the location of Bos & Lommer (B) and the location of the Kolenkit (C)

Table 4.1 – Housing tenure in New West, 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Owner-occupied</th>
<th>Social rented</th>
<th>Private rented</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Units</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Units</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolenkit</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2,513</td>
<td>95.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bos &amp; Lommer</td>
<td>1,123</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>8,903</td>
<td>61.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: O+S, the Amsterdam Bureau for Research and Statistics

Table 4.2 – Average housing unit size in New West (in square metres), 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Less than 40</th>
<th>40-50</th>
<th>50-60</th>
<th>60-70</th>
<th>70-80</th>
<th>80-90</th>
<th>90+</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kolenkit</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>1,411</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>516</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>2,634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bos &amp; Lommer</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>3,849</td>
<td>6,657</td>
<td>1,873</td>
<td>1,329</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14,584</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Bureau Parkstad, 2002
Lommer and Slotermeer that were partly build according to their original pre-war plans (1937 respectively 1940), plans were designed for Geuzenveld (1953), Overtoomse Veld (1956), Osdorp (1957) and Slotervaart (1959). As a result, Amsterdam was expanding at an unprecedented rate.

In this chapter we will provide an overview of the developments and current state of New West. Where appropriate and possible we will frame these issues within Amsterdam or zoom in to one housing estate within New West, the Kolenkit area in the Bos and Lommer district (figure 4.1). The Kolenkit estate will be central in our research project. Where data on the Kolenkit are not available we will provide data on the Bos and Lommer district and/or on New West. While this chapter focuses mainly on general statistical data, the next chapter will have a more selective focus on problems and perspectives of the Kolenkit.

4.1 Physical structure

4.1.1 Type of dwellings

Tenure
In New West 18.2 per cent of the units are owner-occupied, 13.5 per cent is in the private rented sector and 67 per cent in the social rented sector. The share of social rented units is higher in the older parts of New West: 95 per cent in the Kolenkit (see table 4.1).

Size
Table 4.2 shows the average dwelling size in the different parts of New West. The average unit measures 71.8 m². The smallest units are mainly in the oldest part of the area such as the Kolenkit (about 50 m²), while larger units are located in the recently built areas. Of the 14,584 units in Bos and Lommer 53.4 per cent has three rooms and 14.7 per cent has four rooms. Within Bos and Lommer buildings in the Kolenkit tend to have more rooms, and even in comparison to other parts of New West the Kolenkit has a relatively high share of apartments with five or more rooms (see table 4.3). However, even the apartments with many rooms in the Kolenkit tend to be quite small in square metres.

Mid-rise buildings are the most common in New West, especially in the older parts. Virtually all buildings in the Kolenkit have four storeys of apartments and one additional storey of sheds. Most buildings have one staircase for every eight apartments. Both high-rise and low-rise are scattered out in small blocks or small concentrations in several parts of New West.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1+2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5+</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>1+2 %</th>
<th>5+ %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kolenkit</td>
<td>479</td>
<td>1,377</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>2,634</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bos &amp; Lommer</td>
<td>3,872</td>
<td>7,781</td>
<td>2,139</td>
<td>791</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14,584</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Bureau Parkstad, 2002
Price
Of the housing stock in New West 57 per cent has a rent below 350 euro only 2 per cent above 500 euro and 18 per cent of the stock is owner-occupied. This means rents are considerably lower than in Amsterdam on average (283 euro for social rented housing and 338 euro for private rented housing in Amsterdam; 248 euro for social rented housing and 282 euro for private rented housing in Bos and Lommer). In the Kolenkit more than 80 per cent of the stock has a rent below 350 euro, almost all have a rent below 500 euro, making it an area of one of the lowest rents in Amsterdam.

Additions/demolitions
Table 4.4 shows housing stock by building period for the different parts of New West. 43 per cent is built in the period 1946-1969 and 27 per cent between 1960 and 1969. Approximately 20 per cent of the units were built in the last ten years. In the Kolenkit almost all units were built between 1946 and 1960.

4.1.2 Housing conditions
The housing stock of the Kolenkit, like that of most housing estates, can be described as ‘much of the same’. Most units measure less than 60 square metres, but almost half of these units have four or more rooms, and as we have seen rents are low. The technical quality of the stock is moderate; most units were renovated in the 1980s, although some buildings, or individual units, have some problems. Forty per cent of the residents is ‘only moderately satisfied’ with their apartment, 25 per cent is ‘(very) unsatisfied’, and 34 per cent is ‘(very) satisfied’. The Bos and Lommer district did research on the housing satisfaction of its residents and quantified the answers on a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being the best). Especially ‘noise isolation’, ‘moisture’, ‘anti-burglary protection’ and ‘kitchen’ scored low (4.3 and 4.9 respectively). Only 6 per cent of the residents indicate that they are completely satisfied. This does however not mean that all residents want major improvements of their apartments: many indicate that they want better noise isolation, some that they want better heating and/or a better/bigger bathroom. However, many are not in favour of many or large improvements – possibly because they think this will imply higher rents.

4.1.3 Quality and character of the environment
Compared to other parts of the city Bos and Lommer has a very high population and housing density and very little green space (see table 4.5). Although the district and in particular the Kolenkit section is considered to be a completely residential area, it is in fact less monofunctional than many other parts of New West as it has some shops and companies within (not at the borders) of the area. Still, the image of the Kolenkit remains a very residential one.

Table 4.4 – New West housing stock by building period, 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kolenkit</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>2,380</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>2,634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bos &amp; Lommer</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2,331</td>
<td>7,510</td>
<td>4,301</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>14,584</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Bureau Parkstad, 2002
in most other parts of New West the housing environment mostly consists of small strips of green space between the building blocks. Contrary to all other parts of New West, the Kolenkit does not have a small or larger back at the border of the area. This is because the Kolenkit is ‘squeezed’ between the city-highway A-10 on the east and the railroad/elevated subway tracks on the west. Both the railroad/subway tracks and the city-highway are very close to the area and produce a high level of noise pollution next to a lower level of air pollution. On the north and the south the area is cut off from a heavy traffic road and an office area respectively a sports park by small canals. There is also a small sports park at the Northside of the Kolenkit.

Like most residents of the Kolenkit are not very satisfied with the quality of their apartment, the housing environment scores quite similar: 34 per cent is ‘(very) unsatisfied’, 28 per cent ‘only moderately satisfied’ and 32 per cent ‘(very) satisfied’. The satisfaction scores on ‘the surrounding housing stock’ and ‘the design of public space’ are only slightly higher, but the scores on ‘greenery’ are clearly higher with only 20 per cent ‘(very) unsatisfied’. Residents were also asked how they feel about the maintenance of the housing stock, the streets and sidewalks, and the greenery. Here only little more than 21 per cent respectively 20 per cent is ‘(very) satisfied’ with the maintenance of the housing stock and of the streets and sidewalks; the maintenance of the greenery scores higher with 35 per cent (source: Bos and Lommer district).

Residents of the Kolenkit are quite satisfied about the public transportation facilities: 62 per cent is ‘(very) satisfied’, while only 7 per cent is ‘(very) unsatisfied’. The presence or proximity of shops, schools and sport facilities scores a little bit less with 13 per cent being ‘(very) unsatisfied’ and 43 per cent being ‘(very) satisfied’. The amount of parking space is considered more unsatisfactory: 28 per cent is ‘(very) unsatisfied’ and 34 per cent ‘(very) satisfied’ (source: Bos and Lommer district).

Residents were also asked how they think the housing environments could be improved. Safety on the street was the top issue as 54 per cent of the residents indicated this on the list of different ‘improvement options’. Maintenance and renovation of the existing housing stock was appreciated by 45 per cent, while 42 per cent indicated that (some) new construction (by replacing older structures) was desirable. The maintenance of public space and more/better neighbourhood amenities and facilities also scores high (both 42 per cent). More parking space on the streets (26 per cent), re-designing public space (16 per cent) more/better public transportation connections (11 per cent), more parking space in or under buildings (9 per cent) and safety in the staircases and elevators (7 per cent) were less in demand (source: Bos and Lommer district).

Table 4.5 – Total km² of land, population density, housing density and green within New West, 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total km²</th>
<th>Land km²</th>
<th>Share of city size %</th>
<th>Population density by km² land</th>
<th>Housing density by km² land</th>
<th>Green space in m² per dwelling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bos &amp; Lommer</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>11,930</td>
<td>5,675</td>
<td>37.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>219.07</td>
<td>166.08</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>4,428</td>
<td>2,245</td>
<td>69.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: O+S
4.1.4 Rent subsidies and social housing allocation

It turns out that units in New West get relatively little applications (see section 2.3 for the allocation and application system). Within the area cheaper apartments are in general in much higher demand than more expensive apartments. On the other hand, the overly cheap apartments in the Kolenkit are less popular than those in other New West estates. The relatively low rents of Kolenkit apartments and the relatively low-income position of its residents is also shown in table 4.6 which shows that in the Kolenkit a relatively large part of the residents depends on rent subsidies while the average amount of rent subsidy per household is on average relatively low.

In the old parts of New West about 2,000 units every year become vacant – these are predominantly cheap and small apartments. Most of the new tenants are (young) immigrant (couples and) families, predominately low-income and with few alternatives in the housing market. Although this again points to the low housing market position of New West, the average period of settlement at the current dwelling in New West is nine years while the Amsterdam average is less than eight years. Also, the share of mobility in New West is relatively low. Of the people who actually moved, New West shows relatively low turnover: in New West 28 per cent of the residents moved within a year, while this holds true for 34 per cent of the Amsterdam residents.

4.1.5 Quality and quantity of available services

Shops

There are about 600 shops in New West with a total of 80,000 square metres; this is about 10 per cent of the city. Following from the fact that New West is predominantly a residential area, the shops in New West are predominantly focussed at so-called daily needs; there is an under-representation of clothing shops as these are heavily concentrated in the city centre. Within New West ‘Osdorpplein’ in the Osdorp district hosts most shops, but within every district there is at least one concentration of shops with 50 or more shops.

The population changes are reflected in the shops in the Kolenkit. There is a rise of – often small – shops that are owned by and cater for immigrants. Three large chain stores (V&D, Perry, Polectro) in the area left a few years ago which lead to a scaling down of not only the shops itself, but also of the image and reputation of the shopping area. Although, there is thus a clear decrease in the number of shops, most residents are quite satisfied. This is mainly because there is a relatively large concentration of shops just outside the area; three supermarkets and many specialized shops. The city-highway that separates the Kolenkit from this shopping area

Table 4.6 – Households depending on rent subsidies in New West, 1997–2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of allocated applications</th>
<th>Average amount per month in euro</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kolenkit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bos &amp; Lommer</td>
<td>3,872</td>
<td>4,008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>80,943</td>
<td>82,064</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: VROM/Pinkroccade/O+S, several years
– No figures available
is considered ‘irritating’ but not as a real barrier. Immigrant women often take the walk over the highway to the supermarket and back in small groups. Thus, the walk and the shopping is a major social activity for them.

**Medical and care services**

The available services for health care in New West are average. The area has two hospitals, and the number of general practitioners is only a little less than it would have been if they were completely spread over the city. GP’s are concentrated in some neighbourhoods because (1) some are working together in health centres and (2) some work from a home-based location, which are owner-occupant units concentrated in several neighbourhoods. Consequently, there are hardly any real problems concerning the availability of medical and care services, but more with the threshold for immigrants to make use of these services: many wait too long before consulting a doctor with physical problems. In many cases, physical problems turn out to be the trigger that make people come to the doctor, while it is actually psychological problems that are more severe.

The Kolenkit has no dentist and no pharmacy and only one GP and one physiotherapist. People at the city district have reason to believe the only GP in the area will close his practice and the same will happen to some of the GP’s and dentists in the other parts of Bos and Lommer. Although some residents from the area have voluntarily chosen to visit a GP or dentist outside the area, the loss of especially GP’s within the area is regretted by the city district as well as some residents.

### 4.2 Economic developments

**Employment and unemployment**

In the 1990s employment has risen in Amsterdam in general, but also in New West. Next to this, the population changes caused by changes in the housing stock (more owner-occupied units, more expensive rental units) have also had a positive effect on employment figures for New West. The unemployment figures for New West are actually lower than for the city as a whole. However, there are several pockets of unemployment within New West. Moreover, although the economic upturn had a positive effect on New West, this effect was less than for the city as a whole. In almost all population categories the decline in the share of unemployed was lower in New West than in Amsterdam as a whole. It were mainly the higher educated people who profit from the increase in jobs.

Table 4.7 – New West labour force, 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total labour force</th>
<th>Employed</th>
<th>Unemployed</th>
<th>Non-labour force</th>
<th>Tot. populat. 15-64 yrs</th>
<th>Gross participation %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bos &amp; Lommer</td>
<td>15,100</td>
<td>14,500</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>6,900</td>
<td>22,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>386,500</td>
<td>368,400</td>
<td>18,100</td>
<td>142,500</td>
<td>529,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thirteen per cent of the potential work force in New West is unemployed (about 10,000 people). Within New West, the Kolenkit (20 per cent), shows the highest levels of unemployment (see table 4.7). Moreover, in the Kolenkit unemployment figures rose during the economic boom of the mid and late 1990s; it concerns mainly immigrants between 35 and 65 years of age.

**New West as a business location**

New West was mainly built as a residential area. The economic activities in the area are mainly derived from the residential function and concern mostly neighbourhood or district oriented amenities and facilities such as shops and services. Most of them are concentrated in shopping centres in the various neighbourhoods. Hence the area does not have a strong economic profile. Most companies in the area are concentrated at the borders of the area and are often not considered part of the area in people’s mind, but part of the axis of the A-10 city highway. The New West areas host almost 6,000 companies (about 12 per cent of all companies within the city of Amsterdam); 37 per cent of the companies — almost exclusively small ones — are located in or at people’s homes and scattered over the whole New West area. In the second half of the 1990s the number of companies has increased with 11 per cent, which is little less than the city as a whole (13.2 per cent). These almost 6,000 companies give employment to almost 40,000 people; it is not known how many of these also live in New West.

The non-profit sector and business services are the largest employers. The largest employment concentrations are the World Fashion Center, education and care/health (mainly because of two hospitals).

The eastern part of New West not only has the city-highway advantage, also the railroad that connects the city centre to the airport and several other cities goes through this area and has a train-station here (this train-station is known to be a notorious one and many people

| Table 4.8 – Number of people within New West, 1960–1999 |
|---------------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Kolenkit                      | –      | –      | –      | –      | 6,794  | 6,799  | +5       |
| Bos & Lommer                  | –      | –      | –      | –      | 31,909 | 30,838 | -1,071   |
| New West                      | 82,470 | 125,570| 103,770| 85,857 | 112,020| 122,483| +10,463  |
| Amsterdam                     | 869,602| 831,463| 716,967| 695,221| 722,350| 727,095| +4,745   |

Source: O+S, several years; Bureau Parkstad, 2002
– No figures available

| Table 4.9 – Age structure of New West, percentages, 1997 |
|--------------------------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| 01-17 | 18-34 | 35-64 | 65+    |
| New West | 23.2 | 24.6 | 33.9 | 18.2 |
| Amsterdam | 18.3 | 32.0 | 36.7 | 13.1 |
| 65+ | | | | |
| Kolenkit | 10.3 | 12.8 | 15.0 | 14.1 | 13.8 | 11.4 |
| Amsterdam | 13.8 | 15.2 | 15.9 | 15.9 | 14.9 | 13.1 |

Source: O+S, 1997
therefore avoid it). This eastern part also has an elevated subway connection to several other office locations, such as Teleport/Sloterdijk, Zuidas [South-axis] and Bijlmer/Holendrecht. The Kolenkit area has a stop on the subway line, but not on the railroad. It also has an exit of the city-highway within the neighbourhood.

4.3 Demographic and socio-cultural developments

Number of people
The last forty years the number of inhabitants of New West rose from 82,000 in 1960 to 126,000 in 1970 (when most parts of the Garden City plan were carried out), declined to 85,000 in 1990 due to individualization processes and the consequential smaller household size, and rose again to almost 130,000 inhabitants in 2000 due to new construction activities at the borders of New West. Only in the Bos and Lommer district (including the Kolenkit) the number of people declined between 1995 and 1999 (3.4 per cent); this is because this is the only area without substantial new construction in the 1990s (see table 4.8).

Age structure
As table 4.9 shows, the age structure of the population of New West can be characterized as polarized: people of 0-19 and 60-79 are over-represented, while the group in between is under-represented.

Ethnicity
Between 1995 and 1999 the share of indigenous Dutch in New West declined from 58.1 per cent to 51.7 per cent (3.1 per cent). The highest rise – plus 35 per cent – was among the Moroccans (from 11.1 per cent to 14.0 per cent), the Turks (from 6.8 per cent to 8.7 per cent) and immigrants of other non-industrial areas (from 6.4 per cent to 7.9 per cent). There was a slight increase in the number of Surinamese (from 7.5 per cent to 8.2 per cent). The newly built areas – that is, the high status areas – witnessed increases in the number of Surinamese, Antilleans and Southern-Europeans. The number of Turks and Moroccans mainly increased in the older parts of New West. The share of ethnic minorities in the Kolenkit has already risen to 67 per cent in 1997.

The share of non-Dutch in New West is with 43 per cent higher than that in the city as a whole (36 per cent). Among people between 0 and 20 years of age, the share of non-Dutch is 70 per cent in New West (and 89 per cent in the Kolenkit). Thus, what we see is not only a selective out-migration of indigenous Dutch but mostly an emigration of indigenous Dutch families. Among the people of 55 years and older (30,000 people) the share of ethnic minorities is still fairly low, but in this category we will see the highest increase in the next years. It is expected that in 2020, 28 per cent of the people aged 55 and older will be non-Dutch.

Focusing on Bos and Lommer we see even higher levels of Moroccans and Turks than elsewhere in New West, a rising number of immigrants from other non-industrial countries and a low and declining number of indigenous Dutch. Table 4.10 shows the recent changes and the forecasting development based on migration trends and a demographic analysis (mostly age structure) of the current population. Within Bos and Lommer the Kolenkit has
Table 4.10 – Bos & Lommer population by ethnicity, 1995-2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surinamese</td>
<td>2,560</td>
<td>2,361</td>
<td>2,375</td>
<td>2,426</td>
<td>2,530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antilleans</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turks</td>
<td>4,254</td>
<td>4,644</td>
<td>5,022</td>
<td>5,204</td>
<td>5,310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroccans</td>
<td>5,383</td>
<td>6,164</td>
<td>6,765</td>
<td>7,151</td>
<td>7,490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South-Europeans</td>
<td>843</td>
<td>834</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>865</td>
<td>874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants from other non-industrial countries</td>
<td>2,171</td>
<td>2,653</td>
<td>3,778</td>
<td>4,571</td>
<td>5,304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants from other industrial countries</td>
<td>1,851</td>
<td>1,639</td>
<td>1,629</td>
<td>1,645</td>
<td>1,653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous Dutch</td>
<td>14,578</td>
<td>12,272</td>
<td>10,313</td>
<td>9,594</td>
<td>9,062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>31,894</td>
<td>30,838</td>
<td>31,070</td>
<td>31,858</td>
<td>32,678</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: O+S, 2001

Table 4.11 – Household type in New West, 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2 adults with kid(s)</th>
<th>1 adult with kid(s)</th>
<th>Marr. witho. kids</th>
<th>2 singles</th>
<th>Single -1 single w. kid(s)</th>
<th>3 or more singles</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kolenkit</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>864</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bos&amp;Lommer</td>
<td>1,926</td>
<td>1,343</td>
<td>1,246</td>
<td>1,677</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>6,043</td>
<td>416</td>
<td>864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>39,885</td>
<td>32,260</td>
<td>39,394</td>
<td>43,548</td>
<td>13,451</td>
<td>170,388</td>
<td>8,866</td>
<td>14,193</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: O+S, 2002

Table 4.12 – Average disposable income within New West, 1998

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Inhabitants</th>
<th>Average disposable income per inhab.</th>
<th>Indiv. with 52 weeks income</th>
<th>Av. disp. per fully employed individ.</th>
<th>Households</th>
<th>Av. disp. per house-hold</th>
<th>Index standardized income households (NL=100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bos &amp; Lommer</td>
<td>29,400</td>
<td>8,500</td>
<td>18,200</td>
<td>13,000</td>
<td>13,800</td>
<td>17,700</td>
<td>81.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>727,100</td>
<td>10,500</td>
<td>492,200</td>
<td>14,800</td>
<td>369,900</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>94.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CBS, 1999

Table 4.13 – Index average disposable income within New West, 1996

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Average disposable income per household</th>
<th>Index (Amsterdam=100)</th>
<th>Index (Netherlands=100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kolenkit</td>
<td>37,600</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New West</td>
<td>41,900</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>40,300</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CBS, 1999
the highest shares of immigrants and the area north of the Erasmus-park the highest share of indigenous Dutch.

**Types of households**
In New West the share of single-parent households rose between 1995 and 1999 from 9.5 per cent to 10.6 per cent. The share of two-parent households was consolidated at about a third of the population. As compared to the city, two-parent households are clearly over-represented, single-parent households are slightly over-represented and single households are under-represented (see table 4.11).

**Income distribution**
The average disposable income per household in New West is higher than in Amsterdam as a whole. This does not mean, that all areas in New West show higher averages than the city; the Kolenkit for instance shows a lower average. Moreover, the average disposable income per individual is slightly lower in New West than in Amsterdam as a whole (see table 4.12). Also, in most areas of New West the average disposable income per household is lower than the Netherlands average (see table 4.13).

**Turnover and mobility**
Most of those who move to New West come from New West itself (29 per cent), Southeast, or the older districts west of the city centre; 24 per cent moves to New West from out of the city. Of the people who move out of New West almost 10 per cent moves to the newly constructed houses within New West; three groups of each about 30 per cent move to existing areas in New West, elsewhere in Amsterdam, or out of Amsterdam.

The population dynamic in New West is quite different from the general population dynamics in Amsterdam. While in 1996 the number of kids, the number of 34-64 year olds, and the number of ethnic minorities in Amsterdam declined, they were on the rise in New West. Similar to the Amsterdam changes the number of elderly and indigenous Dutch dropped, while the number of 18-34 year olds increased (see table 4.14). In general 1996 was a typical year for the population dynamics in the 1990s. The only exception is that the number of ethnic minorities increased in Amsterdam in all years but in 1996.

In the Kolenkit, many residents want to move; only 15 per cent does not want to move at all, and 25 per cent maybe wants to move. Of the 52 per cent of the residents that want to move, however, 35 per cent wants to move within the Bos and Lommer district, also 35 per cent wants to move to another district, while the other 30 per cent has other or less strong preferences. If we look at how many years people live in the Kolenkit on average we see very different figures (see table 4.15).

**Changing values and norms**
Residents of the Kolenkit were asked how the neighbourhood developed the last year. Twenty per cent indicated that it had ‘heavily declined’, 18 per cent that it had ‘declined a bit’, 32 per

---

6 In absolute values; in relative values little people from Southeast move to New West.
cent that it ‘more or less stayed the same’, 20 per cent that it had ‘improved a bit’ and 3 per cent that it had ‘improved a lot’ (source: Bos and Lommer district).

The communication between the different groups in the neighbourhood is seen as ‘very problematic’ by 11 per cent, ‘problematic’ by 14 per cent, ‘average’ by 41 per cent, ‘satisfactory’ by 22 per cent and ‘very satisfactory’ by 5 per cent. Although many people are not satisfied by the communication between different groups, the scores seem rather low considering all the talk and debate on miscommunication between different groups in urban neighbourhoods with many immigrants and/or different ethnic groups. Moreover, most residents do not have any complaints about their neighbours while many have indicated that there are noise problems with the buildings. Filthiness and crime are seen as more problematic as less than 20 per cent does not have problems with filthiness and less than 30 per cent not with the crime levels in the neighbourhood. During daytime most residents feel safe in the own neighbourhood, but at night less than 40 per cent feels safe (source: Bos and Lommer district).

Table 4.14 – Population change in New West, 1996

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>0-17</th>
<th>18-34</th>
<th>34-64</th>
<th>65+</th>
<th>Indigenous</th>
<th>Dutch</th>
<th>Ethnic minority</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New West</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>-267</td>
<td>-408</td>
<td>1,612</td>
<td>1,204</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>-2,238</td>
<td>4,259</td>
<td>-5,825</td>
<td>-1,368</td>
<td>-3,861</td>
<td>-1,311</td>
<td>-5,172</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolenkit</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: O+S, 1997

Table 4.15 – Years of residence in the Kolenkit (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 1</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14</td>
<td>17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25+</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>15.45 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100 (5,801)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: O+S/Bos & Lommer district, several years
Education

Between 1995 and 1999 the number of schoolables in New West increased by 22.6 per cent (see table 4.19). The Turks (45.4 per cent) and the immigrants from other non-industrial countries (35.7 per cent) showed the largest increase; the number of indigenous Dutch schoolables increased by almost 10 per cent. In the Kolenkit the number of schoolables with the Dutch nationality decreased by one-third in four years, while the number of Turks, Moroccans and immigrants from other non-industrial countries increased rapidly.

In New West the average Cito-score is lower than in Amsterdam. The lowest average Cito-score are measured in Bos and Lommer. A more alarming statistic is that of omission. Within New West, this figure is dramatically high, especially in Bos and Lommer and especially amongst ethnic minorities, in particular Turkish children.

4.4 Conclusions

Between 1946 and 1960 the older parts of New West were constructed. The development of the population in this area of the city is broken up into three periods. The first is characterized by a massive supply of housing and an increase in the population of up to 126,000 people in 1970, composed of mainly young families. The following 25 years are characterized by a continual decline in the population, down to 85,000 in 1990. Despite this, however, the housing stock still increased slightly. In addition to people moving out due to an increase in income or change of job, children left the parental house and many also left this area of the city. The ‘empty nest phase’ begins. The third period begins half way through the eighties. Houses gradually became free because the original inhabitants had moved to old peoples’ homes or had died. Next to this, new housing was constructed on the edges of New West. The population increased to almost 130,000 in 2000. What is notable in the second period is that households became much smaller. In short, the size of the population of an area of the city depends, to a great extent, upon the phase of the life cycle, which the households have reached.

The planners of the AUP (Amsterdams Uitbreidings Plan, 1934) did not foresee the development of new phases of the life cycle (young single people and couples living together without children and the empty nest phase), the growth in wealth and the increasing consumption of space arising from this.

The same applies to the influx of immigrants from underdeveloped countries. Immigrants of Surinamese origin were the first ethnic minority group to move to New West. Over the years, the opportunities within the social housing market of Amsterdam increased for other ethnic groups. Once their wife and children had also moved to Amsterdam, they satisfied the requirements regarding the size of the family, which were placed on candidates for larger houses. As a result of their low incomes, they remained within the applicable income boundary and could therefore move from the old to the post-war areas. Mainly Moroccans, but also Turks, moved in a short space of time, in the third phase discerned above, to New West. As usual, the influx is very age-specific, whereby the old Dutch population is replenished with young ethnic families. In addition to differences in values and norms based on cultural background, there are also differences based on the needs.

Around 1970, when the first inhabitants of New West – skilled workers – are well-established, the area scored considerably above the average of Amsterdam and also above the
average of the surrounding municipalities. In the 1980s, in comparison with the city, the area declines. With regard to the surrounding municipalities, the decline is even bigger.

The appreciation of New West by the older inhabitants has also strongly declined. The most important negative point mentioned is the change in the composition of the population, especially the influx of ethnic minority groups. Many people place a direct link between immigrants and increasing criminality and pollution. The decline of the area is not seen primarily as a result of poor town planning, or the quality of the housing. Older inhabitants find that the area is no longer under their control, instead, specific parts are dominated by the young and by foreigners. So the quality of the domain in terms of accessibility, safety and respectability (authority constraint) is going down (Cortie, 1997).

The appreciation of the garden village character of the area by the present-day inhabitants is ambivalent. On the one hand, there is much appreciation of the green areas and much criticism of the way in which new buildings have affected them. On the other hand, there is great discontent about the upkeep of the green areas, and the parks especially are regarded as being very unsafe. Contentment regarding the green zones in the area does not lead to a greater attachment to the area (Cortie and Dekker, 1995).
The position of New West has changed dramatically since the construction of the first housing a little more than fifty years ago. Originally New West would be a completion of the city. Nowadays the area is part of a much larger, but also very dynamic urban region. Although the area lies quite central within this region and close to its three main nodes (Amsterdam city centre, Amsterdam South-axis and Schiphol airport), the business image and its popularity amongst housing consumers are not particularly favourable.

While the focus of the last chapter was mostly on general statistical data, the focus of this chapter is more on data specific for problem accumulation. Besides, the geographical focus on this chapter will in general be more selective as we describe – where possible – the developments and problems of the Kolenkit and less of New West in general. This chapter is partly based on open and structured interviews with key persons, residents and shopkeepers.
5.1 Housing and design

The local housing market in New West changed a lot; this is only partly a result of physical changes in the housing stock including new extensions, but also of the position of New West within the regional housing market. In its early years, New West used to be a true 'Mecca' for people coming from the over-populated parts of the city. Nowadays the amount of open and green space and the Sloterplas (artificial lake) are still considered demand triggers, but except the new extensions and some often small pockets of low-rise buildings, New West is now considered one of the least popular areas within the regional housing market. Competition within this regional housing market will only increase the following years due to new construction on both sides of the IJ-river and in new (quasi-) suburban areas.

Nowadays, New West is particular in high demand with young immigrant couples or families. Of the people who now live in New West many would rather buy than rent a house and many would rather live in a larger house (source: O+S). Often, another apartment in New West is considered the right alternative if only those larger but not too expensive owner-occupied units were there. The decline in popularity of living in New West is mostly a result of declined popularity among people who do not live in the area. Especially many elderly do not necessarily want to leave the area, but they indicate that the low level of services and shops in some parts of New West almost forces them to move within or out of New West (source: O+S). Only recently most retired Turks and Moroccans decide not to move back to Turkey or Morocco as many of them planned during their working lives. Many of them still do not completely feel at home in the Netherlands, but they indicate that they would also not feel at home anymore in Turkey or Morocco. And equally important: most of their direct family (i.e. children and grandchildren) also lives in the Netherlands – quite often in the same or a nearby neighbourhood.

Most of the housing in New West – 82 per cent or 45,000 of the 55,000 units – was built in the 1950s and 1960s. Most of these units are in virtually 100 per cent social housing mid-rise buildings and 75 per cent has low rents according to their small size. Although new units have been built (mostly in New Sloten, the Aker and Geuzenveld-West) that are more often large, more often expensive, owner-occupied (40 per cent) and low-rise, and although this may affect the social or housing mix on the scale of New West, this does not affect the social or housing mix within neighbourhoods. Moreover, the highest demand for owner-occupied housing in New West is in the lower prices ranges – up to 150,000 euro – and there are almost no buildings built in these price ranges in New West, or anywhere else in the region. Paradoxically, of the few owner-occupied units in the older parts of New West, most of them are in these lower price ranges while houses in these price ranges have become virtually non-existent in many parts of the region.

As table 5.1 shows residents of Bos and Lommer are not extremely dissatisfied with their housing environment, but they are more often than the average Amsterdam citizen dissatisfied with the quality of the housing stock, safety and public transportation and parking. Especially the last issue is surprising since public transportation facilities are quite well (and much better than elsewhere in New West) and parking possibilities are better than in most other areas, but worse than in other parts of Old and New West. Surprisingly, Bos and Lommer residents are more satisfied with the design and maintenance of public space.
Thus, after 50 years a large part of New West shows signs of ‘wear and tear’, exemplified by a relatively low demand for housing especially in its oldest parts as the Kolenkit. This does, however, not lead to high vacancy rates and high turnover and mobility. Due to the shortage of housing on the regional housing market, also housing in New West is in demand. The problem is that the area has a relatively high share of low-quality, low-rent, small apartments in monotonous – if not poor – design.

The last few decades we have seen that not only housing itself, but also the housing environment has become more important. For New West this means that the before-mentioned open and green space – springing from the original design of ‘licht, lucht en ruimte’ [light, (fresh) air and room/space] – are often viewed as positive. However, the ‘worn out’ looking direct housing environment and the monotony of mid-rise building/green space/mid-rise building/green space etcetera – also springing from the original design of ‘licht, lucht en ruimte’ stands opposite to the large demand for housing environments typified by variation, challenging design and high quality.

### 5.2 Labour market, well-being and access to services

**Social services**

A quick scan of the state of the social services in New West shows us that:

- the state of maintenance of welfare buildings is poor;
- there is a lack of services and adequate housing for the elderly;
- the arrears in education and employment among immigrants are large;
- the health situation of the residents is below average;
- many residents are unsatisfied with the housing environment and feel unsafe;
- sports- and recreation facilities close down because there is not enough demand.

The most important bottlenecks with the area-based social renewal are:

- Untransparent credit facilities.

Contrary to the spatial and physical domain, finance sources in the social domain are many, but scattered. Moreover, seemingly available budgets are often already allocated and it is difficult to transfer money from one goal to another goal. There is a clear need for really available money that is not yet targeted and can easily be transferred to wherever money is really needed.

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**Table 5.1 – Points of improvements indicated by the Bos & Lommer population (%), 2001**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bos &amp; Lommer</th>
<th>Amsterdam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Design and maintenance public space</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>24.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety of the housing environment</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of the housing stock</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public transportation and parking</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SWD, 2001, Wonen in Amsterdam
• Tension between area-based and general policies.
As well in city hall as in the city districts there is a clear tension between general budgets
and special area-based budgets. Often a need for area-based budgets is stated clearly in
policy documents, but in practice money is used for general welfare policies. This problem is
enlarged by the before-mentioned scattered sources of money and already targeted money.

• Measurement of results is lacking.
Contrary to the ‘hard’ sector of physical and spatial renewal it is hard to see and hard
to measure the effects of social policy. Although there are several methods developed to
measure the results of social policy, these measurements are still considered to be lacking or
misrepresenting the actual developments. Many organizations want to move to area-based
methods of measurement that do really measure social policy implementation. Thus, the
new focus is on ‘demand-based’ social policy – i.e. reacting to direct problems and quests
of residents – on beforehand defined results to be measured before, during and after policy
implementation, and on the promotion of public-private-partnerships – not so much with
‘companies’ but with private social organizations and with groups of organized residents.

Labour market
Although the unemployment rate in new West (12 per cent) is lower than the average in
Amsterdam (15 per cent), the development of unemployment rates in New West is far from
pleasing (see table 5.2):
• the share of long-time unemployed is relatively high;
• the education is very low: 75 per cent has only finished high-school at the lowest level (or
even less);
• youth unemployment is low in an international context, but high within the Amsterdam
context;
• about 60 per cent of the unemployed are first- or second-generation immigrants;
• there is also a dramatic rise in immigrant unemployment;
• there is a concentration of unemployment in the Kolenkit, Osdorp-East, Slotermeer-North
and -Southwest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5.2 – Trends in people looking for employment in New West (for each category index 1993=100), 1993-1999</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-34 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-64 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low educated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High educated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous Dutch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Amsterdam | 1993 | 1996 | 1999 |
|---------------------------------------------|
| 100 | 103 | 61 |
| 100 | 135 | 140 |
| 100 | 113 | 95 |
| 100 | 120 | 89 |
| 100 | 96 | 70 |
| 100 | 152 | 134 |
| 100 | 116 | 92 |

Source: Bureau Parkstad, 2002
On the city level about half of the unemployed (about 29,000) are considered not or very unlikely to be able to find a job. This considers people with two or three of the following characteristics: low education, lack of social skills and language problems. However, joint projects by the city district Slotervaart/Overtoomse Veld together with many social and employment organizations called ‘Werkvirus’ [work/employment virus] were considered a success in providing a group of mostly problematic youths with an entry-level job.

Services

Many shops in the Kolenkit do not survive. This partly has to do with the little purchasing power of the neighbourhood’s residents, which causes shops to choose other locations. Some of the big shops have been vacant for some time, and the managing broker refuses to split these buildings in smaller units. This also plays down on the smaller shops: they have not so much lost a big competitor as they have lost a large ‘customer trigger’.

The new shops are usually down-market and focus on low-income immigrants. Their down-market focus helps them to survive. Since the Kolenkit also has a downmarket image, rents for shops are relatively low which helps these shopkeepers to survive. However, competition between small deli’s is also very fierce and many go broke after some time; a small number of shops has seen half a dozen owners in five, six years. It is often argued that these shops survive because of the family and friendship networks in the neighbourhood, but immigrant shopkeepers see this different: ‘people go to another store if their vegetables are a bit cheaper’. Part of the immigrant shopkeepers actually prefer Dutch customers who do not show this behaviour (source: Bos and Lommer district; shopkeepers).

Picture 5.2 – Market in Bos and Lommer. Market just outside the Kolenkit area which is frequented by many Kolenkit residents (Photo: Manuel Aalbers)
The downmarket profile of the shops is also reflected in how many of them look: the lion’s share of the buildings is maintained poorly because shopkeepers do not invest in their shops. Almost all shopkeepers also have problems with crime and with youth giving trouble: ‘some enter the shop just to be thrown out’, others shoplift small things, but there are many of them doing this (source: Bos and Lommer district; shopkeepers).

Many people stress that the shops in the Kolenkit may not be perfect, but they are more than happy with the shops surrounding the Bos and Lommerplein (square on the other side of the city-highway). The market, the cheap supermarket (Dirk v/d Broek), the many chain stores and also some speciality stores there are positively evaluated.

The neighbourhood is also seen as well accessible by both car and public transport, e.g. for people who work at the airport or people who clean offices elsewhere in the city.

Well-being and health
The following developments in health care are considered to be dominant trends:
• from institutionalized care to self-care and the ability to manage for oneself;
• from ‘cure’ to prevention with more attention to social-cultural and physical environmental factors;
• more area-based initiatives.

Just like in other ‘less prosperous’ parts of the city, the health situation of New West residents is below average. Extra attention is needed for immigrant groups and for the elderly, and elderly immigrants in particular. For immigrants the health care in the Netherlands is often considered untransparant and hard to access; the threshold is often too high. Next to this, the current supply of health services is inadequate for elderly who would like to stay in their homes but have a small demand for care. Care-at-home would free elderly of having to move to receive institutionalized care, but it is often not available while it is considered more satisfactory and often even cheaper.

Criminal behaviour
Feelings of unsafety – during the day as well as during the night – have increased in New West in the late-1990s, especially in Bos and Lommer and to a lesser extent in Geuzenveld/Slotermeer. This not only has to do with the experience of feelings of unsafety; the numbers of for instance attacks and hold-ups or of car theft (especially in Osdorp) have actually increased. There is also a link between feelings of unsafety and the discomfort of inter-ethnic communication. Especially young immigrants cause feelings of discomfort and unsafety for elderly indigenous Dutch. In general feelings of unsafety in New West are fostered by the co-existence of several ethnic groups in the same neighbourhood. The resulting feeling of unsafety is in particular the case in Geuzenveld/Slotermeer.

There is a major problem with youth crime. Police records show that New West has the highest share of crime among 12 to 17 year olds, and among 12 to 17 year olds in the city crime is also the highest in New West. Moreover, the police witness a declining average age of youth crime. The major problems are shoplifting and vandalism.
5.3 Demographic changes and social exclusion

Challenged by youths

New West used to be an area that accommodated predominately indigenous Dutch middle-class families. In the late 1970s and 1980s there was a first major population change as the share of (upper-) middle class families declined and the share of non-family households increased. In these years, New West also witnessed the first settlement of immigrants, although in small numbers. Nowadays, the number of non-family households is still below the city average but with one-third of one-person households, the household structure has changed a lot. Also, the number of first- and second- generation immigrants have increased 61,000 of the areas 140,000 inhabitants – rising to over 80 per cent in some neighbourhoods like the Kolenkit.

Compared to other parts of the city New West has relatively high shares of young and of old people (17 per cent is aged 65 or more, 24 per cent 55 or more; the city average is 13 per cent respectively 21 per cent), and a fast and continuing rising share of immigrant elderly. Of the young people (23 per cent; the city average is 18 per cent) about 75 per cent is a first- or more often second-generation immigrant; in the Kolenkit this is 93 per cent while the city average is 45 per cent. There are especially many Moroccan children (31 per cent), but also quite some youths from Turkey (14 per cent), Suriname (13 per cent) and from other non-industrial countries (11 per cent) over-represented in New West (source: website O+S).

There have been several small and larger disorders between New West youths and the police. The most well-known example is that of the riots in early 1998 at the August Allebéplein in the Slotervaart/Overtoomse Veld district when several hundreds of mostly Moroccan youths rebelled against society and demolished lots of shop-windows, shop interiors and artefacts of public space. A commission [Commissie Lankhorst] was assigned to investigate the riots. On the basis of the commission’s report Door jongeren uitgedaagd [Challenged by youths] city hall proposed an approach to the problem of the youths in New West. The commission’s report concluded that there were already many initiatives for the youths in New West, but that coordination and communication between executing organizations was lacking and should be improved. To accomplish this, a task-force was set up.

Income and social exclusion

In general the income position of New West may be low in comparison with the rest of the Amsterdam region, but it is not in comparison with the Amsterdam average. In New West about 40 per cent of the population depends on a low-income; the Amsterdam average is 46 per cent (source: website O+S). However, there are very big differences within New West, in particular between old and new neighbourhoods. Low-income households are mostly elderly and immigrants living in the older parts of New West. Many elderly do have very limited rights to pension credits, while it is estimated that of the first wave of guestworkers immigrants about half does not or hardly speak Dutch.

As we have seen in chapter 3 there is a concentration of people on welfare benefits in the Kolenkit, and while unemployment was declining in the city it was rising in certain parts of New West, in particular in the Kolenkit. Since the Netherlands is a generous welfare state compared to most other countries (with the possible exception of the Scandinavian countries) people who do not have income out of the labour market are not as poor as they are in these
other countries. Thus, the high level of income redistribution does not lead to lower levels of unemployment, but it does lead to only moderate social exclusion of the unemployed.

Next to this general welfare organizations such as Impuls (e.g. homework classes, childcare facilities), but also specific often ethnicity-based and -targeted organizations provide additional services. Many immigrants indicate that there is also some form of inter-ethnic support, although this is fairly limited due to the fact that most immigrant households depend on low incomes for often relatively big families while they often also send some money to their families in Turkey or Morocco. Inter-ethnic support is then limited to non-financial help as fixing technical equipment of things in the house as well as updating other people on where and when to buy which goods for a low price.

5.4 Multi-cultural developments and social cohesion

In the 1990s New West has seen a more rapid increase in almost all immigrant groups than the city on average (see table 5.3). While the share of ethnic minorities is now just below half of the New West population, it is excepted that their share will rise to well over half of the population (80,000 inhabitants) in 2010.

The differences within New West are becoming more clear: on the one hand we see prosperous neighbourhoods with little immigrants (with the exception of a notable share of Surinamese) like the Aker and New Sloten; on the other hand, we see low-income neighbourhoods with virtually entirely cheap social housing units that are predominantly inhabited by disadvantaged immigrant groups like the Kolenkit, Overtoomse Veld-North, Osdorp-Centre and Geuzenveld-South. This process can be self-reinforcing as indigenous Dutch retreats from predominantly immigrant areas.

Education is arguably the most important aspect of measurement of integration, and two of the major problems in New West are seen as directly connected to education (source: Spit, 1999; Bos and Lommer district; school principals). First of all the relatively high unemployment

| Table 5.3 – Trends in ethnic groups in New West (for each category index 1994 = 100), 1994-2001 |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
|                                                   | New West                                        | Amsterdam                                      |
| Surinamese                                        | 100  | 117  | 130  | 100  | 103  | 106  |
| Antilleans                                        | 100  | 126  | 147  | 100  | 100  | 113  |
| Turks                                             | 100  | 122  | 158  | 100  | 100  | 113  |
| Moroccans                                         | 100  | 124  | 158  | 100  | 106  | 124  |
| South-Europeans                                   | 100  | 117  | 130  | 100  | 101  | 108  |
| Immig. from other non-ind. countries              | 100  | 127  | 130  | 100  | 108  | 134  |
| Immig. from other ind. countries                  | 100  | 98   | 99   | 100  | 95   | 99   |
| Indigenous Dutch                                  | 100  | 98   | 96   | 100  | 96   | 93   |
| Total                                             | 100  | 106  | 114  | 100  | 99   | 101  |

Source: Bureau Parkstad, 2002
among several immigrant groups which have low to extremely low education levels. Second, it
regards youth nuisance on streets which causes feelings of unsafety by, in particular, indigenous
elderly Dutch, and which is connected to the dramatically high levels of youth crime in New
West. Within the education system language problems are often mentioned since most kids
that go the school at the age of four already have language arrears of up to two-and-a-half
years. Outside the education system there are many immigrant adults who hardly speak any
Dutch. Besides, there is also a problem with the different norms and values within the school,
on the streets and at home. Many social psychologists and others see this as the major problem
of ‘problem-causing-immigrant-youths’. Again others regard this to be an emancipation battle.

Many people in the Kolenkit stress the education system. The two schools in the area are
almost completely black: Moroccans, Turks and a small group of refugees. Both schools have
250 to 300 pupils, many of them from low-income families. Here often not only the first
generation speaks hardly any Dutch; also part of the second generation has huge problems.
Partly as a consequence, pupils enter the school with language arrears. Many parents see these
black schools as a problem; key persons doubt if owner-occupant units will solve the problem.
Probably, white parents will not send their children to black schools and if they will, they
might be discouraged to do this by one of the schools (Spit, 1999; Bos and Lommer district;
school principals).

A positive development is that parents are becoming more involved in the schools, partly
because the ‘boards of parents’ have become more active in the late 1990s. The schools are also
a meeting point within the neighbourhood. The playing garden caters the younger kids, but
there is little to do in the neighbourhood for the children over 12 years old. They can meet in
youth centre Horizon, sports school Vathorst and at a square (Staesplein) where many play
soccer games.

There is also a welfare organization that focuses on young Turkish people, between 15 and
40; there are about 300 male participants. Their building is opened from eleven in the morning
on, but is most popular at Friday evenings. It functions as a place to keep people off the streets,
but also as a ‘focal point of addressment’ [aanspreekpunt] for institutions like the city district
or the schools. Sometimes young Turkish women organize their own activities within the
centre. There is also a Turkish women’s association, but that focuses on older Turkish women.
Recently, a mother-centre was opened to provide women with a place of their own in the
neighbourhood. Among others things, language courses are organized here.

There is also a ‘playing garden association’, but there are only few immigrants participating.
This is partly because of the associated costs, but also partly because of what the ‘playing garden
association’ is offering. Most participants do not come from the Kolenkit but from other areas.
Moroccan and Turkish people do want to organize their own activities, but the chairman of
the ‘playing garden association’ does not want separated activities. The association’s building is
also used for meeting of (mainly) white elderly. There has been a wedding in the building, but
that was not very successful.

Although many adults meet in front of the schools and at the playgrounds, there is little
room for encounters, besides a coffeeshouse (which is not a coffeeshop). There is also no room
for parties, marriages and the like. Many people now use one of the schools for this, but this is
not a very good space. It is also essential to have separated rooms for men and women.
The changing ethnic composition of the neighbourhood is seen as the highest concern for both indigenous Dutch and immigrants. Not only the remaining white people regret the loss of other white people (and often want to move out themselves), many immigrants also see this as a loss: ‘how can we integrate if there are only immigrants living here?’ Immigrants often wonder how their children are supposed to become a full member of Dutch society when all the Dutch left the neighbourhood when they came in. On the other hand, some aspects of Dutch culture are also feared (drugs, sexual liberalism, role of women etc.). There are even some immigrant parents who take their children to white schools out of the neighbourhood in order to provide them with good education among Dutch people and fewer immigrants.

The mosque association is also predominantly Turkish, although about one-third of the visitors is Moroccan. Both the Turkish and the Moroccan communities are seen as tight, but not as tight as some Turkish and Moroccan communities elsewhere in the city where sometimes many families come from the same village. It is also striking that the smaller Turkish community has lots of associations, while the larger Moroccan community has virtually none. The differences in level of organization are often traced back to the national or regional culture where the people come from. As a consequence the Turks are better organized in a political way and they have spokespersons that are frequently contacted by Dutch institutions.

A 1999 report on Bos and Lommer operationalized social cohesion based on four statements: 1) ‘Neighbourhood people hardly don’t know each other’; 2) ‘Neighbourhood people interact in a pleasant way’, 3) ‘I live in a cosy neighbourhood with much solidarity’; 4) ‘I feel at home with people who live in the neighbourhood’. A high score means that neighbourhood people experience much social cohesion. The scores range from 0 (no social cohesion) to 10 (much social cohesion). According to the survey people in the Kolenkit experience less social cohesion compared to the Amsterdam population as a whole (4.1 against 5.5; 4.6 respectively 5.5. in 1996) (Van Krieken et al., 1999).

In addition, only 31 per cent (41 per cent in 1996) of its population is positive about ‘different ethnic groups living together in one neighbourhood’ (for Amsterdam as a whole this is 44 per cent, down from 48 per cent). Immigrant people experience more social cohesion and are more positive about different ethnic groups living together in one neighbourhood compared to Dutch people. Kolenkit residents also feel less connected to their environment compared to the whole Amsterdam population: 62 per cent (57 per cent in 1996) of the residents feel rooted in the area against 71 per cent (74 per cent in 1996) at the city level. The positive thing is that this share is rising in the Kolenkit. Finally, their contentment with neighbours and the availability of family, friends and relatives in the neighbourhood is also low compared to the average Amsterdam figures: satisfaction declined from 78 to 64 per cent in the Kolenkit while in Amsterdam it declined from 87 to 82 per cent.

The survey also pays attention to problems in the neighbourhood. In the perception of the neighbourhood population most important problems, in order of appearance, are litter in the street, cultural integration (which means a concentration of immigrants that is considered to be too high and also that people from different ethnic backgrounds do not mix very well), nuisance caused by youngsters (Moroccan youngsters in particular, the authors), criminality, the lack of neighbourhood centres for youngsters, and arrears in public space and housing repairs. In addition, this is also mentioned by people living and/or working in the neighbourhood.
There are also several positive aspects of the neighbourhood that pop up in conversations and discussions with people who live (and/or work) in the Kolenkit: some of the immigrant women talk of ‘een gezellige buurt’ which is a typical Dutch expression for a relaxed, cosy neighbourhood. Most immigrants have friends in the neighbourhood with whom they like to spend some time outside when the weather allows this.

Many residents who complain about the housing stock, crime, traffic, garbage, the declining amount of Dutch people, the downmarket shops and the design of public space, also indicate that they prefer the Kolenkit to other neighbourhoods. The location of the neighbourhood is seen as positive. Other neighbourhoods closer to the city centre are considered too busy and the Kolenkit as ‘nicely quiet’. Both neighbourhoods closer to the city centre as neighbourhoods further from the city centre are considered as poorly accessible: the first are hard to reach by car and have no good connection to work locations near the highway, while the second are too remote from the city centre and sometimes also lack good public transportation possibilities.

Turkish residents also stress the Turkish organizations in the area which bring social cohesion and – again – ‘gezelligheid’ (cosiness). And while crime and garbage are stressed as factors of discomfort, they are also mentioned as things that are better in the Kolenkit than in many other neighbourhoods. Overall, however, the Kolenkit is considered ‘messy and untidy’ and less clearly structured than for instance Osdorp (a newer part of New West) and many people wonder why other neighbourhoods with cheap housing and predominantly immigrants like the Indische Buurt (district of Zeeburg, east of the city centre) are better maintained – public space as well as the housing stock.

Another paradox is that many immigrants fear a ghetto and they want more Dutch people in the neighbourhood, they also stress the social cohesion within their community, and in the Turkish case, their own organization that attract other immigrants. Overall, the presence of a cheap housing stock is seen as the main factor that attracts immigrants, because they tend to depend on low-incomes.

There are communication problems between the different groups in the neighbourhood, partly as a consequence of language problems, partly as a result of not understanding each other’s culture. Dutch people feel they cannot communicate with immigrants. Moroccans indicate that they may not always speak the language but they are very hospitable. Some people regret the fact that other people do not want to help with maintaining the staircases, but most of them see this not as a major problem, because this does not enable them to clean their individual houses which is seen as far more important. Some housing corporations organize so-called ‘portiekgesprekken’ [tenement-house conversations/discussions] where people who share a stairwell are enabled to communicate and solve problems, but this is not always a very successful event.

5.5 Conclusions

New West has a relatively attractive location within the urban region close to its main economic centres and economic growth centres offering both high-end and low-end jobs (Schiphol airport, South-axis, Sloterdijk/Teleport area, harbour) with good connections by road (highways) and rail, also to other cities. New West also offers a string network of water
and green space, a number of attractive housing environments, a fair number of shops with several good concentrations (notably Osorpplelin) and a large supply of affordable housing. The area, however, has a bad image by both companies and housing consumers, several housing environments in low demand with a high level of ‘wear and tear’, a very one-sided supply of housing, a high share of long-term unemployed (in particular among immigrants) and an only moderate level of public transportation within the area.

The upside is that many residents of New West would like to move to a better house in a better housing environment within New West and that the housing market tension provides opportunities to attract new groups of housing consumers by goal-directed intervention, action and renewal of the area. The area also has several spaces that are available or can be made available for small and starting businesses, often within residential areas. A good thing is also that most of the involved institutional actors (e.g. housing corporations and several layers of government), but also several companies and shops are willing to invest in the area.

The downside is that New West’s image is currently still in decline with a continuing decline of popularity of New West with housing consumers, with a declining/decreasing basis for facilities, high rates of school drop-out in combination with low education levels (in particular among immigrants), an increase of disadvantaged households, rising feelings of unsafety and the pull out of middle- and high-income households (in particular indigenous Dutch, but also Surinamese) from the older parts of New West.

Just like other estates in New West, the Kolenkit has not always been a deprived neighbourhood. In fact, it was a typical middle class area for many years. In the 1970s things started to change: increasingly low-income people from redevelopment areas elsewhere in the city settled in the neighbourhood, while the better-off (mainly young families with children) were leaving the neighbourhood in exchange for more spacious and comfortable dwellings and residential environments outside the city (to suburbs and satellite towns). This process continued for a while and as a result of massive international migration, increasingly immigrant families (mainly Turks and Moroccans) settled in the neighbourhood, especially in the 1980s and 1990s. They occupied the dwellings left behind by Dutch people.

An important explanation for the large inflow of immigrants in the Kolenkit has to do with the characteristics of its housing stock. Dwellings are relatively cheap and also have relatively many rooms. This makes these dwellings attractive to often large low-income immigrant families. Based on their relatively large number of children, dwellings with many rooms were – and to a lesser extent are still – allocated in particular to immigrant families.

One of the outcomes of this change in population structure was that in the early 1990s the city district Bos and Lommer faced many social problems. Since then, Bos and Lommer suffers from a stigma as being a problematic area. In addition, the Kolenkit area itself was labelled in the media as ‘one of the most declined neighbourhoods of Amsterdam’ with high levels of unemployment, problematic youngsters, bad quality of housing, bad quality of public space, and a one-sided local economy. A recent resident survey revealed that residents of the Kolenkit value their neighbourhood the lowest of all Amsterdam residents. Moreover, its residents are also the most negative of all city residents on the recent trends in the neighbourhood (Van der Veer, 2003).

At present, a large restructuring programme of the Bos and Lommer area is in process. The heart of the Bos and Lommer, just east of the Kolenkit over the city-highway will get a real
face-lift in the near future. New office space will be built there, a new library will be opened, new dwellings will be constructed (especially owner-occupied housing for middle-income households), the market will be renewed and so on. Construction of owner-occupied dwellings is in line with the Dutch Large Cities Policy in which the goal of ‘mixed neighbourhoods’ is a central element. Among politicians and policy makers it is expected that differentiating the housing stock (i.e. mixing low with high-income people) is good for social cohesion. Social scientists have often doubted this.
The ‘Amsterdam Uitbreidingsplan’ [AUP, Amsterdam extension Plan] of 1934 envisioned all future expansions for the city up till the year 2000. An extension Southeast of the city was not envisioned. However, in the 1960s it turned out that the city needed more space for housing, parks and workspace. In 1965, after earlier plans, the urban design for the Bijlmer – that will make up a lion’s share of the Southeast extension – is presented. Even more than New West,
the Bijlmer is designed according to the principles of CIAM: not only is workspace separated from the residential areas, public transportation and car traffic are also separated from pedestrians and bikes by the construction of elevated ‘autostrada’s’ and ‘subway’ lines. Roads were built on raised embankments, leaving ground level free for pedestrians and cyclists. In another aspect, the urban design of the Bijlmer resembled the development of the New West: the Bijlmer was built as a new lobe of the once concentric city.

Like New West in the 1950s and 1960s, in the 1970s the ‘city of the future’ was built for the Amsterdam citizens who wanted to flee the overpopulated inner city or were forced to do so by urban renewal. The Bijlmer offered 23,000 mostly large (100 to 125 square metres) and often almost identical apartments in identical high-rise buildings in a honeycomb-like spatial pattern. Although the Bijlmer, just like New West, upheld the principles of equality, the Bijlmer was targeted at households with an income level slightly higher than those in New West; compared to other social housing units, apartments in the estate were relatively expensive.

In this chapter we will provide an overview of the developments and current state of the Bijlmer. Most of the times we will present data on the Southeast district of which the Bijlmer makes up about half. Where possible we will distinguish between Southeast, Bijlmer-Centre and Bijlmer-East (figure 6.1). While this chapter focuses mainly on general statistical data, the next chapter will have a more selective focus on the problems and perspectives of the Bijlmer.

6.1 Physical structure

6.1.1 Type of dwellings

Tenure
Of the housing stock in Southeast 73 per cent is social housing, 14 per cent private rented housing and 13 per cent owner-occupied. Between 1996 and 2000 600 social housing units have been marked to be sold off; not all of these units have yet been sold. Thus, for some areas it is hard to say how many units are social housing or owner-occupied.

Multi family/single family dwellings
Although a number of the large apartments in the Bijlmer has been subdivided over time, a large share is still spacious, as compared to the Amsterdam average (Musterd and Dukes, 2001).

Table 6.1 – Housing tenure in the Bijlmer (%), 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Owner-occupied</th>
<th>Private rented</th>
<th>Social rented</th>
<th>Others/unknown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>1 /</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bijlmer-Centre</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bijlmer-East</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: O+S, 2000; AFWC/SWD, 2001

[ 68 ]
In more than half of the dwellings in the Bijlmer, the indoor surface is larger than 70 square metres, whereas this only holds for one third of the total Amsterdam housing stock (table 6.2).

Originally 90 per cent of Southeast was designed to be multi-family dwellings and 10 per cent single-family. Nowadays, after some high-rise buildings have been torn down and replaced by low-rise the share of single-family dwellings is 24 per cent, and it continues to rise.

Price
In Amsterdam 63.5 per cent of the housing stock has a rent below 350 euro or measures at least 60 square metres and a rent below 500 euro. These units are considered ‘affordable’. In Southeast about half of the stock is affordable, and 78 per cent of the social housing stock.

Additions/demolitions
While 61 per cent of the housing stock in Amsterdam dates back to before 1960, 99 per cent of the housing stock in Southeast was constructed after 1960. Most high-rise buildings were erected between 1967 and 1977. The housing that dates from the 1980s mainly consists of mid-rise and low-rise. Housing that dates from the 1990s are mainly new constructions that
replaced some of the high-rise buildings; it is predominantly low-rise, but also consists of some mid-rise.

6.1.2 Housing conditions
The housing stock of the Bijlmer, like that of most housing estates, could be described as ‘much of the same’. However, since the latest renewal plan was implemented starting in 1992, many units have been torn down and replaced by others and many other units have been transformed physically (splitting apartments, high renovation etc.) or in tenure. Thus, now housing conditions tend to be very differentiated and the statistics provided in the last sub-paragraph are already outdated in many respects.

The layout of the apartments remains unchanged, as the interiors of the apartments themselves are spacious and attractively designed. The major operations involve the structure of the buildings. The public corridors on the first floor, the original entrance to the flats are removed. Lifts and entrances are transferred to the ground floor, where new, closed-off entrances are placed. On the ground floor the blank walls of boxrooms/sheds are replaced by apartments and office space.

Next to this, 6,465 units will be demolished (2,672 completed by 2001) and replaced by 7,340 new units (1,409 completed by 2001), 40 per cent of which consists of single-family dwellings. Together, new development and flat renovation create widely different living environments with their own distinctive characters. The variety on offer strengthens the Bijlmer’s position on the housing market. At the moment the demand for newly built flats exceeds the supply (source: http://www.zuidoost.amsterdam.nl/, visited on the 9th of April 2003). New owner-occupied units in various price ranges offer scope to residents with varying incomes and it

![Picture 6.1 – Housing in the Bijlmer. From left to right: Non-renovated high-rise, renovated high-rise, new single-family dwellings (Photo: Manuel Aalbers)](Image)
turns out that many people on medium incomes who used to leave the Bijlmer now continue to live there.

6.1.3 Quality and character of the environment

Compared to other parts of the city, the Bijlmer has a relatively low population and housing density and a high share of green space (table 6.5). Although the Bijlmer itself is considered to be a completely residential area, the Southeast district shows a high level of variety with an important office area west of the Bijlmer (Holendrecht/Amstel III) and also moderate to high scores on other non-housing territory uses.

The high amount of open green space in the area is sometimes considered the Bijlmer’s most attractive, but also most disattractive feature. The Bijlmer estates were planned as buildings in a park, and not a park adjacent to the buildings as is more common. In 1995 residents of some parts of the Bijlmer mentioned the high share of green space as the most attractive side of their housing environment (72 per cent); in 1999 71 per cent of the residents in another part did the same. However, pollution, vandalism and safety are considered the most problematic sides of the Bijlmer. Many people connect these problems to public space in general as well as to (1) the boxrooms/sheds and flat entrances, and (2) the large tracts of open, green space in particular. In several research projects residents identified the use and maintenance of public space as unsatisfactory (Wassenberg, 2002).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total km²</th>
<th>Land km²</th>
<th>Share of city size %</th>
<th>Population density by km² land</th>
<th>Housing density by km² land</th>
<th>Green space in m² per dwelling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>22.09</td>
<td>20.37</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>4,164</td>
<td>1,856</td>
<td>133.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>219.07</td>
<td>166.08</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>4,428</td>
<td>2,245</td>
<td>69.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: O+S, 2002

6.1.4 Rent subsidies and social housing allocation

Within the social housing sector, households can apply to certain units (see section 2.3). Within Southeast, however, there is an important variation in the system in which it differs from New West and other parts of the city. About half of the social housing stock in the Bijlmer is owned and maintained by the housing corporation ‘Nieuw Amsterdam’ [New Amsterdam]. For many years, Nieuw Amsterdam was excluded from the ‘normal’ social housing allocation procedures because of the problematic nature of the Bijlmer estates. This holds no longer true: since April 2000 the ‘normal’ system also applies to Nieuw Amsterdam’s stock in Southeast, but it is important for understanding the dynamics in the Bijlmer housing market. The stock of Nieuw Amsterdam consists mainly of high-rise buildings in Bijlmer-Centre and Bijlmer-East, our focus area. Dwellings were assigned by the housing corporation to people on their list – usually people who did not have the time to wait for an apartment within the ‘normal’ allocation system. Thus, high-rise in the Bijlmer was relatively unpopular and easily accessible. This is

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7 For a short overview of the results of these research projects, and a narrative on the changes in design and experiences considering open, green space, see: Wassenberg, 2002.
also true for other parts of Southeast, but only to a lesser extent. But even for the non-Nieuw Amsterdam units in Southeast, the average number of applications is the lowest for the whole city. However, nowhere in the city has the increase in applications (mostly due to the rising tension on the housing market) been as substantial as in Southeast. As usual, the differences within Southeast are also impressive: while the average number of applications in parts of the Gein area are above the city average and applications in the Holendrecht area just below the city average, these numbers are extremely low in the older parts of the Bijlmer-East.

Since rents are relatively high and many residents have an income below average, a relatively large part of the residents depends on rent subsidies. Due to this combination of high rents and low incomes, the average amount of rent subsidy per household is also very high (see table 6.6).

### Table 6.6 – Households depending on rent subsidies in Southeast, 1997-2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of allocated applications</th>
<th>Average amount per month in euro</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bijlmer-Centre</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bijlmer-East</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>14,408</td>
<td>14,112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>80,943</td>
<td>82,064</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of VROM/Pinkroccade/O+S, 2002
– No figures available

6.1.5 Quality and quantity of available services shops

The Bijlmer offers many local services, but originally no leisure activities (amusement, bars, restaurants, cinema’s, theatres etc.) were planned. The Bijlmer was a satellite city with no full-blown city centre of one’s own, and heavily dependent on Amsterdam’s city centre. In the course of time, however, the available shops and also leisure activities have mountainously increased in the Bijlmer.

One reason for the (s)low start in the number of shops was that the phasing of construction necessitated the completion of the car garages before the shops could be built (Mentzel, 1989, p. 203). In fact, even in 1975, the 30,000 Bijlmer residents had to make do with only one baker, one butcher and four makeshift supermarkets. Residents were forced to travel distances of up to ten kilometres for basic items. The main shopping facility, the underground centre ‘Ganzenhoef’ in Bijlmer-East, was completed in 1976. This was a much needed, but hardly sufficient facility. Since Ganzenhoef was disconnected from street-level traffic, shopkeepers could not profit from passers-by and over time this centre acquired a reputation of being dark and unsafe. The district authority decided in 1987 to demolish it, which finally took place in 1999-2000. A new shopping centre at the Ganzenhoef location has just been opened.

Due to these glaring deficiencies in the retail structure, it was decided that a large regional centre should be built in the Bijlmer – the ‘Amsterdamse Poort’ [Amsterdam Gate, referring to its location on the edge of the city] – to serve the local population and visitors from

8 This subsection is partly adapted from David Evers’ PhD-thesis (in preparation) at the University of Amsterdam named ‘Building for Consumption’.
nearby villages. The project also aimed to attract the patronage of workers from the adjacent Holdendrecht/Amstel III business park and the abutting ING bank headquarters then under construction (it was estimated that 10 per cent of the sales would be to non-Southeast residents). This project was also viewed as providing a badly needed economic impulse to the area. It was hoped that a mixed-use retail centre at the Amsterdamse Poort would not only provide employment and stimulate local entrepreneurs, but that its ‘leisure’ aspect would help to assuage fears of non-residents and subvert the negative image of the nearby Bijlmer estates.

The Amsterdamse Poort was completed in 1987. Immediately, shopkeepers clamoured to re-establish themselves at this location (and move away from Ganzenhoef). These were admitted according to a strict retail mix scheme drawn up by the developer MBO. Several years later, the four other locations (‘sub-centres’) declined rapidly. By the end of the decade, the Amsterdamse Poort had absorbed most of the food and non-food provision for the Southeast district, and the smaller centres had vanished or been demolished. Another significant project was the construction of the 30,000 m² Ikea outlet in 1985 to the Southwest.

Then around the turn of the century, following the construction of the soccer-stadium ArenA, a shopping strip named ArenA Boulevard has developed between train-station Amsterdam–Bijlmer and the ArenA, adjacent – though on the other side of the railway and elevated subway tracks – from the Amsterdamse Poort shopping centre. Now the ArenA Boulevard mainly consists of chain stores such as Media Markt, Prénétal, and Perry Sports, but also a furniture mall named Villa Arena, a mega cinema, a temporary theatre and a concert hall.

Medical and care services
The available services for health care in the Bijlmer have been problematic (i.e. under-serviced) for quite some years, and although the situation has improved, the availability is still below average. Although the available services are below average this is hardly considered a real problem. The area also has the city’s most respected hospital, the Academic Medical Centre Amsterdam within its borders. Next to these institutionalized services, the area also hosts many

### Table 6.7 – Job-seeking unemployed in Southeast (%), 1993–2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1993</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bijlmer-Centre</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bijlmer-East</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: O+S, 2000; AFWC/SWD, 2001

### Table 6.8 – Labour force in Southeast, 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total labour force</th>
<th>Employed</th>
<th>Unemployed</th>
<th>Non-labour force</th>
<th>Total pop. 15-64 years</th>
<th>Gross participation %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>40,900</td>
<td>37,800</td>
<td>3,100</td>
<td>18,600</td>
<td>59,500</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>386,500</td>
<td>368,400</td>
<td>18,100</td>
<td>142,500</td>
<td>529,000</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: REB/O+S, 2002
legal and illegal health and care service providers who usually work on the basis of ‘alternative’ approaches and in general cater specific ethnic groups.

6.2 Economic developments

Employment and unemployment
In 1993 the share of unemployed in the Southeast and the city as a whole were the same. Due to the economic boom of the mid and late 1990s unemployment figures declined in the whole city with 25 per cent, but only with 12 per cent in Southeast. Thus, Southeast has profited less from the economic boom. Now unemployment figures are only higher in Westerpark (15 per cent) and Bos and Lommer (16 per cent). The gross participation rate of Bijlmer residents is below the city average (see table 6.7 and 6.8).

The Bijlmer as a business location
Just like in most other parts of the city, most businesses in the Bijlmer are small businesses. Unlike most other areas, however, most employees work in big companies. Big employers tend to be located in office parks or industrial zoned land at the edges of the city, and the Bijlmer possesses one of the largest office parks – if not the largest office park – in the city: Holendrecht/Amstel III. Thus, within Southeast most big employers are located west of the residential area, while most small employers (including many shops in the Amsterdamse Poort and the sub-centres) are located in or directly near the residential area.

Since the development of the residential area (with the exception of the retail spaces) was advanced before the development of the working area, the number of jobs was very low in Southeast. With the development of Amstel III in the 1980s, 1990s and in this decade, the number of jobs increased in the Southeast district. The year 1987 seemed to be a pivotal year for the district as a whole. For the first time, vacancy levels in the high-rise housing units decreased markedly, the installation of the district council ‘Zuidoost’ [Southeast] became a reality, and both the ING-bank headquarters and the ABN-Amro-bank building were completed.

The flurry of planning activity at Holendrecht/Amstel III during the 1980s and early 1990s was primarily targeted at attracting white-collar employment and did little to help the largely unskilled labour pool in the Bijlmer. The jobs mismatch became more acute in the course of the 1990s as Amstel III gained in popularity as a highly accessible and relatively affordable business park. Over 55,000 people worked in this area in 2001, and this number is expected to grow to 75,000 by 2010 (Bruijne, 2002). Meanwhile, the Bijlmer faced an unemployment rate of over 25 per cent and contained 3,000 empty housing units. Jobs became even a more poignant issue on the political agenda once plans for building the stadium and the ArenA Boulevard became known. It is at this time that the district authority began playing a larger role as a spokesperson for the residents. The increased involvement with the Bijlmer manifested itself in two distinct ways. Socio-economically, there was a drive to ensure that the growth in jobs in the Centre area would go to the Bijlmer unemployed. Physically, there was a desire to alter the urban landscape from the detested high-rise estates to suburban-style family houses.

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9 This subsection is partly adapted from David Evers’ PhD-thesis (in preparation) at the University of Amsterdam named ‘Building for Consumption’.
6.3 Demographic and socio-cultural developments

Number of people
The city of Amsterdam is subdivided in 15 districts and every district is headed by its own administration. The area that is usually referred to as Bijlmer is part of the Southeast district. The Southeast district covers about 10 per cent of the total surface of Amsterdam. At present, about 49,000 people live in the Bijlmer area, which is about 58 per cent of the total number of inhabitants in the Southeast district (see table 6.9). The number of inhabitants was rising fast in the early 1970s with the completion of many high-rise buildings, but also in the late 1980s with the completion of many mid- and also low-rise buildings in the adjacent neighbourhoods of the Bijlmer. Between 1992 and 1996 – and to a lesser extent after 1996 – there was an important drop in population due to the start of the renewal project.

Age structure
In Amsterdam 12 per cent of the population is aged 65 or more; these figures are higher in New West, North and especially Zuideramstel, but lower in Southeast. Young people (up to 20 years old) are however over-represented in Southeast – even more than in New West. There are large differences between the different areas in Southeast. In general, there are more children in the low-rise buildings and in the more recently built structures (see table 6.10).

Ethnicity
The share of ethnic minorities (excluding immigrants from industrial countries who account for 10 per cent of the population) in the Amsterdam population is 36 per cent; the highest shares are in the following three districts: Zeeburg (49 per cent), Bos and Lommer (including the Kolenkit) (57 per cent) and Southeast (62 per cent). In Southeast there is a large over-representation of Surinamese, Antilleans, Ghanese and to a lesser extent immigrants from other non-industrial countries. The shares of Turks, Moroccans and immigrants from industrial countries are relatively low. Within Southeast there are areas with about 90 per cent ethnic minorities, but also one area with only 6 per cent ethnic minorities (see table 6.11).

Table 6.9 – Inhabitants of Southeast, 1976-2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>751,054</td>
<td>716,967</td>
<td>676,524</td>
<td>691,837</td>
<td>713,493</td>
<td>718,091</td>
<td>728,882</td>
<td>735,328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>38,000</td>
<td>39,500</td>
<td>39,500</td>
<td>55,000</td>
<td>91,084</td>
<td>86,002</td>
<td>84,609</td>
<td>84,811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bijlmer-Centre</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>22,790</td>
<td>20,933</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bijlmer-East</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>26,862</td>
<td>27,635</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: O+S, various years
No figures available

In the other chapters on Amsterdam and its estates we have not distinguished the Ghanese as a distinct group, but have interpreted it as one of groups within the ‘immigrants from other non-industrial countries’. Because of the vast over-representation of Ghanese in Southeast we have distinguished them as a separate group in this chapter.
Table 6.10 – Age structure of Southeast (%), 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0-9</th>
<th>10-19</th>
<th>20-34</th>
<th>35-50</th>
<th>50-65</th>
<th>65+</th>
<th>Absolute number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>728,882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>84,609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bijlmer-Centre</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20,933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bijlmer-East</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>27,635</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: O+S, 2000; AFWC/SWD, 2001

Table 6.11 – Population of Southeast by ethnicity (%), 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Surinamese</th>
<th>Antillean</th>
<th>Turkish</th>
<th>Moroccan</th>
<th>South Europeans</th>
<th>Other non-indus.</th>
<th>Ghanaese</th>
<th>Ethnic minorities</th>
<th>Indus.</th>
<th>Dutch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bijlmer-Centre</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bijlmer-East</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: O+S, 2000; AFWC/SWD, 2001

Table 6.12 – Household type in Southeast (%), 1993–2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Single-parent family</th>
<th>Couple with kid(s)</th>
<th>Couple without kids</th>
<th>Single person</th>
<th>3 or more singles</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1993/2000</td>
<td>'93</td>
<td>'93</td>
<td>'00</td>
<td>'93</td>
<td>'00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bijlmer-Centre</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bijlmer-East</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: O+S, 2000; AFWC/SWD, 2001

Table 6.13 – Net monthly income per household in Southeast, (%) 1999

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>&lt; 928 euro</th>
<th>928-1312</th>
<th>1312-1583</th>
<th>1583-2097</th>
<th>&gt; 2097</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bijlmer-Centre</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bijlmer-East</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Wonen in Amsterdam, 1999
Within Southeast the Dutch are under-represented in the high-rise buildings; the Ghanese and immigrants from other non-industrial countries, on the other hand, are over-represented in high-rise buildings. The Surinamese are over-represented in recently built housing – or, in other words, in housing that replaced older high-rise structures. This reflects the upward social mobility and housing careers of many Surinamese.

*Types of households*

Just like New West and North the share of households with children is much higher in Southeast (35 per cent) than in Amsterdam as a whole (24 per cent). Southeast has relatively little couples without children; their share is particularly low in some areas with many owner-occupant units. The share of single person households is lower in the Bijlmer than in Amsterdam, but higher in some areas where there are many small apartments targeted at single young people.

If we compare 2000 to 1993 we see that the share of single-parent households increased from 12 to 16 per cent. Although there was a small decrease of couples with kids in the Bijlmer, their share rose in the areas where new buildings were constructed in the 1990s (see table 6.12).

The average number of people per dwelling in Amsterdam declined from 2.07 in 1992 to 1.99 in 1998 and 2.0 in 2000. These figures are higher in North, New West and Southeast (2.30).

*Income distribution*

The average monthly income per household in Southeast (1,423 euro) is just below that of Amsterdam as a whole (1,487 euro). Also, per income group the differences between Southeast and Amsterdam as a whole are rather small (see table 6.13). If we look at the yearly disposable income (table 6.14) we see that again Southeast lags behind the city as a whole, but not in a very dramatic way. However, (1) the average household size in Southeast is larger than in the city, thus the average income per individual is lower in Southeast than in the city, (2) the differences within Southeast (although only partly reflected in table 6.13) are considerable, and (3) the average income increase between 1997 and 1999 in Southeast (11.5 per cent) was considerably lower than in Amsterdam (14 per cent). It is hypothesized that the biggest differences in income within Southeast are between those who live in the socially rented high-rise buildings from the 1960s and 1970s and those who live in the owner-occupied low-rise buildings of the 1980s and 1990s.

The share of low- and moderate-income households in Southeast declined from 48 per cent (1997) to 46 per cent (1999); the decline in Amsterdam as a whole was more eminent (from 46 to 41 per cent). Within Southeast their share is higher in Bijlmer-Centre (55 per cent) and Bijlmer-East (61 per cent), but lower in some other areas of Southeast. Again, within these areas there are also important differences, especially within Bijlmer-Centre and Bijlmer-East – i.e. between the high-rise buildings and the low-rise buildings from the 1990s.

*Turnover and mobility*

The competitive position of the Bijlmer was heavily undermined by suburbanization. As a result the area was the easiest accessible. When many Surinamese left their country prior to the independence of their country (1975), the Bijlmer became their destination. Starting from the mid 1980s, the Bijlmer became more-and-more a haven for marginal groups such as refugees, poor immigrants and undocumented immigrants, but also a problematic group of drug users.
and another group lacking good opportunities on the housing market: young people, especially those from out of the city.

The population turnover in the Bijlmer, including vacancies, is directly linked to the inferior position of the district on the regional housing market. The Bijlmer had become a ‘passageway’ to which people with little possibilities on the housing market go, and leave when their possibilities increase. The high turnover was promoted by the conversion of large apartments in small units for one or two persons. However, we should be careful with viewing a high turnover as a ‘problem sign’, because this can also be the result of social mobility.

Starting from the 1980s, the problems described in earlier sections mount. In 1983, a special housing corporation is founded that would take over almost all of the housing in the Bijlmer to stop degeneration. The first years of this ‘super housing corporation’, named Nieuw Amsterdam, turned out to be the hardest as turnover and vacancy rates climbed to unparalleled heights in 1984 and 1985.

Notwithstanding these unfavourable circumstances, the new housing corporation successfully upgraded – both socially and physically – several flats. This was partly done with the use of a special rule that turned the Bijlmer’s high vacancy rates into an advantage: high vacancy rates made it possible for New Amsterdam to relocate the remaining residents and renovate the building. Next, new residents were selected before they were admitted to the apartments (e.g. the renovation of ‘Gliphoeve 2’ into ‘Gravestein’). Additionally, elevators, gallery and stairwells were improved, and special care was taken to make sure that the ‘good buildings’ would not degenerate while the already degenerated ones would be upgraded.

In several cases Nieuw Amsterdam succeeded in reaching their physical goals, in several other cases they failed. The failure of several buildings is coupled with the movement of the drugs scene from the Zeedijk in the red light district in the city centre to part of the Bijlmer. Nieuw Amsterdam had a hard time fighting drugs related crime, partly because it did not have the discretion to fight crime, but only to fight the consequences of crime and to try to prevent crime. This was done by introducing concierges on the flats and by adapting the flats. This could, however, not stop crime and this contributed to the already negative image of the Bijlmer.

Since the mid 1980s, both vacancy rates and turnover have dropped although turnover is still clearly higher than those in other districts. This improvement is partly a consequence of the social and physical transformation of the Bijlmer in the 1990s, but also of the Amsterdam regional housing market. The housing market has been and continues to be very tight; as a

### Table 6.14 – Average disposable income, Southeast, 1998

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Inhabitants</th>
<th>Average disposable income per inhab.</th>
<th>Indiv. with 52 weeks income</th>
<th>Av. disp. inc. per fully employed indiv.</th>
<th>Households</th>
<th>Av. disp. inc. per house-hold</th>
<th>Index standardized income households (NL=100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>85,300</td>
<td>9,100</td>
<td>52,600</td>
<td>14,000</td>
<td>39,400</td>
<td>19,400</td>
<td>86.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>727,100</td>
<td>10,500</td>
<td>492,200</td>
<td>14,800</td>
<td>369,900</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>94.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CBS, 1998
consequence also less popular estates were in demand. Many people still use the Bijlmer as a ‘springboard’ to get ahead in the housing market.

**Average duration of stay and moves out of the area**

In Amsterdam the average duration of stay at a certain address is about 7.7 years. For the Bijlmer area this duration is considerably lower, at 4.5 years in Bijlmer-Centre and 4.7 years for Bijlmer-East. However, as compared to 1990 this is an improvement; at that time the average duration amounted to 3.0 years in Bijlmer-Centre and 3.9 years in Bijlmer-East (Musterd and Dukes, 2001). The proportion of residents who leave the Bijlmer area varies over time, but is generally high, especially as compared to the proportion of residents who leave their neighbourhood elsewhere in Amsterdam (see table 6.15). During the 1994-1997 period the Bijlmer proportion was even twice as high as the Amsterdam proportion. The Amsterdam proportion seems to be rather stable over time. Again, we should be careful viewing the instability of the Bijlmer population as a weakness, as it can also be seen as a sign of social mobility.

**Changing values and norms**

Southeast in general and the Bijlmer in particular is a highly fragmented area. Only shortly after its construction it was faced with problems. Since then, the area is not so much affected by changing values and norms as it is by constantly crashing values and norms. In the next chapter we will deepen our knowledge about this, in this chapter we would just like to mention a few things that have been of particular importance in this crash of confronting values and norms: drug dealing, drug using, fear and high crime, vandalism, garbage and waste dumping in public spaces, different cultures (both ethnically and non-ethnically), youth delinquency and anonymity.

### 6.4 Conclusions

The Bijlmer is a collection of vast peripheral social housing estates, built in the 1960s and 1970s, located to the Southeast of Amsterdam. It houses almost 50,000 people. The Bijlmer estates belong to the most distressed and deprived in the city of Amsterdam. Due to major social and economic problems, over time they have both been target areas of extensive urban renewal- and social-economic programmes. The estates are home to a large number of people.
from ethnic minority groups: their share is far above the share for Amsterdam and has strongly increased during the last decade. In the Bijlmer, almost half of the population consists of Surinamese or Antillean minority groups and a quarter of the population is a group composed of ‘ethnic minority groups from non-industrialized countries’ (including Ghana).

The Bijlmer can further be characterized by a large share of unemployed job-seekers – almost twice the share of the unemployed for the city as a whole. This share seems to have increased in the 1990s. In Amsterdam as well as in the Bijlmer, ethnic minority groups are hit in an uneven way. These unemployed job-seekers are further relatively poorly educated and have often been unemployed for a long time. Youth unemployment is slightly higher in the Bijlmer estates as well. Next to this, a considerable proportion of the potential labour force relies on welfare and a large proportion of the total number of households receives individual housing benefits. The average disposable income in the high-rise estates is below the average disposable income for Amsterdam.

Finally, home ownership is low but increasing. The privately rented sector is poorly represented; most of the dwellings are owned by housing corporations. Although many of the houses in the Bijlmer estates have been subdivided over time, a large share is still spacious as compared to houses in the city of Amsterdam (Musterd and Dukes, 2001).

A considerable number of (sometimes very large) establishments and a substantial number of jobs are located in the Southeast district. In the direct vicinity of the Bijlmer, a large business district is located, that is still expanding. However, a large part of people employed in the Southeast district does not live there, but commutes to and from this area. Thus at the same time, the district is characterized by a large number of (office) jobs and a large number of (often poorly educated) unemployed residents, who are concentrated in the Bijlmer area.

Even though the Bijlmer is not the ghetto as is often suggested by the press, it can’t be denied that many who finds the opportunity to leave do, thus making place for the most marginalized in society. This constant evaporation of social capital explains why the Bijlmer has never been able to get rid of it’s negative stigma. What remains is a lack of social cohesion, drug related crime and annoyance. All these factors have made the Bijlmer into the Dutch symbol of utopian urban planning gone wrong.

Almost from the beginning on there have been many initiatives to fight the negative image of the Bijlmer. The most impressive intervention has been the 1992 renewal plan which implementation is now halfway. Its aim is to make the Bijlmer an attractive place where residents are happy to live. The renewal is being approached as a whole: besides physical renewal, management and socio-economic aspects will also be renewed. In the next RESTATE reports we will provide more information on the 1992 renewal plan. But first, in the next chapter we will provide more information on the problems and perspectives of the Bijlmer estates.
7 The Bijlmer in Amsterdam: problems and perspectives

Just like New West, the Bijlmer was planned to be a completion of the city; an extension for the middle-class where they could live in a ‘modern palace in a park’. Soon after the construction of the first high-rise buildings the Bijlmer was already faced with problems. Up until the mid 1980s problems only seemed to mount. But since then the Bijlmer has slowly, but vastly been renewed in many ways.

While the focus of the last chapter was mostly on general statistical data, the focus of this chapter is more specific on problem accumulation.

7.1 Housing and design

*High turnover and management/ownership/design alterations*

Turnover rates and vacancies in the Bijlmer high-rise area have always given cause for concern. In 1974 the ‘Stedelijke Woningdienst’ [City Housing Department] mentioned the causes for the exceptionally high turnover: the competitive position of single-family dwellings, the housing needs of large numbers of foreigners and people from (former) Dutch colonies (Surinamese and Antilleans), and uneasiness about social conditions and the facilities of the Bijlmer. Around the year 1983 vacancies in the Bijlmer reached a maximum of about 18 per cent. The sharp fall in new house construction in Southeast after 1985 caused a decline in vacancies.

This decline is also associated with the maintenance and administrative measures taken since the founding of housing corporation ‘Nieuw Amsterdam’ [New Amsterdam] in December 1983. Nieuw Amsterdam was supported financially by the housing corporations which had originally built and administered the Bijlmer, and by the government. Nieuw Amsterdam was charged with solving the problems of the area. Next to this, a project office ‘Hoogbouw Bijlmermeer’ [High-rise Bijlmermeer] was commissioned with co-ordination. The measures concerned improvement of the flats and their immediate environment and – decades sooner than usual – major technical improvements, lowering the rents, making the parking facilities free and changing the layout of the open spaces. They went to work with a will. Sections of the multi-storey parking garages were demolished and lock-up parking areas built. About 1,000 four and five-room apartments were split up to provide smaller homes. In some buildings the long inner streets disappeared, galleries were closed off and more entrances and lifts were provided. Some of the old storage areas at ground level (boxrooms/sheds) were converted
into apartments. In some green areas private gardens, where people could grow flowers and vegetables, were created.

These changes, however, took time, and by 1985 the vacancy rate had risen to as high as 25 per cent. This obviously meant a huge financial deficit, and voices calling for the demolition of some estates began to be heard, although the buildings were in a perfectly sound condition (Verhagen, 1989). Thus, the removal of many bottlenecks did not seem to give sufficient relief. The ‘Effectrapportage 1987’ [Effects Report 1987] of the City Housing Department says that the aim of Bijlmer set-up, an occupation of 100 per cent, with long-term occupants, is simply unattainable (Mentzel, 1989, pp. 268–269).

Part of the problem is that the maintenance cost for (semi-) public spaces in the Bijlmer are higher as a result of the nature of the physical environment with many semi-public spaces and a high share of green open space. Especially, the maintenance of semi-public spaces has turned out to be very expensive. The costs are further increased by the low levels of attachment of the residents to these places and the consequently low levels of resident responsibility of these places next to high levels of garbage dumping, graffiti and vandalism. In 1984, the residents were asked what the major problem source was and they indicated that this was the maintenance and cleaning of the direct housing environment (Source: Woonomgeving hoogbouw, http://www.zuidoost.amsterdam.nl, visited on the 9th of April 2003).

**Spatial problems and renewal**

Looking back on the development of the Bijlmer from the implementation of the first construction plans on key persons indentify a positive development which is overshadowed by a negative development. On the one hand, the Bijlmer flats were spacious and comfortable, and you could live in the Bijlmer quite happily behind closed doors; but on the other hand most key persons say they come to the inevitable conclusion that the spatial concept of the Bijlmer is the most important cause for its decline. Accordingly, the misfits of the spatial concept were the following (Leferink (2003) PowerPoint presentation):

- massiveness and monotony;
- identical high-rise estates of 400 or 500 flats, all connected by balconies;
- excess of semi-public open spaces;
- rigid division between functions;
- intangible size and scale in which the individual disappears.

These insights led to a new and more fundamental renewal plan in 1992. In the next RESTATE report we will debate this plan more extensively. Here, we will only provide you with the basis. The basis is the combination of physical renewal with socio-economic renewal. In the field of physical restructuring and physical management the aims, means, budgets and desired standards of performance were laid down in contracts between the Amsterdam city council, the Southeast city district, ‘Centraal Fonds Volkshuisvesting’ [Central Fund Social Housing] and the Patrimonium and Nieuw Amsterdam housing corporations.

Since its inception in 1992 the renewal program has been radically altered. In 1992 the basic plan was that one-quarter of the 12,500 high-rise flats would be demolished. Three-quarters would remain and be renovated in many ways; some units would be put up for sale. In 1999 the interim effects of the renewal were evaluated. Every neighbourhood was examined. On the basis of the evaluation, it was decided on considerably more demolition and new construction
and thus a definitive transformation of the Bijlmer. The basic plan was no longer 25 per cent
demolition, but a minimum of 40 per cent and a maximum of 58 per cent. The shift towards
considerably more demolition comes, on the one hand, from the effectiveness of the new
housing projects and, on the other hand, from the limited market prospects of large high-rise
estates, particularly in the social housing sector (Leferink (2003) PowerPoint presentation).

The physical renewal will not be limited to the housing stock. The traffic structure will
be radically altered. The three original neighbourhood shopping centres, all situated under
viaducts or car parks, will be replaced. The rigid separation of functions will be abolished.
Business accommodation, churches, cultural facilities, sports and recreation will be integrated.
And the open mostly green space, originally 80 per cent of the area, will be redesigned reduced
in extent. The renewal is currently halfway through.

Resident satisfaction
In 1997 the residents of the Bijlmer were asked how they value several parts of their estate. It
turned out that they were very happy with the size of their apartment and quite happy with the
floorplan, the low level of noise pollution and their direct neighbours. Many people, however,
were dissatisfied with the high rents. Next to this, Bijlmer residents were more critical on the
maintenance of public space (see table 7.1) and on signs of degeneration like graffiti and a mess
on the streets (see table 7.2). Next to this, many Bijlmer residents who move out of the area mention reasons like unsafety, pollution in and around the estates, vandalism in and around the estates, and ‘I do not like the neighbourhood’ (Mininconferentie Vernieuwing Bijlmermeer, 1999).

In 2001 another resident survey was carried out (Helleman and Wassenberg, 2001). This project focused on twelve non-renovated buildings with 4,842 dwellings. There was a very high response of 76.7 per cent (3,556 households) as a result of active resident involvement in the drafting of the survey, but also partly due to the fact that the survey was not only provided in Dutch, but also in English (18 per cent, mostly Ghanese) and Spanish (only 2 per cent). Besides, the non-response turned out to be a-selective. Now we will provide you with some data on these twelve buildings and the satisfaction levels of its residents (Helleman and Wassenberg, 2001).

Almost one third of the residents are Surinamese, 22 per cent indigenous Dutch, 15 per cent Ghanese and 10 per cent Antilleans. The Ghanese show the lowest levels of turnover and are thus the over-represented among the long-term residents. Of all residents, 42 per cent has an income on or below the ‘social security benefit level’. Next to this, 20 per cent has an income above this level but makes less than 120 per cent of the official minimum wage; only 18 per cent have an income above moderate. Low-income people (including single-parent households) more often live in the larger dwellings due to the fact that their households often consist of more members. Two of the twelve buildings are quite different from the other ten buildings: its residents have a higher average income, they are predominantly Dutch and they have fewer children.
Most residents (68 per cent) are satisfied with their apartment; tenants of the large apartments are more satisfied (81 per cent) than tenants of small apartments. However, many people indicate that they would rather not live in a high-rise building. Residents are most dissatisfied with their housing environment: pollution, vandalism and safety are, just like in older surveys, indicated as major problems.

Contrary to older surveys, most residents are quite satisfied with the level of social contacts and the level of ‘ethnic/cultural mixture’. Many residents indicated that they have several friends or family-members living near-by. Other positive aspects mentioned are the green space, the shopping centres and the walking and cycling paths.

Indigenous Dutch people in general have little problems with living in a high-rise building, but they are less satisfied with the Bijlmer as a neighbourhood. This is contrary to Antillean, Ghanese and Surinamese families and single-parent households who are quite satisfied with the Bijlmer as a neighbourhood, but dissatisfied with the fact that they are living in a high-rise building. It is the family and friendship network that keeps them in the Bijlmer (high-rise). Strikingly, elderly people are more satisfied than others are; they are satisfied about the neighbourhood as well as about the dwelling type (i.e. an apartment in a high-rise building).

Still, turnover levels are slightly higher in these parts of the Bijlmer than in other parts of the Bijlmer and other parts of the city. The high share of people who would like to move within a year also shows this; it concerns one-third of the residents.

The survey also asked residents how they feel about the renewal plans and what kind of physical renewal they would prefer or dislike (see table 7.3). This table shows that demolition and construction of single-family dwellings is more popular than renovation of the existing buildings. This is a big difference with earlier surveys when more residents advocated renovation and less demolition/new construction. The share of people that advocates demolition is similar to that in earlier surveys: two-third advocates demolition, one-fifth is against it.

Striking is that residents of the two ‘a-typical buildings’ with more Dutch and a higher average income more often are against demolition and more often in favour of renovation and of selling off social housing. Advocates of renovation are – besides the people who want to move within a year – low-income households, (single-parent) families, people under 50 years of age, Surinamese and Antilleans. The Ghanese often advocate renovation as well as demolition; there are few people who dislike both renovation and demolition.

Table 7.3 – Views of residents of non-renovated buildings in Southeast on physical renewal possibilities (%), 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical renewal possibilities</th>
<th>Good idea</th>
<th>I don’t know</th>
<th>Bad idea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Renovation of the buildings</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selling off units</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demolition of buildings</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demolition of parts of the buildings</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demolition of your own dwelling</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of single-family units after demolition</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of multi-family units after demolition</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Helleman and Wassenberg, 2001
People have also been asked about neighbourhood amenities like parking garages and children’s playing facilities. It turns out that 58 per cent wants to demolish the parking garages, and there are only small differences between people who do own and people who do not own a car. In the future, one-third of the people who like to park in the current parking-garages, one-third prefers parking on the road preferably close to their frontdoor and one-fourth of the people who like to park in a new, more luxurious, but paid parking garage. Concerning the children’s amenities: two-thirds of the residents thinks there are too little playing facilities for children, while one-fourth thinks the current amenities are adequate. Here, there are, however, big differences between the different buildings (Helleman and Wassenberg, 2001).

7.2 Labour market, well-being and access to services

As we have seen in section 6.1.5, the Bijlmer has a comparatively low level of services and shops. It is important to note that the situation is currently not very problematic and much better than in the 1970s and 1980s when the Bijlmer had a lack of virtually all kinds of services.

To avoid repetition of chapter 6, we will here focus on formal and informal social services and on health care. Next we will look at the labour market, crime, stereotypes, youth gangs, education, rough sleeping homeless and drug users.

Formal and informal social services

The social domain in the Bijlmer is more diverse than almost all other neighbourhoods in the country. Besides institutionalized organizations such as schools, churches and mosques, and care- and welfare organizations, it consists of a high number of less institutionalized organizations such as ‘self-organizations’ or immigrations associations and organizations.

A formal and institutionalized organization like ‘Buurtwerk Zuid-Oost’ [Neighbourhood Work Southeast] is a private institution, operating from various localities and agencies, sponsored by the local city government. A few years ago, it merged with two similar institutions. The entire organization now employs about 800 professional workers. In addition many hundreds of volunteers are assisting with numerous activities. The range of activities includes pre-school education, educational activities, youth work, community centres, social rehabilitation, arts classes.

One of the activities of Buurtwerk Zuid-Oost focuses on the reintegration of unemployed people who have difficulties in finding a job. In many cases this regards people with little or no prior vocational education or schooling and/or with a disability. In addition they sometimes have very little work experience and as a result suffer from a lack of self-esteem. The project ‘Dubbel Plus’ [Double Plus] tries to help these people by offering special jobs that are subsidized by the national government. Most of these jobs are within official agencies and institutions such as the district police, the district cleaning department and housing corporations. Their main purpose is to improve the district safety and environmental conditions. The precondition is that one has been jobless for more than a year, is over 23 years of age and registered at the Employment Office. Once employed the person gets a salary that is 130 to 150 per cent of the standard social benefit. It is hoped that eventually, and with some extra training and counselling, participants in the scheme will qualify themselves for a regular job elsewhere.
Next to these formal organizations, there are many, many informal support networks among immigrants. In this respect, the Ghanese community seems to stand out with a low-income position and social status, but with a very high level of organization, sometimes directed by a church (-based organization), but mutual support between families is also very common. Although, most Ghanese individuals make little money, dual earner households are very common; to avoid high child-care expenses there are, for instance, a few women who drive around in the early morning to pick up little children before the parents go to work. The parents are not charged in money, but in mutual reciprocity.

**Health**

The general trends in health in the Bijlmer are similar to those in New West (see section 5.2). Additionally, some things can be said that are specific for the Bijlmer. Important is that the Bijlmer knows many official and unofficial health-takers and health organizations, some of which are based on century old ethnic belief-systems. Furthermore, just like in other ‘less prosperous’ parts of the city such as New West, the health situation of Bijlmer residents is below average. Extra attention is needed for immigrant groups and for the elderly. For immigrants the health care in the Netherlands is often considered untransparant and hard to access; the threshold is often too high. Next to this, the current supply of health services is inadequate for elderly who would like to stay in their homes but have a small demand for care. Care-at-home would free elderly of having to move to receive institutionalized care, but it is often not available while it is considered more satisfactory and often even cheaper.

**Labour market**

As we have seen in chapter 6, unemployment rates in Southeast, especially in the high-rise Bijlmer estates, are considerably higher than the average in Amsterdam. Although many people stress that the situation has improved in the course of the 1990s, we should be careful with this conclusion. First, the decline in unemployment was slightly lower than the city average. Second, there is an increased concentration in already problematic estates – that is: the non-renovated high-rise estates (source: website O+S).

Third, like other immigrant areas the Bijlmer knows an eminent amount of *sans-papiers*, people without a legal residence status in the Netherlands. Consequently they are not registered in almost all city statistics, e.g. on housing and unemployment. People who know the area well, claim most *sans-papiers* are concentrated in the non-renovated high-rise buildings, some move from one to the other when the physical renewal plans to renovate or tear down the building in which they live. Many of them find low-paid and insecure work through informal networks.

Fourth, and finally, it is hard to measure the effects of the more favourable economy of the 1990s in combination with the physical renewal of the Bijlmer. Residents who lived in estates that were or are now torn down, were and are forced to move, and many move out of the Bijlmer. The question is: has the Bijlmer renewal ‘artificially’ lowered unemployment levels by ‘exporting’ unemployed individuals and households depending on social benefits to other areas in the city? Based on the available data it is impossible to answer this question, but what we do see is for instance that the influx of Bijlmer residents in certain parts of Amsterdam-North is coupled with an increase of unemployed individuals and an increase of households depending on social benefits (cf. Dignum, 2002). We can, however, not commit to the empirical fallacy
and conclude that declining unemployment in the Bijlmer is a consequence of the outflow of unemployed individuals.

Crime and stereotypes¹¹
Feelings of unsafety – during the day as well as during the night – have always been high in the Bijlmer. This not only has to do with experience of feelings of unsafety; crime statistics have always been much higher in the Bijlmer than elsewhere in the city. Research dating from the 1990s points out that criminality in the Southeast district (http://www.zuidoost.amsterdam.nl/, visited on the 9th of April 2003) is concentrated in the Bijlmer estates and that it mainly consists of street robbery, burglary and hold-ups (OBEE Consultancy, 1998). Reports of criminal offences in the Bijlmer give an impression of present criminality in this area which is remarkably higher than in the Amsterdam region as a whole (Tulner and Van Soomeren, 2000).

Examining reported crime rates, it is clear that Bijlmer residents fall victim to crimes far more often than the average Amsterdam resident. Especially robbery in the street, shoplifting, trouble caused by drugs and murder and manslaughter occur relatively often in the Bijlmer. In 1997 there were about 38 per cent more reports of crime per 1,000 inhabitants in the Bijlmer than in the wider Amsterdam police region. For 1999 this was about 42 per cent (Tulner and Van Soomeren, 2000). Furthermore, more than 400 Bijlmer residents and about 1,300 Amsterdam residents were asked about their feelings of insecurity in their neighbourhood and in their homes. Bijlmer residents seem to feel insecure in the street far more often than Amsterdam residents do. This holds especially in the evening. Moreover, feelings of insecurity in the high-rise Bijlmer estates have seriously increased in the late 1990s.

In spite of all the building activity in the Bijlmer and the adjacent office and leisure area, falling crime rates and the creation of jobs, Southeast, and the Bijlmer in particular, continues to be portrayed in a negative light in the media. In 2000, there was a controversy surrounding the relocation of the IT company Getronics to the suburb Hoofddorp because of the alleged high crime rate: the company claimed that at least one employee or customer is mugged each month on the way from or to the parking garage. Other companies that threatened to vacate the area for similar reasons were Albert Heijn (supermarket) and Kwik Fit (car mechanics), while the telecommunications companies UPC and KPN publicly stated that they refuse to send their employees into Southeast at night. In fact, Kwik Fit demanded compensation from the city for failing to provide adequate safety. Finally, there were reports in the press that most taxi drivers refuse to drive to Southeast, and a shooting on the still uncompleted ArenA Boulevard did not help matters either. All this placed the question of safety and crime in Southeast on the agenda. Although the district authority possessed figures of rapidly falling crime rates (38 per cent in muggings since the year before), the stereotypical image of Southeast proved stronger.

¹¹ The first part of this subsection is partly adapted from Musterd and Dukes (2001); the second part of this subsection is partly adapted from David Evers’ PhD-thesis (in preparation) at the University of Amsterdam named ‘Building for Consumption’.
Youth gangs and education

Although many Amsterdam neighbourhoods have problems with young people hanging around on the streets and causing problems regarding vandalism and (feelings of) unsafety, the problem in the Bijlmer is more serious than in for instance New West. Experts claim it is not just youths hanging around and causing problems as a consequence of boredom, but a more structural problem rooted in (sustained) poverty and socialized from a very early age. Contrary to New West is also that the problem does not pass by when people get older, but that it is sustained at older age. Moreover, they behave like gangs with their own informal rules and they use more violence. Striking is also that there are also a number of ‘girl gangs’. School omission and dropout are high among gang members of both sexes. Just like ‘normal’ groups of problem causing youths, but even more extreme, is the ethnic and/or language base of the gangs in the Bijlmer (Woonomgeving hoogbouw, Southeast district, http://www.zuidoost.amsterdam.nl/, visited on the 9th of April 2003).

Intensive research by Bowen Paulle (2002) also shows that high-school pupils in Southeast are less motivated and much more threatening and violent with each other as well as with teachers. Next to this, teachers stressed how much more efficient the organization of other schools was compared to Southeast schools. The degree of disruptive influence and apathy is also, according to these teachers, of a different order from what they found at the less isolated and stigmatized schools. Paulle (2002: 12) speaks of ‘a large minority of status-rich, ‘hard’, non-motivated and frequently obstructive student groups. (...) The members of these ‘ghetto fabulous’ student groups frequently obstruct, and at other moments appear decidedly apathetic to, the official goals and sanctions of the school.’ As a result official school regimes respond, as socialising institutions primarily, form above. This leads to an ‘ideology of meritocratic sorting and labelling [which] is deeply woven into routine school-based practices. This (...) largely structures the internalization of failure’ (Paulle, 2002, p. 15).

Rough sleeping homeless and drug users

The Bijlmer knows serious problems of drug abuse, drug dealing and drug-related crime. There are many drug users who live in one of the high-rise buildings, but there are also some homeless drug users. Almost half of the rough sleeping homeless people in Amsterdam lives in the Bijlmer (almost 100 people on an average winter night). Especially the Ganzenhoef area (next to the demolished shopping area) and Fazantenhof area have high numbers of both drug users and homeless (Rensen, 2002). In the mid 1990s many homeless people were sleeping in boxrooms/sheds which officially belonged to individual tenants, but many tenants were afraid to enter their boxroom and did not take care of it. Since then things have changed and, as Deben and Rensen show, in 2002 only eleven of the 95 rough sleeping homeless in the Bijlmer spend the night in a boxroom. Of these almost 100 people, 83 per cent indicated to be addicted to drugs. Their average age is 39 years and only 10 per cent of them are female. Many are born in other countries than the Netherlands (84 per cent); the share of Surinamese homeless in extremely high in the Bijlmer (43 per cent). However, 74 per cent of them have the Dutch nationality (among them many Surinamese); of the non-Dutch 71 per cent do not have legal papers to reside in the Netherlands. Two-thirds of the rough sleeping homeless do not have any source of normal income (including social security benefits); this is ‘only’ 52 per cent in the city centre of Amsterdam (Rensen and Deben, 2002).
The number of drug users is, however, much bigger: 450 of them are registered with the city health department in the Southeast district. Their number has been rising since they were ‘chased away’ from several city centre locations as the notorious Zeedijk in the red light district and the Central Station. Besides, Ganzenhoef is known as a ‘good drug market’ with a fair price-quality-relation. Since many drug users do not have a job or social security benefits, and even if they do, this is not enough to financially sustain their drug addiction, there is a lot of drug-related crime in the Bijlmer, especially in the Ganzenhoef area (Rensen, 2002).

7.3 Demographic changes and social exclusion

The spacious and comfortable high-rise apartments in the Bijlmer, mostly developed as social housing, were intended for (lower) middle-class families from the old inner city areas of Amsterdam. However, in the years after completion of the first homes, several developments affected the residential climate in the Bijlmer. The population flow into the Bijlmer turned out to grow much more slowly than had been expected, resulting in a lack of occupancy. Instead of families, vacant apartments attracted a relatively large number of one-parent families, singles and people without children. The Bijlmer became an area where people mostly settled if they could not find a place to live elsewhere (Musterd and Dukes, 2001). At that time, certain groups in Amsterdam – single people, unmarried couples, large poorer families, foreigners – had great difficulty in finding suitable accommodation. Although rents were among the highest in the city, annual rent increases were kept within the limits necessary for tenants to qualify for rent subsidies, which enabled large numbers of people from these groups to go to live there.

The composition of the Bijlmer population turned out different in another way as well: between 1970 and 1975, preceding the independence of Surinam, many Surinamese came to the Netherlands. As the Bijlmer was one of the only places where they could easily find a home, many of them settled in the Bijlmer area, followed by immigrants from the Netherlands Antilles (Musterd and Dukes, 2001). Particularly the Gliphoeve estate became a major place of settlement for Surinamese; the estate rapidly became over-populated because often more than one family lived in a single apartment. Many people think that the Bijlmer’s negative spiral began with the arrival of huge numbers of Surinamese, but according to Leferink (2003) and others, cause and effect are the other way around: the coming of the Surinamese to the Bijlmer was the result of the empty housing and departure of tenants in the early years.

Because of these specific population groups, the problems created by the (back then) poor infrastructure and the high rents, many people – particularly those who could find accommodation elsewhere – found the Bijlmer unattractive as a place to live. Those who did move there, however, whether by choice or not, together formed a melting pot of cultures. Furthermore, because there were so many problems to be solved, many people in the Bijlmer were militant and inventive. They conducted a continuous battle with the housing corporations and local council, who had promised a great deal and done very little. Although not everything these activists attempted was successful, they set up a children’s farm, a local TV-station and cafes run by volunteers (Verhagen, 1987).

Although these measures made the Bijlmer a bit more liveable, it was still considered a very unattractive area. An ever-increasing number of departing tenants, residents with less and less
affinity with the neighbourhood, and all the negative side-effects which that brings, brought the Bijlmer in a negative spiral. Negative side effects that eventually acquire their own dynamic and lower the tone even further. Moreover, in the mid 1980s, many fringe groups, such as refugees, migrants, illegal foreigners, and so on, found refuge in the Bijlmer area. The drug trade and associated crime took root and became virtually in eradicable. For hanging around and hiding there was nowhere like the Bijlmer with its anonymity and badly organized public and semi-public spaces (Leferink (2003) PowerPoint presentation). As often happens when an experiment is not altogether successful, the press and other media concentrated on the drawbacks and failures of the Bijlmer, and this undoubtedly led to many people hesitating to settle there (Verhagen, 1987).

As rents were high, people shared dwellings, causing overpopulation in some blocks. In connection with high unemployment and increasing drug abuse, this resulted in major problems. Not only that, but also the same problems led to more and more people moving out. The vacancy rate continued to rise and in 1983 the rents were lowered and charges for car parking abolished in an attempt to reverse this trend. In the meantime the Giphoeve estate and its immediate surroundings had been fundamentally rebuilt (Verhagen, 1987).

In spite of the 1980s measures that were taken to improve the Bijlmer situation, the results turned out to be disappointing: the Bijlmer image remained poor, the economic position of the population did not really improve. Strikingly, whereas the Bijlmer over time had become such a distressed neighbourhood, at the same time other areas of the Southeast district were flourishing. Over the last decades, the Southeast district developed into an area of crucial importance for the economy of the city of Amsterdam. It became a significant centre for industry and commerce, housing head offices of multinationals, as well as many middle-sized and small businesses. The Southeast district is now second only to the centre of Amsterdam itself in the provision of employment and it is still expanding (http://www.zuidoost.amsterdam.nl, visited on the 9th of April 2003). Many of the district residents did not profit from these developments at all and as we will see later, over time a visible spatial division developed in the Southeast district between the successful business area and a highly problematic residential area. But meanwhile, many initiatives have taken place to bridge the gap.

7.4 Multi-cultural developments and social cohesion

Multi-cultural developments

During the 1990s, the proportion of ethnic minority groups in Amsterdam has risen considerably from about 25 per cent of the total population in 1990 to 45 per cent in 1999. This increase resulted from an increase in the shares of all separate ethnic minority groups represented.

The population in the Bijlmer consists of a large share of ethnic minority groups, and their proportion has strongly increased during the last decade and is far above the proportion of these groups for Amsterdam as a whole. In the Bijlmer area it is almost twice the Amsterdam share. Regarding the ethnic composition of the Bijlmer population, two large groups stand out. The first one is the Surinamese and Antillean group, accounting for almost half of the Bijlmer population. The second group is far more mixed and consists of ‘others from non-industrialized
countries’, such as Africa (notably Ghana), South America, Asia and eastern and southern Europe. Between 1990 and 1999 this category has strongly increased, now amounting to more than 25 per cent of the total Bijlmer population.

**Social cohesion**

Because of its position on the (regional) housing market, the Bijlmer had become an area for people who lag behind: a passage without being a desirable destiny; a waiting room from where to look for chances to enter the rest of the Amsterdam housing market. Hence, the Bijlmer was faced with high concentrations of people with social arrears: low education levels, high unemployment levels, low-income levels. It would, however, be inaccurate to define the Bijlmer as a problem area because of the high concentration of people with social arrears. The problem with the Bijlmer, however, is that it had become an area of little social cohesion and no living up to formal and informal rules of ‘how to live together’; the Bijlmer was lacking a social structure (source: interviews with several key persons). No doubt, the Bijlmer has many social institutions, but they often only function within one group, usually an ethnically defined group.

The Bijlmer lacks a solid society. One of the things that makes the Bijlmer different from many older, smaller neighbourhoods with concentrations of people with social arrears, is that those neighbourhoods often have a very solid alternative society with often divergent (and sometimes deviant) informal rules. The Bijlmer, on the other hand, even lacks such an alternative structure of social cohesion – although it knows many alternative structures of social cohesion ranging from informal help networks and churches in parking garages for the Ghanese and imitated ghetto culture of some Surinamese and Antillean youths (Paulle, 2002).

Within the Bijlmer many people are very in-house focused and out-side ignorant or indifferent. The involvement of residents with everything that is not the apartment where they live in, but the housing environment including semi-public spaces like the access to the buildings, is very limited. Many residents say they have no choice but not to be involved because there is too much ‘wrong’ in these public spaces to worry about. This further enhances litter and garbage dumping in public spaces which in return does not stimulate social involvement. Hence, spaces that are meant to be used collectively like elevators, inner- or covered- streets, garbage chutes, parking garages and collective rooms (e.g. in the apartment buildings) did not function well. Moreover, these spaces already needed a high level of maintenance by their very nature, but the total lack of attention to these places by the residents made them even more problematic.

Thus, together (1) the maintenance of, and involvement with, semi-public spaces, and (2) the lack of social cohesion within the Bijlmer, or – to put it differently – between the several social groups in the Bijlmer. Both these problems promote moving out of the Bijlmer and the consequential high turnover rates do not stimulate social cohesion and place-attachment.

We should, however, mention that this scenario is mostly applicable to the non-renovated high-rise estates and less to the renovated high-rise estates and to the newly constructed low- and mid-rise blocks. That is not to say that the situation is perfect there and that these latter areas show high levels of social cohesion, but to indicate that these ‘renewed’ areas show less problems concerning the involvement with semi-public spaces (often because they show a stronger border between public and private places) than the non-renovated high-rise estates. These ‘renewed’ areas also show a higher level of adapting to formal and informal rules; there
seems to be a more structured level of social cohesion and residents feel more attached to, and responsible for, their housing environment. This leads to less litter and garbage dumping and less vandalism and graffiti. This in return, enhances feelings of place-attachment. We should, however, be careful with the conclusion that the renewal so far has been successful: the decline in problems may be caused by the changing population of the renewal areas, and problems might have been 're-located' to other areas.

7.5 Conclusions

The construction of the Bijlmer can best be characterized as an urban planning experiment, as the Bijlmer would be a ‘modern’, ‘functional’ or even ‘radiant city’ where living, working, traffic and recreation were separated. The spacious and comfortable high-rise apartments, mostly developed as social housing, were intended for middle-class families from the old inner city areas of Amsterdam. However, in the years after completion of the first homes, several developments affected the residential climate in the Bijlmer.

At the national level, the policy of ‘growth centres’ was launched; close to the city of Amsterdam, tens of thousands of low-rise dwellings were built. To many people these low-rise dwellings were more appealing than the high-rise Bijlmer dwellings, and relatively cheap. Although most of the Bijlmer apartments had been developed as social housing, they were rather expensive. Moreover, the infrastructure, services and shopping areas in the Bijlmer area were not created in time. The population flow into the Bijlmer turned out to grow much more slowly than had been expected, resulting in a lack of occupancy. Instead of families, vacant apartments attracted a relatively large number of one-parent families, single people and people without children. The Bijlmer became an area where people mostly settled if they could not find a place to live elsewhere.

The composition of the Bijlmer population turned out different in another way as well: between 1970 and 1975, preceding the independence of Surinam, many Surinamese came to the Netherlands. As the Bijlmer was one of the only places where they could easily find a home, many of them settled in the Bijlmer area, followed by immigrants from the Netherlands Antilles. Moreover, in the middle of the 1980s, many fringe groups such as refugees, migrants, illegal foreigners and so on, found refuge in the Bijlmer area. As rents were high, people shared dwellings, causing overpopulation in some blocks. In connection with high unemployment and increasing drug abuse, this resulted in major problems (Musterd and Dukes, 2001). In a recent resident survey, the Bijlmer was still seen by its residents as one of the least attractive in Amsterdam: residents of Bijlmer-Centre value their neighbourhood lower than residents of Bijlmer-East. Only residents of two neighbourhoods¹² value their neighbourhood lower than residents of Bijlmer-Centre. If we look at how residents value the recent developments in the Bijlmer, Centre and East have the same low score under the Amsterdam average. Now, however, both Bijlmer areas do not belong to the worst ten areas in the city (Van der Veer, 2003).

The Bijlmer was known throughout the Netherlands as being synonymous for crime, unemployment and poverty. And – although frequently referred to as a ghetto in the Dutch

¹² These are the Kolenkit and Overtoomse Veld, both in New West.
media – the Bijlmer is nowhere comparable to the blighted areas characteristic of most large American cities. This image was exacerbated when an aeroplane crashed squarely into a Bijlmer housing block in 1992 – an incident that exposed to international scrutiny the squalid conditions of the many immigrants (legal or otherwise) that had settled in the area.
This chapter starts with a general description of the city of Utrecht. Attention will be paid to different economic, demographic and migration developments. The position of Utrecht in the national and regional hierarchy is described as well. In section 8.2, the different neighbourhoods in the city will be indicated briefly. Where are the neighbourhoods located? When were they set up and why? Emphasis will be on the geography of large post-WWII housing estates.

8.1 General description of Utrecht

Short history of the city
Utrecht is located in the middle of the country and knows a long history. Next to flourishing periods, such as the early 14th century, when Utrecht was an important city along the lower course of the river Rijn, the city has known adversity as well. By the 17th century for example, Utrecht had no significant trade; in stark contrast to other Dutch cities, shipping formed no important stimulus anymore. Nevertheless, the central location within the Netherlands, appeared to be a substantial advantage; this characteristic feature attracted all kinds of activities and in the 19th century Utrecht had become an important industrial city.

In 1843 Utrecht got its first railway connection to Amsterdam. More junctions followed and the city became a national hub of rail- and highways. This development caused an enormous increase in population and Utrecht grew out to be the fourth largest city in the country; nowadays the city houses about 250,000 people and offers room for many offices. Like Amsterdam, Utrecht is part of the Randstad conurbation (www.goutrecht.nl, visited in January 2003).

Economic profile and role
The city of Utrecht takes a prominent position in the national economy; the central location and the important task as transport hub, has always provided an attractive production environment. Therefore, since the early 1970s a major office concentration has developed next to the central railway station and additional large office complexes were built at the edge of the city in the 1980s. Although recently there has come an end to a period of economic growth, Utrecht keeps on doing well (Gemeente Utrecht, 2002). Compared to 1994, when 1,300,000 m² of the city was covered by offices, the city boasted 2,006,000 m² of office space in 2001; an increase of 54 per cent in less than 10 years. This enormous growth is to a large extent connected to the fact that the traditional emphasis on manufacturing has been replaced by services (Van
Kempen and Van Weesep, 1994). In the past decennia the service sector grew strongly, both in the country as a whole as in the four largest cities, including Utrecht. While in the mid 1980s, 85 per cent of Utrecht employment was already captivated by this sector, services nowadays even take 91 per cent (almost 20 per cent above the national average) (Atzema and Bulterman, 1995; Gemeente Utrecht, 2001). Like in Amsterdam, more than half of the jobs within this sector belong to services in finance, insurance or the business branch. As Information and Communication Technology showed an enormous growth as well, Utrecht nowadays can call itself the second ICT-city in the country (after Amsterdam) (Gemeente Utrecht, 2002).

This economic prosperity had positive effects for employment; not only did the number of jobs almost double after 1985, reaching a total of 216,661 in 2001, from the mid 1990s unemployment figures in Utrecht decreased faster than elsewhere in the country. By 2001 the number even fell under the national average, which is rather unique for a big city like Utrecht (2.4 and 2.6 per cent respectively) (Gemeente Utrecht, 2002; www.utrecht.nl, visited in February 2003; Van Kempen and Van Weesep, 1994).

Nowadays, the number of jobs surpasses the total working population. However, half of the working population is active outside the city so that over 50 per cent of the jobs have to
be filled by people living elsewhere. This causes a huge flow of commuters every day. Selective departure of both households and employment, starting in the 1970s, obviously resulted in a mismatch on the urban labour market; *highly educated individuals* left the city together with the *low-skilled jobs* (Gemeente Utrecht, 2002; Van Kempen and Van Weesep, 1994; ETI-Utrecht, 1982).

**Demographic structure and size**

Not only the number of offices and jobs rose the past 15 years, the population of Utrecht did the same; an increase of about 14 per cent between 1987 and 2002 (table 8.1).

Apart from new building and immigration, discussed later, the increase is the result of urban expansion. In 2001 Utrecht officially incorporated the municipality of Vleuten-De Meern, which caused a growth by 22,290 individuals. Logically the number of households increased as well (table 8.1) (Gemeente Utrecht, 2002).

Considering the household composition, Utrecht follows the national trend of individualization; the share of singles increased the past decennium, while the number of households with children decreased (table 8.1). That Utrecht houses many one-person households is actually not very surprising: with the largest university of the country and a wide range of high skill training possibilities, the city attracts many students (Gemeente Utrecht, 2002).

Another remarkable development is probably connected to the former; contrary to the national figures, the share of elderly in the Utrecht population is diminishing. The housing situation of this group forms an explanation as well; as the urban stock doesn’t provide enough dwellings that meet their needs and wishes, many elderly are more or less forced to leave the city (Gemeente Utrecht, 2002).

**Ethnic minority population**

Colonial legacy as well as international labour migration resulted during the 1960s and 1970s in the arrival of people from southern Europe, Morocco and Turkey as well as Surinam (section 2.2). Nowadays, at least 30 per cent of the total Utrecht population has a non-Dutch background. Moroccans form the majority with a total share of more than 8 per cent (table 8.1).

![Table 8.1 – Developments in the Utrecht population (%), 1987, 1992, 1997 and 2002](image)

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<tr>
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<td>65.0</td>
<td>68.3</td>
<td>68.6</td>
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<td>Couple</td>
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<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.9</td>
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<td>16.0</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>12.9</td>
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<td>145,557</td>
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<td>45.3</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>42.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt; 65 years of age</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>13.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total population (abs)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Because some foreigners have the opportunity to naturalize, the share of individuals with a non-Dutch nationality is decreasing contrary to the ethnicity-figures.

As in almost every large city, the ethnic minority population in Utrecht is concentrated in certain neighbourhoods (figure 8.1). Although initially many foreigners settled in the northwestern part of the city, during the 1980s neighbourhoods in the southwest of Utrecht became more interesting; within these parts, which comprise our research areas as well, at least 47 per cent of the inhabitants has a non-Dutch background nowadays. As in the rest of the city, most of them have a Moroccan or Turkish background (21.9 and 10.1 per cent respectively) (Gemeente Utrecht, 1987, 2002).

The spatial concentration is probably connected to the fact that most ethnic minorities have low incomes and the neighbourhoods concerned have a relatively cheap housing stock (see section 2.3). Nowadays, many of those areas have to deal with decline.

Next to the fact that the minorities have to live in the less favorite neighbourhoods of the city, the socio-economic position of this group differs from that of the native Dutch as well.

Table 8.2 – Population of Utrecht with a non-Dutch nationality / ethnicity (% of total population)

<table>
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<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moroccan</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surinam/Antillean</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Europe</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Dutch ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Remainig countries:

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moroccan</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>2.8</td>
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<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surinam/Antillean</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Europe</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Dutch ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>6.7</td>
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<td>1997</td>
<td>3.7</td>
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<td>4.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.3 – Developments in migration within the city of Utrecht, 1985, 1992, 1997 and 2001

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total settlement</td>
<td>12,117</td>
<td>14,062</td>
<td>15,058</td>
<td>19,059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of total population</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total departure</td>
<td>12,439</td>
<td>13,569</td>
<td>17,302</td>
<td>16,762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of total population</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migration balance</td>
<td>-322</td>
<td>493</td>
<td>-2,244</td>
<td>2,297</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


* Figures concerning 1985 and 1992: Greece, Italy, former Yugoslavia and Spain; Figures concerning 1997 and 2002: Greece, Italy, former Yugoslavia, Spain and Portugal

** Figures available since 1992: the country of birth of both the individual and his or her parents determines ethnicity. This way the group surpasses the number of persons with a non-Dutch nationality

– No figures available
Although unemployment decreased considerably over the past years, minority groups seem to take less advantage of this development; as many of the ethnic minorities are low educated, an increase in high-skilled jobs doesn't affect their situation (Gemeente Utrecht, 1998, 2002).

Migration and dynamics

Settlement and departure have always played an important role in the population dynamics of Utrecht. While the past 15 years have shown some fluctuations, population numbers nowadays show an annual increase (table 8.3) (Gemeente Utrecht, 2002).

Next to annexation and urban expansion, the increase is caused by migration as well. Migration dynamics are characterized by a settlement surplus of individuals between 18 and 22 years of age; often students and young two-income households standing at the beginning of their housing- and/or working career (Gemeente Utrecht, 1999, 2002).

After having lived in the city for a couple of years, many of those households leave again. From the mid-1980s more and more high-income families with children moved elsewhere
and the city lost more children under 12 and adults between 30 and 44 years of age, than it gained. The number of elderly decreased as well. Apparently, the urban housing stock doesn’t provide enough dwellings that meet the wishes and needs for every household category. To some extent this is connected to the enormous pressure on the housing market. The same time, unemployed, low-educated and for example ethnic minorities are tied to the city with its large share of social rented housing; they can’t afford a dwelling elsewhere (Kalle & Spiertz, 1988; Gemeente Utrecht, 2002).

In many cases, in- as well as out-migration seems to occur between Utrecht and the rest of the region. In Leidsche Rijn for example – the largest newly built area of the country, which has been under construction since 1997 and is partly inhabited nowadays – almost 50 per cent of the new households lived in Utrecht already, while another 25 per cent come from a city or village nearby. Surrounding municipalities clearly affect the migration process (Gemeente Utrecht, 2001, 2002).

Relative deprivation

As said before, Utrecht is one of the four largest cities in the Netherlands and is part of the Randstad conurbation. These cities, the so-called ‘Big Four’ (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht) have a typical urban profile; not only the housing stock differs from that of smaller cities, the population structure is characteristic as well; ethnic minorities, singles, unemployed, low-incomes and low-educated individuals are over-represented and the cities have to deal with arrears in the field of education. To some extent, problems in the

| Table 8.4 – Utrecht in relation with the region, the Randstad conurbation and the country (%) |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------|
|                                             | Utrecht    | Region            | ‘Big Four’      | The Netherlands |
| Single                                     | 52.8       | 28.0              | 52.0            | 34.0           |
| Couple                                     | 22.3       | 30.0              | 21.3            | 29.3           |
| Household with children                    | 18.5       | 35.7              | 25.7            | 30.3           |
| Total households (share in national figures) | 2.0        | 1.4               | 15.5            | 6,888,519 (abs.) |
| Unemployed                                 | 2.4        | –                 | 5.0             | 2.6            |
| >65 years of age                           | 11.9       | 11.3              | 13.4            | 13.6           |
| Non-Dutch*                                 | 29.8       | 15.4              | 40.4            | 17.5           |
| Total population (share in national figures) | 1.6        | 1.5               | 12.1            | 15,987,075 (abs.) |
| Single-family dwellings                    | 48.0       | 76.0              | 23.2            | 71.0           |
| Multi-family dwellings                     | 52.0       | 24.0              | 55.5            | 29.0           |
| Social rented sector                       | 42.0       | 30.0              | 49.8            | 35.0           |
| Owner-occupied                             | 45.0       | 60.0              | 26.4            | 53.0           |
| Total housing stock (share in national figures) | 1.7        | 1.5               | 14.9            | 6,648,952 (abs.) |

Source: Gemeente Utrecht, 2002; www.cbs.nl; www.grotevier.nl, visited in February 2003
* Figures refer to 2000
– No figures available
Figures concerning households and population refer to 2001. For the city of Utrecht this source shows another division than local calculations, but is used because of the comparability with the rest of the region as well as with the country as a whole; figures concerning the housing stock refer to 2002
field of vandalism and criminal behaviour appear more often as well. However, the ‘Big Four’ are important engines for the national economy and accommodate many cultural supplies (Gemeente Utrecht, 1998).

Besides those general features, each ‘Big’ city has its own national function by which it is distinguished from the other three; while Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague respectively are important cultural, industrial and governmental cities, Utrecht clearly is a service centre and seems to have a strong position in both the national and regional context. The central location, as well as the extensive railway junctions, attract a lot of employment and make the city an attractive place to work and live. Likewise, table 8.4 shows Utrecht’s relatively favourable position in relation with the other ‘Big’ cities (e.g. little unemployment and a relatively low share of ethnic minorities).

According to household composition, Utrecht differs from the region; while in Utrecht more than half the households are singles, in the region two-person households and households with children are over-represented. As said before, this is related to (1) the function of Utrecht in the field of higher education and (2) the composition of the urban housing stock combined with the pressure on the housing market.

Differences with the region are declining however; after the annexation of Vleuten-De Meern and new building projects, almost half of the Utrecht housing stock consists of single-family dwellings. The same holds for the owner-occupied sector (table 8.4). Likewise, compared to the other ‘Big’ cities, the housing stock of Utrecht is getting more diverse and offers more opportunities to all kinds of households (Gemeente Utrecht, 2002).

8.2 Neighbourhoods in Utrecht

The housing stock in the city of Utrecht is realized over different periods of time. Figure 8.2 shows the location of the different neighbourhoods according to their building period.

The inner city of Utrecht is capable of combining the attractive historical centre with a large diversity of entertainment possibilities. In most parts people actually live as well. The housing stock is largely built in the 19th century or before and is characterized by a large share of spacious single-family dwellings (five rooms and more is no exception).

The private rented sector dominates this part of the city, which attracts a lot of students. Furthermore, middle- or high-income one- and two-person households take even more interest in the area as well; 87 per cent of the households in the city centre is single (table 8.5). As households with children as well as elderly and the underprivileged often can’t afford or don’t want to live there, the inner city of Utrecht becomes the domain of the well-to-do.

The 19th century ring gives a totally different story. The only resemblance with the city centre is the large share of private rented dwellings. Most of the neighbourhoods dating from this period are located near the inner city and are characterized by narrow streets with small dwellings of bad quality and low economic value; most dwellings had to be built in a short period of time to accommodate labourers and rules for construction did not exist at that time. Likewise, (green) public spaces or playgrounds are rare and these neighbourhoods got more
and more problems like heavy traffic and pollution (Gemeente Utrecht, 1985). As even more well-to-do households left, low-income households, students and starters on the housing market concentrated in those areas. During the 1970s however, many dwellings were upgraded and the situation changed. Other neighbourhoods slowly took over the function as area for the underprivileged. In most cases these were the large post-WWII neighbourhoods (see later).

The housing stock in the so-called early 20th century neighbourhoods differs from that of the preceding period. By that time, the government had formulated strict rules to ensure a certain kind of quality of the new stock, which resulted in a large share of large single-family dwellings. Although at present the neighbourhoods start to attract singles and two-person households, the new housing initially focused on middle- or high-income families (table 8.5). Low incomes or ethnic minorities often can’t afford living there. Likewise, those areas form an attractive alternative for households that are willing to leave the city (Van Kempen and Teule, 1989). Compared to other big cities in the country, the early 20th century neighbourhoods in the city of Utrecht form an exception; in contrast with Amsterdam for instance, where those areas often belong to the lower parts of the housing market, in Utrecht the stock has a high economic value and almost half of it belongs to the owner-occupied sector (Gemeente Utrecht, 1985).
This does not hold for the *post-WWII housing estates*, built from 1945 to 1968. After WWII, like almost every large city in the Netherlands, Utrecht had to cope with severe housing shortages. To solve this problem, large multi-family housing estates were realized on the edges of the city (figure 8.2). From 1945 to 1970, 31,000 dwellings were built (23,000 multi- and 8,000 single-family). As ‘efficiency’ was the key-word in the building process, many building blocks, high-rise as well as four-story dwellings without an elevator, were constructed in the same way. Because a lot of people had to be accommodated in a short period of time, the physical quality of the complexes didn’t get much priority. Most complexes were realized in the social rented sector and have relatively low rents. The new building initially focused on households with children, resulting in many comfortable flats with three or four spacious rooms. Furthermore, much value was attached to the ‘community-idea’; ‘light’, ‘air’ and ‘green’ were some of the key words to create a neighbourhood with a tight community-life. All sorts of services

![Figure 8.2 – Neighbourhoods in the city according to building period](source)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 8.5 – Number of households per neighbourhood-category in 2002</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inner city</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Gemeente Utrecht, 2002
and dwellings were attuned and the estates were set up with a lot of green and open spaces (Gemeente Utrecht, 2001).

Although initially most inhabitants were very pleased with their new housing situation, at present both the physical and the social environment are characterized by decline. This is partly connected to the relatively cheap social housing stock and the current allocation system; the cheapest dwellings are allocated to the lowest incomes (see section 2.3). Therefore, during the years, the large housing estates changed in concentration areas for the underprivileged (e.g. low-incomes, unemployed and ethnic minorities) (Van Kempen and Teule, 1989).

The newly built areas from the seventies until the late eighties show a totally different picture. By that time the quantitative housing shortage was solved and the local government wanted to prevent higher incomes to exchange the city for centers of urban growth. This resulted in a large variety in dwelling types; next to single-family dwellings, there are middle-rise multi-family dwellings, many one- or two-room apartments and different forms of ownership. This diverse housing stock has resulted in a diverse population; both one- or two-person households and families with children can afford a suitable dwelling in one of the neighbourhoods built in this period (Van Kempen and Teule, 1989; Gemeente Utrecht, 2001).

8.3 Conclusions

The city of Utrecht shows a lot of different faces. Over the past 15 years the city had to deal with favourable as well as less favourable developments. To start with, Utrecht has obtained a strong position in both the national and the regional context; the central location as well as urban expansion resulted among other things in a strong economy (important service city with low unemployment figures) and a changing housing market (relatively large share of owner-occupied and single-family dwellings). However, Utrecht had to deal with less favourable developments as well. First, like many other large cities, the pressure on the housing market causes various problems; the housing stock doesn’t seem to provide suitable dwellings for every household, resulting in the departure of middle- and high-incomes. This way, the city is in danger of becoming the domicile of the underprivileged. Furthermore there are big contrasts within the city itself. Some residential districts have to cope with decline, while others are doing fine. Nowadays, the most unfavourable situations exist in the large post-WWII housing estates: realized in the 1960s and characterized by high-rise housing complexes in the social rented sector and a weak socio-economic population composition.

What particular combination of factors is associated with the problems in these large housing estates? How are they related? These questions will be discussed in the following chapters by focusing on two post-WWII housing estates in the city of Utrecht: Nieuw-Hoograven (New-Hoograven) and Kanaleneiland-Noord (Northern Kanaleneiland). Apart from some differences, both areas have been confronted with even more problems.
This chapter starts with a brief narrative outlining the history of Nieuw-Hoograven (New-Hoograven), one of the two large housing estates that are researched in the city of Utrecht. Next, attention will be paid to changes with respect to physical structure as well as to socio-economic, demographic and socio-cultural developments. Does the present population of the estate differ from the original? And what about the quality of the housing stock? In the conclusions some words are said on the position of Nieuw-Hoograven within the city hierarchy.

Figure 9.1 – Location of Hoograven within the city of Utrecht (A) and the location of Nieuw-Hoograven within the Hoograven neighbourhood (B)
Introduction

Nieuw-Hoograven is located in the southern part of the city of Utrecht and belongs with three other areas to the Hoograven neighbourhood (figure 9.1A). As the area is surrounded by railways, national highways and water, it is sometimes characterized as ‘isolated’. However, the northern part of Hoograven is located only one kilometre from the city centre.

The two southern areas (Nieuw- and Oud-Hoograven) did not belong to the municipality of Utrecht until they were incorporated in 1954 (figure 9.1B). At that time the whole area of Nieuw-Hoograven was not built upon yet. However, due to the enormous housing shortage after the Second World War, Utrecht was in a hurry to build new dwellings. This meant that soon after the annexation of Hoograven, building plans were made and the building process started (Houben et al., 1983; Gemeente Utrecht, 1990).

After the construction of 2,250 dwellings to the east of the existing pre-war Oud-Hoograven (Old-Hoograven), by 1965 the whole neighbourhood was able to accommodate about 22,000 people. The newly built area was different from the existing parts of the neighbourhood in several respects. While Oud-Hoograven was characterized by an over-representation of single-family dwellings and a north-south situated road-system, Nieuw-Hoograven was constructed on the basis of an efficient and strict urban planning pattern; clustered multi-family complexes (over 60 per cent consisted of apartment blocks with three or four storeys without an elevator) were supplied with some single-family dwellings on the sides. Every complex surrounded a semi-public garden and, in contrast to pre-war Hoograven, public water and green were well represented. Furthermore, like in many other post-war neighbourhoods, a large share of the dwellings in Nieuw-Hoograven was built in the social rented sector (60 per cent).

9.1 Physical structure

The physical structure of Nieuw-Hoograven has not changed a lot after almost four decades. Apart from some small changes in the housing stock, table 9.1 shows a continued over-representation of multi-family dwellings and dwellings in the social rented sector. These figures are linked: most multi-family dwellings belong to the social rented stock.


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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multi-family</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>77.0</td>
<td>79.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single-family</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner-occupied</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social rented sector</td>
<td>84.0</td>
<td>84.0</td>
<td>85.0</td>
<td>85.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rents*</td>
<td>50-75</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>250-400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (abs)</td>
<td>2,251</td>
<td>2,250</td>
<td>2,424</td>
<td>2,595</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Houben et al., 1983; Pol, 1988; Gemeente Utrecht, 2002a/b

* Figures refer to the average net rent of dwellings in the social rented sector in euros

– No figures available
What has changed however, is the quality of the housing stock. This holds for both the relative and the absolute quality. New-building in other parts of the city caused a decrease in the relative quality of the stock. Although the efficient building methods resulted in relatively large dwellings (many four-room apartments), at present most apartments do not meet modern standards anymore (e.g. simple sanitation facilities, central heating and proper insulation are rare). The absence of elevators in most complexes is seen as a lack of quality as well and causes problems for the increasing number of elderly living in these complexes. Next to this relative decline some buildings have been confronted with absolute decline as well; draught, noise pollution and moisture have resulted in inconvenience.

These developments had influence on the rents; as the amount of rent depends to a large extent on the size of the dwelling and its facilities, rents stayed relatively low in Nieuw-Hoograven. Although the prices initially were on an average level for post-WWII neighbourhoods (between 50 to 75 euro in the 1960s) nowadays the neighbourhood has a relatively cheap housing stock; rents between 250 and 400 euro per month are relatively low for a large city like Utrecht with rents fluctuating around 386 euro (WBO, 2000; Interview with managing director of housing corporation; Gemeente Utrecht, 1990).

---

Between 1983 and 1992, 112 apartments were constructed in the social rented sector (Gemeente Utrecht, 1993). From 1996 to 2002, 349 apartments have been demolished (three- and four-storey flat-buildings in the social rented sector) and replaced by 162 single-family dwellings of which 82 per cent in the owner-occupied sector. Some changes with respect to the administrative boundaries of the neighbourhood cause differences in the totals.
Quality and character of the environment

Next to the multi-family dwellings, the green and open living environment characterizes the environment of Nieuw-Hoograven. This gave the area initially an attractive image; residents partially took care of the public spaces themselves and used it for leisure. Nowadays many of these areas are not very attractive anymore. A declining interest from both the municipality and the inhabitants in keeping the areas clean is seen as an important cause of the increasing pollution and vandalism (see chapter 10) (Projectgroep Hoograven/Tolsteeg, 1990).

Another characteristic of the physical environment of Nieuw-Hoograven is formed by the ’t Goylaan. This 4-lane road with many through traffic is an important connection with several national highways, but is also an awkward physical barrier; the road goes straight through one of the two main shopping centres (shopping centre ‘’t Goylaan’) and separates the northern part of the estate from the south. This causes dangerous situations and makes shopping not very attractive. Residents experience inconvenience in the form of noise pollution and exhaust gases as well (Houben et al., 1983; Gemeente Utrecht, 1990; Projectgroep Hoograven/Tolsteeg, 1990).

Character and physical characteristics of Nieuw-Hoograven

The enormous urban housing shortage preserved the neighbourhood from housing vacancies. However, some developments described above caused damage to the image of Nieuw-Hoograven and the demand for dwellings in the estate decreased during the 1990s: nowadays, a vacant social rented dwelling in Nieuw-Hoograven is reacted less upon than an average social dwelling elsewhere in the city (32 and 54 reactions respectively14) (Gemeente Utrecht, 2002b).

Next to the image-problems, the decreasing demand and declining popularity are related to the quality of the housing stock (see before). The price/quality ratio of the social rented housing stock in Nieuw-Hoograven is criticized by the residents to be very unfavourable; in 1996 about 16 per cent of the residents were unsatisfied with their dwelling and although the number has fallen to 13 per cent nowadays, comparison with urban figures again gives an indication of the ‘popularity’ of the estate (urban average: 7 and 6 per cent respectively) (Gemeente Utrecht, 2002b). Almost the same development holds for the future perspectives: as the share of residents with negative feelings about the future increased the past five years with 8 percentage points (to 29 per cent), many residents have lost their trust in Nieuw-Hoograven (Gemeente Utrecht, 2002b).

Quality and quantity of available services

Services in Nieuw-Hoograven are concentrated in two areas: the ‘Smaragdplein’ and the ‘t Goylaan’. Both centres initially contained different kinds of shops (emphasis on shops for daily goods) and ‘Smaragdplein’ had a social function as well; all kinds of services (a community centre, a local health centre, a public library and a community post-office) were located here around a square. Next to these two concentrations, several streets initially accommodated some community shops. Schools, old people’s homes and clubhouses were scattered throughout the whole neighbourhood (Houben et al., 1983).

14 The popularity of an estate is measured on the basis of the number of reactions on vacant dwellings within the social rented sector by households that are registered as ‘searching’ (Gemeente Utrecht, 2002b). See section 2.3 for further information.
Nowadays, the two concentration areas give place to 82 establishments; both daily and non-daily goods, catering industries and other services. Although the number of entrepreneurs increased during the years, the demolition of a small shopping strip in the mid 1990s resulted in a decrease in retail trade establishments from 27 to 18 (Projectgroep Hoograven/Tolsteeg, 1990; Gemeente Utrecht, 2001, 2002a). Nowadays however, the Smaragdplein is under reconstruction and will be expanded with 3,500 m² of floor space.

Other services had to deal with some changes as well. Although the number of primary schools maintained at six, the composition of the school-population has altered; the number of pupils almost halved the past 15 years (from 1,219 in 1987 to 654 in 2001), while the share of school going children with a non-Dutch background almost doubled to 70 per cent (www.wijkinfo.nl, visited in March 2003; Pol, 1988; Gemeente Utrecht, 2002b).

Finally, the number of medical services declined significantly; at least two family doctors have left and although one dentist holds practice in the neighbouring Oud-Hoograven, residents of Nieuw-Hoograven have to leave their neighbourhood to visit one (Interviews with several key-persons).

9.2 Economic developments

Nieuw-Hoograven was built to solve the housing shortage within the city of Utrecht. This resulted in a monolithic neighbourhood with an almost pure residential function and a low supply of jobs; nowadays, only 569 jobs are located in the research area (0.3 per cent of the total
number of jobs in the city). Many of the economically active people of Nieuw-Hoograven thus have their job elsewhere in Utrecht or outside the city (Gemeente Utrecht, 2002b).

Initially, almost all the residents of Nieuw-Hoograven were employed (Gemeente Utrecht, 1975). However, finding a job became harder and harder (table 9.2). Although the percentage is relatively low nowadays, unemployment figures showed an enormous increase during the 1990s.\textsuperscript{15}

The table shows the weak position of Nieuw-Hoograven, both within the city as in the rest of the Hoograven neighbourhood. Although increasing unemployment was a local and even a national problem in the 1980s and early 1990s, Nieuw-Hoograven had to suffer more than most other areas in the city. This development is probably connected to the socio-economic composition of the neighbourhood population. Due to the economic restructuring process of the 1980s, many manufacturing workers became redundant and could not always find a new job in the expanding service sector (section 2.1). Apparently, many residents in Nieuw-Hoograven belonged to this group.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Nieuw-Hoograven</th>
<th>Hoograven neighbourhood</th>
<th>City of Utrecht</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\textbf{Table 9.3 – Demographic profile over the lifetime of Nieuw-Hoograven (\%)}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Singles</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>43.0</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>60.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households with children</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total households (abs)</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>2,701</td>
<td>2,751</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>2,834</td>
<td>2,908</td>
<td>3,062</td>
<td>3,181</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 65 years of age</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 29 years of age</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>54.1</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>49.1</td>
<td>48.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Dutch ethnicity</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td>55.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Inhabitants (abs)</td>
<td>7,806</td>
<td>9,515</td>
<td>8,755</td>
<td>7,856</td>
<td>6,803</td>
<td>6,336</td>
<td>6,240</td>
<td>6,231</td>
<td>5,903</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


– No figures available

\textsuperscript{15} These figures are influenced by the Dutch welfare system; many people in the Netherlands depend on the Act for individuals who are unfit for work [WAO Wet op de arbeidsongeschiktheidsverzekering]. See section 2.1 for further information.
9.3 Demographic and socio-cultural developments

The composition of the population in Nieuw-Hoograven has altered since the estate was realized. Table 9.3 shows some significant developments. First, the number of residents has decreased during the years, while the number of households has constantly increased. This has to do with the second significant development: the increase of small households. Next to the increase in the number of single-parent households, the neighbourhood population nowadays consists for more than 60 per cent of singles (www.utrecht.nl, visited in March 2003). The national development of individualization is thus shown on neighbourhood level.

Thirdly, the share of elderly in the population is gradually increasing. Partly this concerns people who have been living in Nieuw-Hoograven since the estate was built.

A fourth striking development is the enormous increase in individuals with a non-Dutch ethnicity; from the mid 1980s their share in the neighbourhood population increased and at present more than half of the population (55.9 per cent) belong to an ethnic minority group. Most of them have a Moroccan or Turkish background. To some extent this is connected to the present allocation system (section 2.3); due to their household size (often more children than Dutch households) and low incomes, non-Dutch households have a right to large, payable dwellings and it has already been said that Nieuw-Hoograven supplies such apartments.

Income distribution

Apparently, the demographic changes of the 1980s not only caused socio-cultural changes, but resulted in a weak neighbourhood population as well (with respect to the socio-economic situation). While Hoograven as a whole has a favourable position within the city, Nieuw-Hoograven belongs to one of the poorest areas (table 9.4). Many of the low-income households are non-Dutch and the household members are often both unemployed and low-educated (Projectgroep Hoograven-Tolsteeg, 1990).

This situation is shown by the enormous increase in the socio-economic arrears as well. Table 9.5 indicates that Nieuw-Hoograven was high on the list of Utrecht neighbourhoods with arrears already in the 1980s. During the years however, this position even got higher, indicating an increase in arrears.

Turnover and mobility data

In the early 1990s, a large share of native Dutch households left Nieuw-Hoograven. Apparently, the original inhabitants were not able or did not want to continue their housing career in the area. Most households left a multi-family dwelling in the rented sector and were succeeded by newcomers often with a different ethnic background (Gemeente Utrecht, 1993).

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16 Indicator which is composed of a combination of unemployment figures among both individuals between 20-64 and 15-24 years of age, the number of individuals of 14 and 15 years of age that do not follow general education, the number of non-attendance pupils that are liable to compulsory education (5-16 years of age), the size of the population related to floor space in square meters, the number of foreigners (including Dutch individuals born in Surinam) and the number of welfare recipients between 20 and 64 years of age (Gemeente Utrecht, 1993). From 1995 onwards less indicators are used.
The fact that many of these households have relatively large families, explains the enormous positive migration balance in 1995 (table 9.6).

During the 1990s Nieuw-Hoograven turned into a neighbourhood where households seemed to live less longer than in other neighbourhoods (Projectgroep Hoograven/Tolsteeg, 1990). Many households also proclaimed that they preferred to live elsewhere; the group of residents who wants to leave the area increased during the years (table 9.6).

*Changing values and norms within the estate*

The demographic developments, described above, resulted in a neighbourhood with varying cultures. This differentiation caused changes with respect to norms and values as well (e.g. other ideas about the living environment and the upkeep of (semi) public gardens). Furthermore, problems with respect to language caused frustration among the original inhabitants; people living in the same complex were not able to communicate with each other anymore. These developments resulted in decreasing feelings of involvement with the neighbourhood or even caused more departures (Projectgroep Hoograven/Tolsteeg, 1990). In the next chapter, those and other issues will be discussed in more detail.

*Table 9.4 – Income distribution in Nieuw-Hoograven, the Hoograven neighbourhood as a whole and the city of Utrecht (disposable incomes per year), 1988, 1993, 2002b*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nieuw-Hoograven</th>
<th>Hoograven neighbourhood</th>
<th>Utrecht</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Household Income (x1,000 in euros)</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of low incomes</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>85.4*</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of high incomes</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Gemeente Utrecht, 1988, 1993, 2002b
* Figures about 1990 refer to both low and middle incomes
– No figures available

*Table 9.5 – Ranking position of Nieuw-Hoograven within the urban hierarchy (scale 0-100), 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 2002*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arrears*</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Gemeente Utrecht, 1993, 2002b
* In 1995 and 2002 less indicators are used to determine arrears: unemployment figures among individuals between 15-64 years of age, unemployment among the youth (15-24 years of age), income and education; the higher the number, the higher the arrears (Gemeente Utrecht, 2002a)
9.4 Conclusions

This section has shown different aspects of Nieuw-Hoograven. Just after the construction in 1965, the neighbourhood was seen as an area where young middle-class households could find a relatively large dwelling in an attractive living environment. However, during the years both the housing quality and the neighbourhood population altered and several unfavourable developments appeared. Nowadays the neighbourhood even has the lowest position in the city of Utrecht with respect to the socio-economic situation and people complain about their dwelling and the living environment. The position of Nieuw-Hoograven within the city hierarchy is further exemplified in table 9.7, which presents scores on a number of arrears.\[17\]

Table 9.6 – Figures on mobility and turnover data within Nieuw-Hoograven, 1990, 1995, 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>1995</th>
<th>2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Migration balance</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>-64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households wanting to move (%)</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>52.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 9.7 – Position of Nieuw-Hoograven within the city hierarchy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nieuw-Hoograven</th>
<th>Kanaleneiland (both Noord and Zuid)</th>
<th>Strongest neighbourhood</th>
<th>Utrecht</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ranking</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational arrears</td>
<td>79.0</td>
<td>92.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>43.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housebreaking</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feelings of safety insufficient</td>
<td>49.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inconvenience caused by youth</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak social cohesion</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>58.0</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>39.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak political involvement</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pollution</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>59.0</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative about traffic</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>43.0</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>37.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative about dwelling</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total score</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Gemeente Utrecht, 2002b

\[17\] The score is based on the situation with respect to the following issues: unemployment (per cent), educational arrears (share of primary scholars that fall under the so-called ‘attention-for-education-policy’ of the national government [onderwijsaandachtsbeleid]), housebreaking (per 1000 dwellings), feelings of safety (share of residents feeling unsafe in the neighbourhood), inconvenience caused by youth (per cent), social cohesion (share of residents qualifying the social cohesion in the area as insufficient), political involvement (share of residents that didn’t vote during the last elections), pollution (share of residents experiencing inconvenience from pollution), traffic (share of residents unsatisfied with the safety with respect to traffic) and opinion on dwelling (share of residents qualifying the dwelling as insufficient).
The table gives a summary score (lowest line) on a scale of zero to ten. Nieuw-Hoograven scores a 3.3 and takes the 25th position on the urban ranking list of 28 estates. Likewise, the area belongs to the nine so-called ‘weak neighbourhoods’ within the city of Utrecht; among those is also the other research neighbourhood in Utrecht, Kanaleneiland (see chapter 11 and 12).

In the field of unemployment, educational arrears and housebreaking, the situation in Nieuw-Hoograven is unfavourable with respect to the urban average. The same holds for feelings of safety and inconvenience caused by youth; almost half the population (49 per cent) claims to feel unsafe within the own neighbourhood sometimes and about one-third (30 per cent) experiences inconvenience from groups of adolescents hanging around in the area (urban figures: 35 and 22 per cent respectively). Furthermore, political involvement is weak and residents are more displeased with their dwelling than elsewhere in the city. In the next chapter we will say more about the problems and perspectives within Nieuw-Hoograven.
In this chapter we will focus on the main problems within Nieuw-Hoograven. We will also try to find out which factors and developments can be seen as causing these problems. Most information used in this chapter is derived from interviews held with a number of key actors. Although problems are central, some positive things about Nieuw-Hoograven will be said as well.

10.1 Housing and design

Dwelling types and obsolescence
Due to a decline in the relative quality of the housing stock (see section 9.1), many original residents were not able or did not want to finish or continue their housing career in Nieuw-Hoograven. The lack of single-family housing, owner-occupied dwellings or dwellings with elevators or other facilities, caused people to look for better opportunities (within newbuilding areas) elsewhere. The popularity of the rented sector in general was affected as well, as it got financially attractive to buy a house. Furthermore, the absolute decline of the stock caused problems: during the years tenants experienced more and more discomfort from draught, moisture, bad insulation and noise pollution. Therefore, demand for the rented multi-family dwellings, so well represented in Nieuw-Hoograven, declined.

Ownership of dwellings, buildings and the environment
As over 80 per cent of the housing stock in Nieuw-Hoograven belongs to the social rented sector, housing corporations are responsible for the upkeep of their properties and parts of the environment. Although they claim to keep everything in repair, some interviewed residents and social workers share another opinion: they have the feeling that retrenchments in upkeep and neglect have caused physical decay. Both the housing corporations and the local government are accused of investing too little in the area, resulting in the pollution of lawns, flowerbeds, streets and parking places (Gemeente Utrecht, 1990). The same holds for playgrounds: the number of suitable recreation grounds is considered to be inadequate and dog’s dirt has polluted many of them.

However, there seems to be a difference between corporations in the field of upkeep; interviews with the district administrators of several housing corporations who have the

18 A complete list of interviewees is included at the end of this report.
responsibility for the estate, showed that some corporations invest more in their properties than others. This results in differences with respect to the quality of the stock, which is rather striking because rents are almost equal throughout the neighbourhood.

Both ownership (the way the corporations administer their properties) and the composition of the housing stock in Nieuw-Hoograven (emphasis on multi-family dwellings) have affected the situation within the area; the composition of the housing stock caused a certain socio-economic division within the Hoograven neighbourhood. This statement becomes even more powerful when considering the fact that parts of Hoograven with emphasis on owner-occupation and the private rented sector, function far better than Nieuw-Hoograven. Figures on income distribution, criminality or living satisfaction confirm this thought and according to the executive of the social welfare organization, the social rented multi-family apartments already housed many problem-households in the 1980s compared to other parts of the stock.

**Management**

Both the housing corporations and the local government admit it is often difficult and time-consuming to manage the area properly; every actor has its own interests and demands and as budgets are under pressure, cooperation seems to become even harder (e.g. who is responsible for mowing the lawn?). When this leads to the situation that the lawn is not mown at all, residents start to feel less responsible for the environment as well. This process is affected and maybe even strengthened by the indistinct difference between public and private green (Interviews with district administrators of several housing corporations).

The owners share another opinion as well; both members of the local government and the corporations claim that the problems are also partially connected to the increasing individualism. The situation that residents took care of the environment themselves slowly disappeared and as they were not prepared for this development, a district administrator of a corporation admitted that their organization had reserved too little money for the upkeep of the environment.

The urban government also has a share in managing the neighbourhood. As the city of Utrecht was confronted with financial problems during the late 1980s and early 1990s, attention for post-WWII neighbourhoods was limited. Other neighbourhoods alike, Nieuw-Hoograven had to suffer from this (Interview with an urban representative).

Finally, some positive things about the physical environment can be said as well. Several complexes have been modernized both internally and on the outside. Furthermore, single-family dwellings in the owner-occupied sector have replaced several multi-family complexes, which changed the socio-economic situation somewhat. Finally, on the initiative of active residents, several playgrounds have been improved (Interviews with an executive of a neighbourhood project; assistant headmaster of primary school).

### 10.2 Labour market, well-being and access to services

**Labour market**

Nieuw-Hoograven was confronted with an enormous increase in unemployment during the 1980s and 1990s (section 9.2). According to a resident who also volunteers in several projects within the area, these developments affected the lives of many families and caused a rather
tense social situation within the area. The departure of those who could find a job elsewhere, strengthened this process. Thus, next to the fact that the housing stock in Nieuw-Hoograven became less popular (see before), people left for work as well. In many cases the households with the least possibilities on the labour market (and the housing market) stayed behind.

Services
The number of so-called problem-households (ex-psychiatric patients, ex-criminals, drug-addicts etc.) within Nieuw-Hoograven has increased in the last decade. At the same time however, medical services in the area have shown the reverse process. Nowadays, almost all residents share the opinion that the area has too little services in this field: no dentist holds practice in the area anymore and the number of family doctors decreased as well. Next to the fact that the buildings they held practice in, have been demolished and new buildings are very expensive, their departure was connected to the aggressive behaviour of some patients (Interviews with an urban representative; active resident).

With respect to primary education, there has been a period when many parents decided to put their children to school outside the neighbourhood. Although the number of primary schools is sufficient, according to several employees of a primary school, those parents had the feeling that the quality of education was affected by the increase of pupils with different ethnic backgrounds. Nowadays however, this development seems to have been reversed a little. Due to several projects, financed by the local government, schools are more able to deal with the multicultural group of pupils (e.g. increasing the involvement of non-Dutch parents). Furthermore, as the director of one of the primary schools realized a day nursery at the site of the school, some Dutch parents are being convinced of the convenience of a school in the neighbourhood (Interviews with schoolteacher; assistant headmaster of primary school).

Another story holds for the supply of shops and other daily services. The inhabitants of the area are not very positive about this; more and more scattered shops disappear and as the situation around the ‘t Goylaan (one of the two important shopping areas) is affected by decay and delayed plans for restructuring, people have to go elsewhere for their groceries. Especially the elderly and the handicapped are the victims of this process.

Several factors are related to the decline of shopping centre ‘Goylaan’. First, the shops are located in premises that are owned by a housing corporation and according to both residents and several key actors this corporation has neglected its property; next to obsolescence of the lay-out of the shopping centre, the knowledge that the centre would be restructured within a few years resulted in decreasing investments. This situation caused increasing vacancies, which affected the appearance and image of the area in question and resulted in vandalism (Projectgroep Hoograven/Tolsteeg, 1990; Interviews with the executive of social welfare organization; representative of the local department of economic affairs). Secondly, because of the restructuring process, a number of dwellings have already been demolished, but nothing is built back yet. Therefore, the shopkeepers had to make do with a decreasing number of customers and some of them decided to take their business elsewhere. This development is connected to the changing neighbourhood population as well (with respect to both income and cultural background). As the demand for certain goods altered, some shopkeepers were confronted with declining profits and left. Although ethnic shops succeeded them in some cases, vacancies are still a problem.
Criminal behaviour and drug abuse

The past years, criminal behaviour and drug abuse increased within the area. According to several key actors, this is caused partially by the closure of a meeting point for junkies in the centre of the city of Utrecht, which resulted in a rush of addicts and dealers towards the relatively well-located (i.e. not very far from the city centre) Nieuw-Hoograven. This development is strengthened by the situation around ‘t Goylaan as well; criminals are not conspicuous between the vacant stores and depressing appearance of the area. Finally, dwellings on the demolition list are often rented temporarily to individuals difficult to house elsewhere (e.g. mentally ill people, alcoholics etc.). Such developments do no good to the social situation in the area and are said to be related to the increase in criminal behaviour and vandalism (Interviews with schoolteacher; active resident).

Due to feelings of fear, caused by the presence of drug-addicts and -dealers as well as groups of youngsters hanging around in the area (the only youth centre in the area had been burnt down), many residents avoid the shopping area around ‘t Goylaan both day and night (Interviews with executive of social welfare organization; executive of a neighbourhood project; ‘original’ inhabitant).

Neighbourhood bond

Although a large share of the residents complain about several aspects within Nieuw-Hoograven, it can be said that many of them (both non-Dutch and Dutch) in some way like to live in the area and feel a certain bond with it; some have lived there all their lives or almost all their family lives in the estate. As a resident of the first our put it: ‘You know what you have got, but you don’t know what you will get’.

However, in the case of the non-Dutch, the neighbourhood bond is sometimes not voluntarily, but connected to the fact that they almost never leave the neighbourhood; they are actually ‘bonded to’ the area (see section 10.4).

10.3 Multi-cultural developments

The present allocation system is an important factor creating the multi-cultural changes within Nieuw-Hoograven (sections 2.3 and 9.3). In some cases these developments resulted in the situation that the original inhabitants no longer identified themselves with the neighbourhood; due to language problems, people living in the same complex no longer understood each other or noise pollution caused annoyance; Turkish and Moroccan households often have more children than Dutch households and they share complexes that are often not very sound-proof. As a result, even more original households started to leave.

However, not only the indigenous Dutch experience problems from this situation; some (often male) ethnic adolescents have serious trouble with the fact that they live between two cultures. Many belong to the group of educational dropouts, which in some cases results in the situation that the adolescent in question ends up in criminality (Interviews with an active resident; executive of social welfare organization).
10.4 Social exclusion, social inclusion and social cohesion

Dependence on welfare benefits
As unemployment increased in Nieuw-Hoograven during the 1980s (section, 9.2) dependence on welfare benefits did the same. Although, the number of inhabitants that had to depend on benefits\(^{19}\) increased just one percentage point between 1994 and 1998, more than half of the neighbourhood population belonged to this group (51 per cent) (Gemeente Utrecht, 2002a).

Due to the unemployment and the fact that they are often low skilled, many members of ethnic minority groups often have financial problems. Although there are enough welfare organizations functioning on neighbourhood level, a volunteer in several social projects within the area, stated that there exists a certain amount of distrust and annoyance among the ethnic groups. At the same time however, non-Dutch residents often do not take pains to read information pamphlets that are spread by the welfare organisation; news has to be spread mouth to mouth.

Values and norms/differences
Nieuw-Hoograven has turned into a neighbourhood with two faces. As stated by a resident: ‘in one cafe customers drink beer, while in the other tea with mint-leaflets is ordered’. The socio-cultural changes have resulted in a weak social control as well, causing a situation in which criminality gets chance to develop (e.g. young adults experiencing difficulties with living between two cultures and the arrival of problems households) (Projectgroep Hoograven/ Tolsteeg, 1990; Interview with executive of social welfare organization).

Furthermore, in some way, the non-Dutch even seem to be accused of being responsible for the pollution within the area; they have not adapted to the Dutch values and norms and have other ideas about how to use the environment (e.g. rules considering schedules to put the garbage outside are not lived after) (Interviews with district administrators of different housing corporations; ‘original’ resident).

Social polarization\(^{20}\)/exclusion
As the ethnic groups have strong community bonds and often live along the native Dutch inhabitants, they also use other parts of the area; recently a mosque has been realized in Nieuw-Hoograven, which now forms an important meeting point for members of the Muslim community. The same time however, the mosque has a function for the neighbourhood as a whole as well; it can be used for other purposes so that contact between different groups is stimulated. Although, these strong bonds are often seen as an obstacle for the integration process, they are ‘used’ nowadays as well; several local initiatives depend to a large extent on the participation of non-Dutch residents (e.g. non-Dutch residents are involved in projects to prevent ethnic adolescents from ending up in criminality). In most cases however, it is the ethnic males who are involved in such projects; woman often live rather isolated in the neighbourhood; apart from their contacts within their own community, a large share almost never leaves the neighbourhood. A schoolteacher even told that a bus had to be arranged

\(^{19}\) Share of the population that is unemployed, depends on social security, is disabled or is pensioned off (Gemeente Utrecht, 2002a).

\(^{20}\) Sharpening of contrasts.
once to transport a group of children to a children's farm located next to the estate; both the children and the parents who volunteered were not capable of crossing some busy roads and walking 'all the way' to the farm.

Nevertheless, according to several organizations, ethnic groups seem to integrate more and more within Nieuw-Hoograven; although difficulties with respect to language still cause problems and to some extent values and norms still differ (e.g. raising children and using the environment), residents get more involved with their neighbourhood and each other (Interviews with executive of social welfare organization; schoolteacher; assistant headmaster of primary school).

10.5 Sustainability and other issues

Although initially households came to live in Nieuw-Hoograven out of free will, without the intention of leaving again as soon as possible, this situation has changed. Nowadays, the newcomers often do not have a lot of choice; as Nieuw-Hoograven has a relatively cheap housing stock, many households are dependent upon a dwelling in the area. It can be seen however that certain households use the area nowadays as a so-called 'spring-board'; they start their housing career there and leave again as soon as they have the opportunity. However, this is not possible for everyone; as many (often ethnic) households lack the financial certainty that is needed to leave the area, it is the socio-economic weak residents that are forced to stay.

It may seem now as if this situation is unique for Nieuw-Hoograven, but this is not the case; almost similar developments can be seen in other large post-war housing estates in the city. Our second research neighbourhood is one of them (see chapter 11).

10.6 Conclusions

This chapter has discussed several problems, which occurred in Nieuw-Hoograven. The estate has been confronted with problems like unemployment, criminality, decreasing social cohesion and a weakening position on the urban housing market. A large share of low-income households is housed in dwellings of relatively poor quality.

As Nieuw-Hoograven initially functioned well, the changing population composition can be seen as one of the factors causing the present problems. This process is connected to the departure of the original households; in most cases they were not able to finish or continue their housing career in the area and after they had left, ethnic minorities often succeeded them. Apparently, the composition of the housing stock is largely responsible for this process; the supply in Nieuw-Hoograven (emphasis on multi-family dwellings in the social rented sector) had become less popular with the native Dutch and the allocation system made the area accessible to the lowest incomes with large families, often non-Dutch households.

Next to these unfavourable developments however, the neighbourhood knows some positive developments as well. Several projects have been released to improve the situation, causing a slow but certain increase of the integration of the ethnic minorities. Furthermore, restructuring projects have led to some small changes in the housing stock, with a certain increase in the number of owner-occupied dwellings and the arrival of households with a stronger socio-
economic background. Recently, the general opinion of the residents about the neighbourhood has improved as well (Gemeente Utrecht, 2002b). In the next RESTATE report, the policies, which have been carried out in the Hoograven neighbourhood will be discussed.
Kanaleneiland-Noord in Utrecht: general description

This chapter describes the situation in the second research neighbourhood in Utrecht, Kanaleneiland-Noord (Northern-Kanaleneiland). Before discussing the physical, economic, demographic and socio-cultural developments, a short outline is given of the history of this large housing estate. Like chapter 9, the section ends with discussing the position of Kanaleneiland-Noord within the city hierarchy. If necessary, the situation is compared with Nieuw-Hoograven.

Introduction

Kanaleneiland-Noord is located in the southwest of the city of Utrecht and forms with three other estates the Kanaleneiland neighbourhood (figure 11.1A). To solve the urban (and national) housing shortage, Utrecht started in 1956 with the so-called ‘expansion plan Kanaleneiland’; a building plot of 258 ha had to be turned into a large housing estate (Gemeente Utrecht, 1990, 1995, 1999).

By 1965, Kanaleneiland was a fact; 7,500 dwellings had been built (for comparison: 2,250 newly built dwellings in Nieuw-Hoograven). The construction of the new houses took place in several stages. Our research area, Kanaleneiland-Noord (66 ha), was realized first (figure 11.1B) and presents many similarities with Nieuw-Hoograven. First it can be said that emphasis is on multi-family dwellings with an over-representation of four-room apartments. Most complexes are realized as three- or four-storey apartment buildings so that an elevator was not legally obliged. A second similarity with Nieuw-Hoograven is the design; similar complexes with a few single-family dwellings on the sides (‘blueprints’), are repeated several times. Thirdly, with respect to ownership, like in Nieuw-Hoograven the social rented sector is over-represented in Kanaleneiland-Noord; corporations and the local government owned the largest part of the stock. Finally, it can be said that a green and open living environment characterizes both research areas. The building project focused on middle-class families with children. As many flowerbeds were planted with roses, Kanaleneiland-Noord was even provided with the nickname: ‘Island of Roses’ (Gemeente Utrecht, 1990).

After the construction of Kanaleneiland-Noord, the second phase of the project started in 1961. To start with Kanaleneiland-Zuid (southern-Kanaleneiland) (figure 11.1B). With respect to dwelling type and design, this area is almost similar to the northern part of the estate. The only difference is the fact that some of the single-family dwellings belong to the owner-occupied sector.
Kanaleneiland neighbourhood comprises Transwijk and Kanaleneiland-Noord-Oost (Northeastern-Kanaleneiland) as well (figure 11.1B). While Kanaleneiland-Noord en -Zuid are sometimes spoken of as being one estate, these two are different. In Transwijk, emphasis is on single-family dwellings in the social rented sector and in Kanaleneiland-Noord-Oost, again three or four story complexes dominate. However, 85 per cent of the complexes in this area is built in the private rented sector (Gemeente Utrecht, 1990).

11.1 Physical structure

After almost four decades, the physical structure of Kanaleneiland-Noord has not altered a lot. Apart from little changes in the housing stock,²¹ table 11.1 shows a continued emphasis on multi-family dwellings in the social rented sector.

What has changed however, is the quality of the housing stock. Like in Nieuw-Hoograven this holds for both the relative and the absolute quality. Because ‘efficiency’ was the key-word

²¹ Between 1983 and 1992, private investors realized 90 apartments in Kanaleneiland-Noord (both in the rented and the owner-occupied sector). Furthermore, during the same period, 30 dwellings were added to the stock due to the rebuilding of certain buildings or changes in development plans (Gemeente Utrecht, 1993).
during the booming production period of the 1950s and 1960s, Kanaleneiland-Noord was constructed by using a lot of brickwork. By the time the other parts of the area were developed, more industrialized building methods were used (Gemeente Utrecht, 1990). Although this difference seems rather unimportant, the opposite proved to be true; absolute decline is more serious in the eldest part of the area nowadays. Apart from several complexes which have been improved both internally and on the outside, draught, noise pollution and moisture are some of the problems (Interview with district administrator of a housing corporation).

These developments influenced the relative quality of the housing stock. Although the Kanaleneiland neighbourhood is characterized by relatively large dwellings (generally 5 m² more floor space than early post-war dwellings\(^{22}\)), compared to new-building elsewhere, the supply in Kanaleneiland-Noord as well as in -Zuid became rather ‘simple’; the absence of facilities like central heating, proper insulation and ventilation, a junction for the washing-machine and an elevator are seen as important shortages (Haenen, 1995). The under-representation of owner-occupied dwellings within the area affected the relative decline as well; as the national government made home-ownership financially more attractive, families that wanted to buy a house had to leave the area.

Rents were also influenced by these developments; although the prices initially were rather high for a post-WWII neighbourhood, varying from 75 to 100 euros in the 1960s, nowadays the neighbourhood is characterized by a relatively cheap housing stock (table 11.1). An amount between 250 to 400 euros per month is relatively low for a large city like Utrecht (urban average around 386 euro) (WBO, 2000; Interview managing director of housing corporation; Gemeente Utrecht, 1990).

**Quality and character of the environment**

Although the upkeep of most public spaces is in the hands of both the local government and the corporations, initially the residents felt responsible as well and kept parts of the semi-public gardens clean themselves. Nowadays however, these feelings of responsibility seemed to have disappeared and the area has been confronted with pollution and vandalism. The public space,

\begin{table} 
\centering 
\begin{tabular}{ l c c c c } 
\hline 
\hline 
Multi-family & – & 81.0 & 82.0 & 82.0 \\
Single family & 16.0 & 16.0 & 18.0 & 18.0 \\
Owner-occupied & 12.3 & 12.3 & 13.0 & 13.0 \\
Social rented sector & – & 84.0 & 79.0 & 78.0 \\
Rents (in euro)* & 75-100 & 181 & – & 250-400 \\
Total (abs) & 2,259 & 2,470 & 2,599 & 2,674 \\
\hline 
\end{tabular} 
\caption{Developments in the housing stock within Kanaleneiland-Noord (%), 1965, 1986, 1996, 2002} 
\end{table} 

* Figures refer to the average rent of the social rented sector

\(^{22}\) In 1985, two-third of the apartments in the Kanaleneiland neighbourhood had between 55 en 74 m² of floor space and almost half the stock had four rooms (Gemeente Utrecht, 1985).
once being an attractive element (the area was also known as ‘Island of Roses’ in the 1960s and 1970s), nowadays causes problems and becomes ever scantier. The roses have disappeared and as high-rise complexes hindered proper supervision many playgrounds were confronted with vandalism and have been closed.

Another characteristic of the physical environment is formed by the fact that the Kanaleneiland neighbourhood is located rather isolated; two busy traffic arteries form an awkward physical barrier between the area and the rest of the city. Although these 4-lane roads are important connections with several national highways, the estate has no proper slow traffic connection with the city center, which is located about two kilometres from the most northern part of the neighbourhood. The park, which is situated across one of these roads, is difficult to reach as well (Gemeente Utrecht, 1990).

**Character and physical characteristics**

Although the national and urban housing shortage preserved the area from a high vacancy-rate, the popularity of Kanaleneiland-Noord decreased during the 1990s; a vacant social rented dwelling in the estate got much fewer reactions than the urban average (19 and 54 reactions respectively) (Gemeente Utrecht, 1990, 2002b).

Next to the declining demand for dwellings, the economic value of the stock decreased during the years as well; although the value of a dwelling was on an average level in the mid 1980s, in 1996 the figures had dropped to 16.3 per cent under the urban average of 922 euro per square meter. By 2001 this difference had even risen to 24.5 per cent (1,449 and 1,919 euro per square meter respectively) (Gemeente Utrecht, 1985, 2001).

Finally, the area is confronted with an unfavourable price-quality ratio (Gemeente Utrecht, 1998). In the 1960s and 1970s Kanaleneiland-Noord was a rather expensive neighbourhood to live, with relatively high rents (table 11.1). However, as the rents increased during the years and the quality of the dwellings did not, even more households became unsatisfied; nowadays, even 15 per cent of the residents qualify their dwelling as insufficient (urban figures: 6 per cent) (Gemeente Utrecht, 1990, 2002b). Almost the same holds for the future perspectives of the estate; as the share of residents with negative feelings about the future increased the past five years with 12 per cent (to 56 per cent), many residents have lost their trust in Kanaleneiland-Noord (Gemeente Utrecht, 2002b).

**Quality and quantity of available services**

In the 1960s and 1970s, the Rijnbaan shopping centre in Kanaleneiland-Noord was one of three concentrations of shops within the Kanaleneiland neighbourhood. During the years, the area has been extended with a small community center and another one was upgraded to a district center both with daily and non-daily goods. A large concentration of furnishing establishments has been realized next to the estate as well. Nowadays, the Kanaleneiland neighbourhood gives place to 509 businesses and the Rijnbaan centre has become of minor importance, giving place to just ten establishments (Gemeente Utrecht, 1994, 2001, 2002b).

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23 The popularity of an estate is measured on the basis of the number of reactions on vacant dwellings within the social rented sector by households that are registered as ‘searching’ (Gemeente Utrecht, 2002b).

24 See section 2.3 for further information.
Next to the developments with respect to quality and quantity of retail trade establishments, other services had to deal with changes as well. Although one primary school closed the past ten years, the number of pupils within Kanaleneiland-Noord showed an increase of 20 per cent; 1,164 disciples have to be placed in one of the three schools still present in the area. Next to these changes, the composition of the group of pupils altered as well; all children in each school in Kanaleneiland-Noord have a non-Dutch background nowadays (Gemeente Utrecht, 1992, 2002b). Finally, with respect to medical services, Kanaleneiland-Noord is not very well served; several GP’s have left and apart from a health-centre, where two family doctors hold practice on arrangement, residents have to leave their neighbourhood to visit other medical services (www.utrechtzuidwest.nl, visited in February 2003).

11.2 Economic developments

The Kanaleneiland neighbourhood was built to solve the housing shortage within the city of Utrecht. Like in Nieuw-Hoograven, this resulted in a monolithic planned neighbourhood with a residential function. Therefore, Kanaleneiland-Noord knows a low supply of jobs; just 1.4 per cent of the available jobs in the city of Utrecht (Gemeente Utrecht, 2002b). Many of the economically active residents of Kanaleneiland-Noord thus work elsewhere.

Initially almost all residents were employed. As their jobs varied from industry worker to higher educated civil servant, the estate could not be described as a working-class...
neighbourhood (Interviews with a social worker; district administrator of housing corporation; original resident). However, the situation has changed (table 11.2). Although the unemployment rate is relatively low nowadays, it showed an enormous increase during the 1990s.\(^\text{25}\)

Furthermore, the table shows the weak position of Kanaleneiland-Noord both within the city as in the rest of the neighbourhood. Although increasing unemployment was a national problem in the 1980s and early 1990s, Kanaleneiland-Noord had to suffer more than most other areas in the city. Like in Nieuw-Hoograven, this development is probably connected to the socio-economic composition of the neighbourhood population. Due to the economic restructuring process of the 1980s, many manufacturing workers became redundant and could not always find a new job in the expanding service sector (section 2.1). Apparently, many residents in both research neighbourhoods belonged to this group. Even the presence of a business area next to the Kanaleneiland neighbourhood and the upgrading of one of the shopping concentrations into a district centre in 1996, did not change the situation; most residents did not seem to have the required skills to get a job there.

### 11.3 Demographic and socio-cultural developments

The composition of the population in Kanaleneiland-Noord has altered since the estate was realized. Table 11.3 shows some significant developments. First, this can be seen with respect to age distribution. Until 1985 the share of residents aged over 65 increased, while the number of young individuals (aged under 29) decreased. Apparently, many households lived in Kanaleneiland-Noord for a long time (e.g. parents stayed as their children left the house). However, from the mid 1980s on a reverse development occurred; the share of elderly started to decrease while the group of young residents increased.

Next to the fact that their dwellings had become too large or the absence of an elevator more or less forced some of the elderly to move, their decreased share can be connected to a second significant development as well: the enormous increase of individuals with a non-Dutch ethnicity. For the same reasons as in Nieuw-Hoograven (chapter 9 and section 2.3) their share in the neighbourhood population increased during the 1980s. At present, over 80 per cent of the residents in Kanaleneiland-Noord belong to an ethnic group. Most of them (66

### Table 11.2 – Unemployment in Kanaleneiland-Noord, the Kanaleneiland neighbourhood and Utrecht as a whole (%), 1975, 1980, 1984, 1992, 1995, 2002b

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kanaleneiland-Noord</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanaleneiland neighbourhood</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Utrecht</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\(^{25}\) These figures are influenced by the Dutch welfare system; many people in The Netherlands depend on the Act for individuals who are unfit for work [WAO Wet op de arbeidsongeschiktheidsverzekering]. See section 2.1 for further information.
per cent) have a Moroccan or Turkish background (Gemeente Utrecht, 2002b). Due to these developments even more original inhabitants got the feeling the area was not ‘theirs’ anymore and decided to leave (see also chapter 12).

Finally, the fact that the Moroccan and Turkish newcomers often have more children than Dutch households, explains the significant increase in the total number of residents after 1985.

Income distribution

The demographic developments of the 1980s not only caused socio-cultural changes, but resulted in a weak neighbourhood population as well (with respect to the socio-economic situation). Initially, Kanaleneiland was a relatively wealthy area with incomes above the urban average (table 11.4). Although it has never been stated officially, some people even say that you had to have a certain amount of income to take possession of a dwelling in the area (Interviews with social worker; original resident). After the mid 1980s however, average incomes decreased and nowadays the share of low incomes is above the urban average. Furthermore, it seems as if the low-incomes are concentrated in Kanaleneiland-Noord; more than one-third of the households in this area belong to this group (34 per cent). This is twice as much as the urban average of 15.0 per cent (table 11.4).

| Table 11.3 – Demographic profile over the lifetime of Kanaleneiland-Noord (%) |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Singles          | –            | 34.3         | 35.0         | 41.4         | 46.0         | 48.3         | 52.6         | 42.0         |
| Households with children | –            | –            | –            | 38.8         | –            | –            | 36.6         | 39.0         |
| Total households (abs) | –            | 3,055        | 8,761*       | 8,977*       | 2,947        | 3,192        | 3,421        | 3,153        |
| > 65 years of age | 3.9          | 8.0          | 9.9          | 11.3         | 13.2         | 11.2         | 9.5          | 9.1          |
| < 29 years of age | 55.3         | 51.9         | 49.7         | 46.8         | 46.7         | 53.5         | 56.5         | 57.1         |
| Non-Dutch ethnicity | 0.6          | 0.6          | 0.8          | 3.6          | –            | 38.8         | 70.3         | 81.3         |
| Total inhabitants (abs) | 8,566       | 8,724        | 8,060        | 7,209        | 6,482        | 7,081        | 7,714        | 7,819        |

* Figures refer to the Kanaleneiland neighbourhood as a whole
– No figures available

| Table 11.4 – Income distribution within Kanaleneiland-Noord, the Kanaleneiland neighbourhood and the city of Utrecht (disposable income per year), 1982, 1990, 2000 |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
|                  | Kanaleneiland-Noord | Kanaleneiland | Utrecht       |
| Household income (x1,000 in euros) | 10.7 | 9.5 | 14.0 | 12.1 | 10.2 | 16.2 | 11.2 | 10.1 | 18.1 |
| Share of low incomes | –   | 83.0* | 34.0 | –   | 79.9* | 19.3 | –   | 77.5* | 15.0 |
| Share of high incomes | –   | 17.0 | –   | –   | 20.1 | –   | –   | 22.5 | 20.0 |

Source: Gemeente Utrecht, 1988, 1993, 2002b
* Figures refer to both low and middle incomes
– No figures available
This unfavourable process is shown by the enormous increase in the socio-economic arrears as well (table 11.5); already in the 1980s Kanaleneiland-Noord had a rather high position on the urban ranking list (67). However, this position even got higher, indicating an increase in arrears.26

**Turnover and mobility data**

In the early 1990s, a large share of native Dutch households left Kanaleneiland-Noord. Most households left a multi-family dwelling in the rented sector and were succeeded by newcomers often with a non-Dutch background (Gemeente Utrecht, 1993). The fact that many of these households have relatively large families, explains the enormous positive migration balance in 1995 (table 11.6). Furthermore, the number of households that want to move almost doubled the past ten years.

**Changing values and norms within the estate**

The demographic developments described above, affected the social situation in the area enormously; the mix of cultures resulted in a mix of life-styles with a large variance in norms

### Table 11.5 – Developments in the ranking of Kanaleneiland-Noord within the urban hierarchy (scale 0–100), 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>77</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>95</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>86</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>94</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Gemeente Utrecht, 1993, 2002b

* In 1995 and 2002 less indicators are used to determine arrears: unemployment figures among individuals between 15-64 years of age, unemployment among the youth (15-24 years of age), income and education; the higher the number, the higher the arrears (Gemeente Utrecht, 2002a)

### Table 11.6 – Figures on mobility and turnover data within Kanaleneiland-Noord

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>1995</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Migration balance</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>-370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households wanting to move (%)</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>49.0</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Gemeente Utrecht, 1993, 1996, 2002a

26 Indicator which is composed of a combination of unemployment figures among both individuals between 20-64 and 15-24 years of age, the number of individuals of 14 and 15 years of age that do not follow general education, the number of non-attendance pupils that are liable to compulsory education (5-16 years of age), the size of the population related to floor space in square meters, the number of foreigners (including Dutch individuals born in Surinam) and the number of welfare recipients between 20 and 64 years of age (Gemeente Utrecht, 1993). From 1995 onwards less indicators are used.
and values. In some cases this caused unfavourable situations (e.g. different ideas about the upkeep of the environment).

However, the national process of individualization affected the situation as well. As stated by several key actors, the mentality of many individuals changed during the years; people became even more individualistic and started to live along each other instead of with each other (Interviews with original inhabitant; district administrators of several housing corporations). In the next chapter, those and other issues will be discussed on more detail.

11.4 Conclusions

This chapter has shown different aspects of Kanaleneiland-Noord. Like Nieuw-Hoograven, in 1965, the neighbourhood was seen as an area where young middle-class households could find a relatively large dwelling in an attractive living environment. However, both the housing quality and the neighbourhood population altered and several unfavourable developments appeared; nowadays the neighbourhood even has the lowest position within the city hierarchy.

This is further exemplified in table 11.7, which presents scores on a number of arrears. It has to be said however, that these figures include Kanaleneiland-Zuid as well; the areas together form a sub-neighbourhood within the city. Furthermore, the table gives a summary score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nieuw-Hoograven</th>
<th>Kanaleneiland (both Noord and Zuid)</th>
<th>Strongest neighbourhood</th>
<th>Utrecht</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ranking</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational arrears</td>
<td>79.0</td>
<td>92.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>43.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housebreaking</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient feelings of safety</td>
<td>49.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inconvenience caused by youth</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak social cohesion</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>58.0</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>39.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak political involvement</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pollution</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>59.0</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative about traffic</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>43.0</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>37.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative about dwelling</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total score</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Gemeente Utrecht, 2002b

27 The score is based on the situation with respect to the following issues: unemployment (per cent), educational arrears (share of primary scholars falling under the so-called ‘attention-for-education-policy’ of the national government [onderwijsaandachtsbeleid]), housebreaking (per 1,000 dwellings), feelings of safety (share of residents feeling unsafe in the neighbourhood), inconvenience caused by youth (per cent), social cohesion (share of residents qualifying the social cohesion in the area as insufficient), political involvement (share of residents that didn’t vote during the last elections), pollution (share of residents experiencing inconvenience from pollution), traffic (share of residents unsatisfied with the safety with respect to traffic) and opinion on dwelling (share of residents qualifying the dwelling as insufficient).
Apart from housebreaking, Kanaleneiland scores worse than the city as a whole on every aspect. Although unemployment figures seem to be low (4.0 per cent of the labour force within the neighbourhood), the share is twice as high as the urban figures (see also section 2.1). Especially in the field of educational arrears, the area shows an unfavourable situation; 92 per cent of the primary scholars within the area fall under the so-called ‘attention-for-education-policy’ of the national government [onderwijsaandachtsbeleid]. This is more than twice the urban average of 43 per cent. Although to a lesser extent, the same holds for feelings of safety and inconvenience caused by youth; half the population claims to feel unsafe within the own neighbourhood sometimes and more than half (52 per cent) experiences inconvenience from youngsters hanging around in the area (for comparison: urban figures 35 and 22 per cent respectively). Furthermore, both political involvement and social cohesion are weak. Residents also complain about rubbish in the streets and are more displeased with their dwelling than elsewhere in the city (18 and 6 per cent respectively). In the next chapter more is said about the problems and perspectives in the area.
This chapter focuses on the main problems within Kanaleneiland-Noord. We will also try to find out which factors and developments cause these problems. Like in chapter 10, most information used here is derived from interviews held with a number of key actors. Next to emphasis on problems, some positive developments within Kanaleneiland-Noord will be discussed as well.

12.1 Housing and design

*Dwelling types and obsolescence*

‘The wish of almost every Dutch household is to live in an owner-occupied single-family dwelling with a garden’. This statement of the assistant neighbourhood coordinator explains to some extent several developments that occurred within Kanaleneiland-Noord. During the 1980s, even more residents could not or did not want to finish or continue their housing career in the area. The lack of single-family housing, owner-occupied dwellings or dwellings with elevators or other facilities, caused people to look for better opportunities (within newbuilding areas) elsewhere. As it got financially attractive to buy a house, general demand for the rented sector decreased as well (relative decline of the housing stock). Although the tenure of the housing stock clearly influenced the popularity of the estate, the type of dwellings seem to be of even more importance. This becomes clear when comparing the research area with Transwijk, another part of Kanaleneiland, where single-family dwellings in the social rented sector dominate. Here, only two per cent of the residents is inclined to move and nobody seems to complain about their dwelling (for comparison: Kanaleneiland-Noord: 33 and 15 per cent respectively) (Gemeente Utrecht 2002b; Interview with an urban representative).

The decline of the absolute quality has been of influence as well: tenants experienced even more discomfort from draught, moisture, bad insulation and noise pollution. Research has even shown that moisture and bad ventilation cause health problems within the area; children in Kanaleneiland suffer more from diseases like asthma than residents in other parts of the city (Nauta, 1997). Therefore, during the years, demand for dwellings in Kanaleneiland-Noord has declined.

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28 A complete list of interviewees is included at the end of this report
Ownership of dwellings, buildings and the environment
Most interviewed key actors share the opinion that Kanaleneiland-Noord underwent a ‘natural process of obsolescence’, of which the effects appeared about 20 years after the construction. They share the opinion that this process could have been reversed when investments would have taken place on time. Especially in the period when the first Dutch households started to leave and maintenance was considered to be crucial, investments were not forthcoming. Apparently, the owners of the stock, mainly housing corporations, did not give priority to their properties in the research area (Interviews with (assistant) neighbourhood coordinator; district administrators of several housing corporations; social workers).

Next to the buildings, the environment was confronted with decay as well. According to several key actors, this was related to the financial problems the city of Utrecht was confronted with during the late 1980s and early 1990s; some budgets had to be cut. Other neighbourhoods alike, Kanaleneiland-Noord had to suffer from this. As a consequence, the famous roses were replaced by grass and brushwood, which were easier in maintenance. When the financial crises was over, the public space still was not taken care of properly; even nowadays things like mowing the lawn and clipping hedges and trees are considered to get too little attention (Interviews with (former) social workers; assistant neighbourhood coordinator; district managers of housing corporations; urban representative).

The lack of investments is not the only cause of the decay. The demographic developments affected both the housing stock and the environment as well. As the neighbourhood population increased, both the dwellings and the public spaces were used more intensely and needed more maintenance than previously foreseen. This situation was strengthened by the increase in unemployment as well (more residents being present in the neighbourhood during the day) (Interview with social worker; district administrator of several housing corporations).

Nowadays, plans exist to restructure the area. Although no final decisions have been made, the interventions will focus on increasing the share of owner-occupied and single-family dwellings. This way, households with a stronger socio-economic background should be attracted to the area or given the opportunity to continue their housing career in the estate.

Management
Like in Nieuw-Hoograven, both the local government and three housing corporations admit it is often difficult and time-consuming to manage the area properly; visions often differ. For example, as one corporation has just carried out maintenance on the apartment buildings both internally and on the outside, another is more reserved in this as several within their properties dwellings are on the demolition list. Furthermore, maintenance often means higher rents and corporations have the responsibility to keep a certain part of the urban housing stock available for low incomes. Actions by tenants supported by social work to improve the facilities in some apartments even brought in nothing; although the tenants were willing to pay more rent, the corporation refused to cooperate. As a consequence, the quality of the stock in some parts of the area is better than in others (Interview with a former social worker; district administrators of several housing corporations; assistant neighbourhood coordinator; volunteer in community centre for elderly).

Managing the environment can cause problems as well (e.g. who is responsible for clipping the hedges and cleaning up the public gardens?) The fact that budgets are under pressure makes cooperation even harder. When this leads to the situation that some flowerbeds are not cleaned
at all, residents start to feel less responsible for the environment as well. This is also related to
the changing society; both the corporations and several ‘original’ inhabitants claim that the
problems are partially caused by the increased individualism. The situation that residents took
care of the environment themselves slowly disappeared and most people are not interested
anymore in what happens on the outside of their front-door. This not only resulted in the
pollution of even more staircases, public gardens and even a rat plague, but causes vandalism as
well. Problems with respect to communication (different cultures and languages) strengthened
this process. As a consequence, corporations have become a bit disappointed and although they
try to keep everything in repair as good as possible, they often have the feeling that it is all for
nothing. In this respect, it is strange, that plans to make one department responsible for the
maintenance of the area, were not accepted (Interviews with district administrator of a housing
corporation; former complex manager; social worker).

Some positive things with respect to management can be said as well. During the years,
tenants have become more involved in plans of the local government and the corporations.
In the beginning of the 1990s, for example, one of the corporations started to assign ‘complex
managers’; members of the organization were made responsible for the daily businesses within
the estate with respect to properties and tenants. They have an important social function and
as every other corporation has copied this policy, it is considered to be successful. Nevertheless,
it strongly depends on the dedication of the person involved (Interviews with social worker;
district administrators of several housing corporations). Next to these success stories however,
several residents have the feeling that they are not really listened to and claim that the
communication with the corporations is just one-way traffic nowadays (Interview with an
‘original’ resident).

12.2 Labour market, well-being and access to services

Labour market
Kanaleneiland-Noord was confronted with an enormous increase in unemployment during the
1980s and 1990s (section 11.2). Apart from the shopping concentrations, the area still doesn’t
supply a lot of work. The construction of a new neighbourhood near the estate with emphasis
on both living and employment will probably not change this situation as well; the residents
of Kanaleneiland-Noord don’t have the required skills to get a job there (Interviews with an
‘original’ resident; assistant neighbourhood coordinator; former educational social worker).

These developments have affected the social situation within Kanaleneiland-Noord and
have turned the estate into an area for the underprivileged. This process is strengthened by the
departure of residents with a job and more financial possibilities. As a consequence, households
with the least possibilities on the labour market (and the housing market) stay behind
(interviews with (former) social workers; district administrator of housing corporation).

Services
Residents actually do not have to leave the Kanaleneiland neighbourhood because everything
they need is present; apart from employment, the area provides primary schools, a park,
shopping concentrations, sport facilities and mosques. Public transport and the connection
with several national highways are fine as well (Interviews with (assistant) neighbourhood coordinator; former social worker). Some remarks can be made however.

First, residents as well as the local government worry about the supply of medical services. The number of so-called problem-households (ex-criminals, drug-addicts, families suffering from violence etc.) within Kanaleneiland-Noord has increased in the last decade. At the same time however, medical services have shown the reverse process. Nowadays, residents have to go to the first-aid station of a hospital nearby or are dependent on a health-centre of the local health department. As the hospital will be relocated in the near future, the number of medical services will decrease even more. Although Kanaleneiland-Noord is not the only area with problems in this field, the behaviour of several patients makes it hard to attract new family doctors; residents have become more exacting and several doctors have left because of aggressive behaviour (Interviews with (assistant) neighbourhood coordinator).

Another story holds for primary education. When the first ethnic minorities started to arrive in the mid 1980s, even more parents decided to put their children to school elsewhere; ‘A ‘black’ school was considered to be a bad school’. As such, the schools within Kanaleneiland-Noord were ‘black’ even before the neighbourhood was and nowadays all three primary schools in the area only teach children with a non-Dutch background. These developments seem to have had unfavourable effects on the educational performances; the arrears in this field increased and nowadays 95 per cent of the pupils within the estate fall under the so-called ‘attention-for-education-policy’ of the national government [onderwijsaandachtsbeleid] (for comparison: urban average: 43 per cent) (Gemeente Utrecht, 2002b).

Initially, most schools tried to stop the departure of Dutch pupils, but this endeavours reversed and they have changed their policy. At present, subsidies are used to adapt their...
teaching methods (e.g. smaller classes and emphasis on language lessons). Dutch parents are sometimes even advised to put their children to school elsewhere. As a primary school has an important social function in a neighbourhood, there are plans to merge the three primary schools and realize a so-called ‘forum-school’. In the framework of this project, the school will cooperate with other organizations (e.g. welfare services, the library and day care). This is an important development; although Kanaleneiland-Noord is the neighbourhood with the largest arrears in the field of education, this project could change this to some extent and advance the process of integration as well (Interviews with (former) (educational) social workers).

With respect to shops, there are some differences within the Kanaleneiland neighbourhood as a whole. According to several key actors, most shopping concentrations are confronted with vandalism (e.g. squat in cars and shoplifting). Due to the image of the neighbourhood it is sometimes hard to attract entrepreneurs as well. Compared to shopping centre Rijnbaan however, these problems can almost be neglected. This shopping concentration, which is located in Kanaleneiland-Noord, has been confronted with serious decline and the depressing appearance with many stores being boarded up damages the image of the area even more. As this situation exists for almost a decade, it seems hard to change (Interviews with (assistant) neighbourhood coordinator).

There are mixed feelings about this shopping concentration however. Although many people do not feel safe in the area both day and night, the shops do not seem to suffer from a lack of customers. As most entrepreneurs nowadays have a non-Dutch background and serve a large share of the neighbourhood population, the centre has an important (social) function within the area (Interviews with a former complex manager, social worker).

Finally, there seems to be a lack of services for adolescents. Although Kanaleneiland-Noord bulges of young people, a member of the local government stated that there is an enormous shortage in this field. It is true that there are several projects, focusing for example on keeping the youngsters out of criminality or stimulating them to find a job, there is a shortage in the field of recreation or leisure activities.

Criminal behaviour and drug abuse
As the neighbourhood has become less popular and has to deal with serious image problems, even less people want to live in Kanaleneiland-Noord. As a consequence, vacant dwellings are often allocated to households that are difficult to place elsewhere (e.g. ex-criminals, drug addicts, alcoholics) resulting in an increase in drug dealing and street-robberies. This development is considered to be strengthened by the design of the neighbourhood as well; the narrow passages round about the apartment buildings and the fact that the parterre of many complex buildings is often not occupied, creates a sphere of anonymity (Interviews with (former) social workers; district administrator of housing corporation; assistant neighbourhood coordinator).

Criminal behaviour occurs from inside the neighbourhood as well; several groups of youngsters (50 or 60 individuals) born and raised in the neighbourhood terrorize Kanaleneiland-Noord. According to several key actors, this problem is connected to a large extent to upbringing and education. In non-Dutch cultures, parents are less strict on young children, especially boys. Furthermore, male adolescents with a non-Dutch background often have serious problems with the fact that they live between two cultures; they do not
feel accepted by our society and often belong to the educational dropouts. These elements, combined with the fact that they are confronted with criminal behaviour and vandalism make them vulnerable to end up in criminality. They are even called the *lost generation* (Interviews with former (educational) social workers; neighbourhood coordinator). As vandalism, robberies and intimidation has increased, Kanaleneiland-Noord is more and more avoided. Not only the residents feel threatened in their own neighbourhood, no pizzas are delivered anymore in several streets and buses sometimes even changed their routes (Huisman, 2000).

**Neighbourhood bond**

Although Kanaleneiland-Noord is known as one of the worst neighbourhoods within the city of Utrecht and the area has to deal with a lot of problems, many residents, both Dutch and non-Dutch, in some way feel a certain bond with the area; many have lived there all their lives or almost all their family lives in the neighbourhood (Interviews with neighbourhood coordinator; former educational social worker). Two remarks can be made, however.

First, it appears that many residents live in Kanaleneiland-Noord due to a lack of choice. Although many, often non-Dutch, households like to live near their family they often do not have the (financial) possibility to leave the area. The neighbourhood bond is therefore to some extent connected to the residents’ financial situation (Interviews with former educational social worker; assistant neighbourhood coordinator).

Secondly, the neighbourhood bond of several non-Dutch individuals seems to be connected to the fact that they almost never leave the neighbourhood; they are actually ‘bonded to’ the area and sometimes even live rather isolated (section 12.4).

**12.3 Multi-cultural developments**

From the mid 1980s on Kanaleneiland-Noord started to turn into a multi-cultural neighbourhood. The present allocation system is an important factor influencing this development (sections 2.3 and 11.3).

Striking however, and unlike Nieuw-Hoograven, is the fact that in the 1980s Kanaleneiland-Noord seemed to attract more ethnic minorities than the rest of the neighbourhood. According to several key actors this is connected to the fact that the housing stock in the Kanaleneiland neighbourhood has different owners. Initially, the housing corporation of the local government owned most dwellings in Kanaleneiland-Noord, while other corporations as well as private investors let the other parts of the area. Because there were no strict allocation rules, both the independent corporations and the investors could more or less decide themselves to whom they allocated their dwellings. As a consequence, it were the apartments owned by the local government, located in Kanaleneiland-Noord, that were first incorporated by non-Dutch households (Interview with social worker).

Especially in the beginning of the 1990s, the arrival of non-Dutch households started to cause feelings of uneasiness among the indigenous Dutch within Kanaleneiland-Noord; a situation of four or more households with an ethnic background living in the same apartment building was reason enough for many original households to leave (Interviews with an ‘original’

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29 In the early 1990s the housing corporation of the local government became an independent organization.
resident; district administrator of housing corporation). As a consequence, social cohesion decreased and like in Nieuw-Hoograven, instead of living with each other, people started to live along each other (Interview with volunteer in a community centre for elderly) (see later).

12.4 Social exclusion, social inclusion and social cohesion

Dependence on welfare benefits

As unemployment increased during the 1980s (section 11.2), dependence on welfare benefits did the same. Although nowadays more than half of the neighbourhood population belongs to this group (53 per cent), according to a member of the local government this number should actually be higher (Gemeente Utrecht, 2002a). This is prevented however by mutual help within some ethnic communities. Although the welfare centre in the area offers a lot of social services, apparently, they prefer to solve their own problems: ‘Even without a job it seems possible to take possession of a rather decent income’ (Interview with former complex manager).

Values and norms/differences

The socio-cultural changes discussed earlier, resulted in a neighbourhood with different faces. To find out the opinion of the inhabitants, a research was carried out among the residents of both Kanaleneiland-Noord and -Zuid. The results showed that over 80 per cent of the neighbourhood population had the opinion that something had to be done about the situation in the area; the concentration of many underprivileged households as well as the large variance in cultures were seen as the most important problems (Leurink and Vermathen, 2002).

Within this framework, it seems hard to organize the neighbourhood population; the residents don’t respect each other’s way of life. For instance, when a housing corporation tries to accomplish communication between tenants on complex level, the original Dutch individuals often just complain and drive away the ethnic participants. The non-Dutch are sometimes even accused of being responsible for the pollution of the open public spaces; several key-actors share the opinion that they have not adapted to the Dutch values and norms and have other ideas about how to use the environment (e.g. gardening or cleaning up the staircase get less attention). However, the same key actors stated on the other hand that the non-Dutch households couldn’t be blamed for the unfavourable situation. Their behaviour is probably connected to the fact that they came to live in the neighbourhood because of a lack of choice and didn’t get the chance to get used to our society. The lost generation, discussed earlier, is probably one of the unfavourable consequences (Interview with several (former) social workers; volunteer in a community centre for elderly; district administrator of a housing corporation).

\[30\] Share of the population that is unemployed, depends on social security, is disabled or is pensioned off (Gemeente Utrecht, 2002a).

\[31\] Since the late 1980s urban policy has to some extent been decentralized to neighbourhood level. Nowadays each neighbourhood has a so-called community center, which forms a link between the neighbourhood and the local government.
Social polarization/exclusion

Next to the differences between the Dutch and non-Dutch cultures, the non-Dutch population does not exist in Kanaleneiland-Noord; although it is often said that the non-Dutch have strong social bonds, most ethnic groups do not even want to be associated with each other; Turks and Moroccans visit different mosques and even within the Moroccan community there are sub-communities. Likewise, social cohesion doesn’t always have to be a favourable situation and can even cause social polarization (Interviews with an ‘original’ resident; former (educational) social workers).

This social polarization is probably also related to the fact that ethnic groups seem to find their way more and more within Dutch society; although language problems still cause severe problems, the past years many so-called ethnic ‘self-organizations’ have come into being. These organizations focus on improving the situation in the neighbourhood and consist for example of Moroccans or Turks. However, as some organizations have the same objectives and refuse to cooperate, there is not much talk of integration. The ‘Turkish parent commission’ for example, focuses on the educational development of Turkish youngsters, trying to keep them out of criminality. As the ‘Moroccan parent commission’ has the same objectives, they focus on Moroccan youngsters. Again the question rises, whether social cohesion is favourable (Interviews with ‘original’ resident; former (educational) social workers; (assistant) neighbourhood coordinator).

Although the strong bonds among several ethnic groups are often seen as an obstacle for the integration process, they are ‘used’ nowadays to improve the situation in the area as well. When the welfare organization wants to involve the ethnic groups in certain projects, they know which members of which groups they should approach. In most cases however, it is the ethnic males who are involved in such projects; women often live rather isolated. Although they have their contacts within their own community, a large share almost never leaves the neighbourhood (Interviews with neighbourhood coordinator; (former) social workers). Almost like in Nieuw-Hoograven, a bus-excursion to the park was organized once; although this park is next to the neighbourhood, a busy road has to be crossed to reach it and many residents (mostly (female) non-Dutch adults and children) had never been there. Apparently, many residents are not very mobile and the fact that the neighbourhood lacks a slow-traffic connection to the city-centre isolates them even more; for some people the neighbourhood really forms an island. Although public transport facilities are sufficient (trams and bus services), many non-Dutch housewives can’t afford a ticket to use these or their husbands do not allow them to buy one. As they often do not know how to ride a bike as well, leaving the neighbourhood really is a problem (Interview with a former social worker).

However, some positive things can be said as well. Social work initiated several projects, which focus especially on the social integration of non-Dutch women. Things like learning to ride a bike or discussing how to improve feelings of safety or the living environment are central in these projects. Interesting is the fact that women with different cultural backgrounds are involved. They already took several initiatives to the corporations and the local government, which have resulted in interventions in the public space (e.g. trees have been clipped and dark footpaths have better lighting). Another success is formed by the fact that some of the female

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Most organizations are financed or supported by social work or the welfare department within the estate. They often focus on both Kanaleneiland-Zuid and -Noord.
participants are employed nowadays so that their independency has increased (interview with (former) (educational) social workers).

12.5 Sustainability and other issues

The function of Kanaleneiland-Noord clearly altered during the years; was the neighbourhood initially inhabited by middle-class families that were pleased to live in an attractive neighbourhood with relatively large dwellings situated in an open and green environment, nowadays, these characteristics seem to harm the area. Residents often come to live in Kanaleneiland-Noord due to a lack of choice; the relatively cheap housing stock makes many households dependent upon a dwelling in the area. As many (often ethnic) households lack the financial certainty to leave the area, Kanaleneiland-Noord has become a neighbourhood for the underprivileged and even an ‘estate, which needs much attention in any field’ (Interview with district administrator of housing corporation).

12.6 Conclusions

This chapter has discussed several problems, which occurred in Kanaleneiland-Noord. Like Nieuw-Hoograven, the estate has been confronted with numerous problems (e.g. unemployment, criminality, social polarization, a decrease in the quality of the housing stock). As the problems are very diverse and appear in different fields, they are the result of a combination of different developments.

Although Dutch households initially occupied Kanaleneiland-Noord, the area turned into a multi-cultural neighbourhood during the years. Most original residents couldn’t or didn’t want to continue their housing career in the area and after they had left, households with a non-Dutch background often succeeded them. The composition of the housing stock can be seen as an important factor causing this process; as even more people preferred to live in a single-family dwelling in the owner-occupied sector, Kanaleneiland-Noord, with emphasis on multi-family dwellings in the social rented sector, became less popular with the indigenous Dutch population.

Within this framework, the allocation system is important as well. As Kanaleneiland-Noord became less popular, vacant dwellings were often allocated to non-Dutch families (due to low income and large households) or people difficult to place elsewhere. Therefore, the area has slowly but surely turned into a neighbourhood for the underprivileged. These developments, combined with the situation that maintenance was not carried out in the period that the neighbourhood needed it most, resulted in an accumulation of problems.

Next to this unfavourable situation however, the neighbourhood knows some positive developments as well. Several initiatives have been released to improve the situation and although it is sometimes hard to measure the effects, in some cases there is a slow but certain increase of the integration of the ethnic minorities. Furthermore, there are plans to restructure the area and increase the number of owner-occupied dwellings. This way, households with a stronger socio-economic background should be attracted. In the next RESTATE report, the policies which have been carried out in the Kanaleneiland neighbourhood will be discussed.
Conclusions

In a former report (Murie et al. 2003), we have indicated that a good explanation of the development of large housing estates should include a large number of factors on different spatial levels, in different fields and in different time periods. While much of the literature emphasizes only one or a few elements, it has become clear from this report on the two research cities in the Netherlands, Amsterdam and Utrecht, that indeed many factors and developments play a role in the explanation of the developments of the estates.

Initially, the estates built in the 1950s and early 1960s were built as part of a large programme to solve the housing shortage of the post-WWII period of the Netherlands. Because in many cities many dwellings had to be built as soon as possible, ‘efficiency’ was the keyword. Areas built during this period (and later in the 1960s and 1970s) were constructed on the basis of a strict urban planning pattern, which could be realized using new and faster building methods.

At that moment this did not mean that the quality was bad (although later it was discovered that the use of industrialized systems did lead to some structural problems). In a relative way, the estates provided much better housing than the dwellings built in the period before the Second World War. They were better constructed, and often had more rooms than the older housing. Also with respect to the environment a big step was taken. Contrary to the neighbourhoods built in the pre-WWII period, the newer areas were characterized by lower densities and much more green areas. They were also more monolithic: while the pre-war areas were often (but not always) areas with a mix of housing, shops, services, and all kinds of small and middle-sized firms, the post-war estates were predominantly developed as housing areas. Shops and services were concentrated in larger and smaller centres within the estate and other manufacturing companies were given no place at all, or only at the outskirts of the areas.

The early post-war housing estates (Nieuw-Hoograven, and large parts of Kanaleneiland in Utrecht and New West in Amsterdam) were characterized by a mixture of mid-rise and some single-family dwellings. Most of the dwellings were in the social rented sector. The Bijlmer area in Amsterdam was built in the early 1970s and can, as many areas in Europe built at that time, be considered as a high-rise area. Contrary to the older areas, problems in the Bijlmer started almost immediately. While also this area was meant to house middle-class families who would relocate from the older areas of Amsterdam, the Bijlmer became an important catchment area for the people from the former colony of Surinam and, later, for many other nationalities from all over the world. The area became known as the gateway to Amsterdam, where people stayed in the beginning of their stay in the Netherlands. But many of them never left the area.

Because of their relatively high quality, the early-post-war areas were in the beginning of their existence very popular places to live. Problems started only later, when other areas became
more popular and the relative status of the older areas declined. Both the built and the social environment have been affected by decay and the areas in this report became increasingly associated with a complex set of problems; criminality, vandalism, drug abuse, problems with youth, unemployment, educational arrears, decreasing number of services, obsolescence of the housing stock and the pollution of the environment are the order of the day. Here we have to focus on some developments that have eventually worked together into the same direction.

The composition of the housing stock is almost the only thing that has not changed during the last decades in the Dutch early-post-war areas. In all kinds of aspects the areas went through a whole trajectory of changes and their functions have radically altered; both Nieuw-Hoograven and Kanaleneiland-Noord in Utrecht and New-West in Amsterdam were initially inhabited by middle-class families that were pleased to live in an attractive neighbourhood with relatively large dwellings situated in an open an green environment, nowadays, the areas have changed into 'areas that need extra attention'; Nieuw-Hoograven takes the lowest position within the city with respect to the socio-economic situation, while Kanaleneiland even forms the worst estate in the city of Utrecht in the field of several issues. In the Bijlmer area already many physical changes have taken place: high-rise complexes have been demolished and low-rise and single-family dwellings have replaced these large complexes.

Which important changes can be discerned with respect to the developments in the large housing estates in the Dutch cities in general?

• Economic developments can be seen as important background causes of changes in the estates. A declining national (or even world) economy, with an increasing number of unemployed people as a result, particularly has affected those areas in which many low-income (and often low-educated) people live. Among them are the housing estates in this research. Here, unemployment figures have risen much more than in the country or the city as a whole.

• Demographic developments can sometimes be seen in connection with economic changes. This is especially true when looking at the former guestworkers. These workers were asked to come to the Netherlands when the economy was more or less overheated and there were not enough people to fill the vacancies on the job market. Low-skilled jobs predominated. Especially many Turks and Moroccans decided to stay in the Netherlands and have their families come over. But when the economy went into recession, many of the former guestworkers became unemployed. In the meantime many of them had moved to the post-war housing estates. The effect of this combination of developments is an enormous rise in the unemployment rate in the estates under review.

• These demographic developments went hand in hand with socio-cultural developments. In several interviews in this report people have mentioned the changing value system within Dutch society in general and in the research neighbourhoods in particular. The estates went from a mono-cultural Dutch mini-society (focused on traditional Dutch family life) to a multi-cultural complex society in which many groups have their own values and norms with respect to their lives and their environment. Different cultures and communication problems often caused frustration and annoyance among the original residents, which affected the feelings of responsibility for the direct living environment.

• Next to these macro-developments, changes in the physical structure of the cities have been influential for the estates that have been described in this report. New building
in other parts of the city or in neighbouring municipalities, starting around the 1980s, resulted in the departure of households that had lived in the research areas for years or even decades. They often exchanged their rented apartment for an, in their opinion, more attractive owner-occupied single-family dwelling elsewhere. Apparently the housing stock in the post-war housing estates had become less popular during the years. This development was strengthened, because home-ownership was (financially) stimulated by the national government. The new building was of better quality as well and offered more facilities than most of the apartments that had become obsolete during the years.

- This development is connected to a second event, which occurred during the mid 1980s. Both the local government and the housing corporations were confronted with financial problems, which resulted in retrenchments in upkeep in our research neighbourhoods.
- Although initially households came to live in the areas out of free will, without the intention of leaving again as soon as possible, during the years this situation changed. Nowadays, the newcomers often do not have a lot of choice; as the areas have a relatively cheap housing stock, many households are dependent upon a dwelling there. Furthermore many (often ethnic) households lack the financial certainty that is needed to leave the area and buy a home.

It will be clear that perception plays an important role in the development of the estates. When people perceive that their environment is declining, they might start to move and when people start to move other people might think it is time to leave too. When this outflow of people is connected to middle- and high-incomes, and the resulting influx is mainly connected with low-incomes and all kinds of households difficult to place elsewhere, processes of residualization may occur. This is especially the case when an area consists of housing that is increasingly considered as unattractive by many home-seekers.

This does not mean that a lot of vacancies occur. Amsterdam as well as Utrecht are known for their tight housing markets, with long waiting lists for social rented dwellings. In case of a vacancy many households apply for the dwelling, despite the fact that these dwellings in these environments are not considered as attractive. But because other (affordable) alternatives are hard to find, vacancies in the post-war areas are quickly filled up.

When so many factors interact, it is not an easy job to turn a failing estate into a successful one: there is no single lever that can be pulled (Murie et al., 2003). However, willingness to invest in the area is an enormously important prerequisite for positive developments. Investment has to do with money and with energy. From the interviews we had for this report we have to conclude that the energy is definitely there; the enthusiasm of many people working in and for the area is admirable. In the next report we will focus on the policies which have been carried out in the areas under research.
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List of people interviewed

Some of these key persons are mentioned in the text. We have learnt a great deal from all of them, especially about past and present developments in the estates. For reasons of privacy we have listed their functions and not their names.

• Teachers and assistant headmasters of primary schools in all estates
• Chairman of tenants organization in Kanaleneiland
• (Assistant) neighbourhood coordinators for Southwest and South Utrecht
• Volunteers in community centre for the elderly in Kanaleneiland
• Two original inhabitants of Nieuw-Hoograven
• Several original and new inhabitants in New West and the Bijlmer
• Several shopkeepers in New West and the Bijlmer
• Managing director of housing corporation Mitros, Utrecht
• Social workers in Kanaleneiland and New West
• Chairman of neighbourhood department South of the town council, Utrecht
• Chairman of neighbourhood department Southwest of the town council, Utrecht
• Chairman of city district Bos and Lommer
• Member of the neighbourhood council in South Utrecht
• Business advisor of the department of economic affairs, Utrecht
• Executive of a neighbourhood project called ‘Hoograven aan Zet’
• Communication and promotion manager of shopping centre Kanaleneiland
• Executive of social welfare organization in South Utrecht
• Former complex manager of housing corporation Portaal in Kanaleneiland
• Complex manager of housing corporation Portaal in Nieuw-Hoograven
• Former (educational) social workers in Kanaleneiland
• Several social workers in New West and the Bijlmer
• Original inhabitant of Nieuw-Hoograven active in several social projects
• District administrator of housing corporation Portaal for South Utrecht
• District administrator of housing corporation Bo-Ex for South Utrecht
• District administrator of housing corporation Mitros for Southwest Utrecht
• Senior staff in several housing corporations in Amsterdam
• Staff and directors of renewal agencies in New West and the Bijlmer