

DOI <https://doi.org/10.3846/cpc.2017.274>

AMSTERDAM RESIDENTS AND THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARDS TOURISTS AND TOURISM

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Received 2 February 2017; accepted 12 April 2017

In Amsterdam, the phenomenon of overcrowding is increasing, and tourism is one of the causes. Both the public debate and the municipal authorities are pointing to an increasing need for more expertise and knowledge regarding ways of achieving a healthy balance for various stakeholders. This article focuses on the stakeholder role of city residents and discusses their attitudes to tourists and tourism-related developments in their own neighbourhood and in the rest of the city. The term “attitude” can be divided into three components: feeling, behaviour and thinking. The results of this study are based on both quantitative and qualitative fieldwork (surveys and semi-structured interviews) and on desk research. It can be concluded that, for the most part, residents have a positive attitude to tourists and tourism. Differences in attitude are mostly determined by the city district where respondents live and by personal feelings and thinking. Follow-up research in the coming years will examine the complexity of the issue of overcrowding in more depth.

Keywords: behaviour, feelings, overcrowdedness, thinking, urban tourism.

Introduction

Amsterdam is growing, in terms of population, businesses and visitors. In 2014, the total number of hotel stays amounted to 12.5 million, compared with fewer than 8 million in 2000 (O+S het Amsterdamse Bureau voor Onderzoek en Statistiek 2002). The record year 2014 showed a rise of 11.3% in hotel stays as compared to 2013, and in 2015 the increase continued (+3.6% over the first eight months) (toeristischebarometer 2014–2015). Amsterdam

has long been among the top 10 most visited cities in Europe. However, to the users of the city these “record figures” are something of a mixed blessing, as evidenced by the growing number of complaints, protests and reader’s letters in the Amsterdam daily newspaper *Het Parool* and social media channels such as Facebook and Twitter (for example, on the page of *Vereniging Vrienden van de Amsterdamse Binnenstad* (Association of Friends of the City Centre) and the *Pretpark Amsterdam* (Amsterdam Theme Park) account). The limited space in the city is

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leading to increasing pressure and competition between the various groups of users.

In 2008, the City Marketing and Leisure Management research group at Inholland University of Applied Sciences decided to investigate the perspective of residents towards tourists and tourism in their hometown in more detail; this research was mostly based on Roos Gerritsma's Master's thesis dating from 1999. In 2015, second-year Leisure Management¹ students, in collaboration with the research group, repeated this study among Amsterdam residents. The theme of this new study is comparable to that of the 1999 and 2008 versions, supplemented with questions about home-rental platforms such as *Airbnb.Inc* and more specific questions about particular locations and times during the week.

The introduction section of this article contains a description of the context to examine the issue of overcrowding in Amsterdam in more depth. This is followed by the theoretical framework, its operationalisation and the research methods. Then the results of the 2015 study are set out and, where relevant, compared to the results from 1999 and 2008. The article then presents the conclusions and a discussion.

Increased tourist numbers in Amsterdam

Due to different developments such as cheap ways to travel, economical progress since the global crisis in 2008 and the branding of cities as a tourism destination, the phenomenon of urban tourism is on a rise. European Cities Marketing has demonstrated the dominant and most dynamic aspect of European tourism: city tourism, which for years has continued to grow twice as fast as national tourism. European cities maintained their strong growth trend, with total bednights up 4.2% in 2015 (European

Cities Marketing 2016). An increase of urban tourism means additional pressure on certain neighbourhoods and facilities (Ashworth, Page 2011). This explains why so many parties are now studying the "issue of overcrowding" and why it has become the subject of regular public debates. The issue is so pressing that it is also high on the political agenda of the current local government of cities like Barcelona, Berlin and Amsterdam.

The Municipality of Amsterdam and Bureau Werelderfgoed (the Dutch world heritage agency) commissioned qualitative research to supplement the study *Drukke in de Binnenstad 2012* (Westenberg 2015). The latter study revealed a clear degree of urgency:

"Residents in parts of the buffer zone wish to relocate and businesses are reporting reduced turnover because there are fewer local residents. This may also influence leisure activities in the city centre: visitors chiefly come to enjoy 'the atmosphere', which to a great extent is determined by residents" (Westenberg 2015: 2).

Overcrowding is experienced chiefly in specific circumstances and influences the balance between living, work and leisure in the city centre. Furthermore, it was concluded that:

"Residents feel powerless if they do not feel supported when they themselves try to do something about the nuisance caused by overcrowding; they blame this on the limited power of the municipality and the political sector" (Westenberg 2015: 1).

A notable finding is that

"residents and businesses view the future with concern; many of them see the global development of a growing tourist industry and fear the allocation of licences that bring overcrowding, including short stays" (Westenberg 2015: 1).

¹ Oscar di Carlo, Tomas van Kampen, Pamela Kolsteeg and Simone Lijdens.

Following on from this, another, small scale, research indicates that residents of the Western canal district “appreciate the interest of tourists in their city [...] but respondents are less positive about the effects this has on their own neighbourhood” (Hoffschulte 2015: 8). According to a third of the respondents, tourism has reached its saturation point: the disadvantages are now greater than the benefits. Half of the residents do not yet see things this way, but of these a quarter do expect the saturation point to be achieved if the numbers of tourists continue to increase at this rate, according to Carla Hoffschulte.

The population of Amsterdam is increasing by 10 000 each year, while tourism is expanding steadily as well. In response, the Municipality of Amsterdam has taken measures to manage the growth of the city. The Municipal Executive drew up a start document entitled *Stad in Balans* (City in Balance) (Gemeente Amsterdam 2015). In 2015, the scientific Dutch journal *Leisure Studies* (*Vrijetijdsstudies*) referred to this document as follows: “*Stad in Balans* is an initial analysis that explains the city’s success. It explores long-term choices and sets out the measures that the Executive is already taking in areas where issues arise” (Heide, Peters 2015). However, at the start of 2016, the Alderman for Economic Affairs, Kajsa Ollongren, announced that the actions taken had had too little effect and that it was time for more effective measures (Het Parool 2016b). In 2015, the number of Amsterdam residents reporting suspected illegal home rentals to the Housing Fraud contact point doubled (Het Parool 2016a). Incidentally, *Airbnb.Inc* has announced that it will act more firmly, and has removed almost 150 homes from its website which clearly involve illicit rental operations (de Volkskrant 2016). Nonetheless, *Airbnb.Inc* alone still has more than 14 000 homes on offer in Amsterdam.

Research among Amsterdam residents regarding perceived crowdedness in their own residential environment and the rest of the city has to date not been very specific regarding

possible relationships between residents’ background characteristics and the extent to which these influence their attitudes towards visitors. Moreover, most studies focus only on residents of the city centre, while residents all over the city are affected by growing tourism. For this reason we have decided to further investigate this research theme.

Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of the 2015 study is derived in part from the models and dimensions applied in the studies in 1999 and 2008. The ones we operationalized in 2015 are explained and criticized below.

As far back as in 1975, George V. Doxey described how policymakers and planners need a monitor to measure feelings of irritation among residents resulting from the impact of tourists in their area. In the early days of tourism development, residents are especially positive (Euphoria) and happy with the chiefly economic benefits, and they accept the associated growth (Apathy). But at a certain moment, they start to feel annoyance (Irritation) and they turn against tourism in their area (Antagonism).

Doxey (1975) underlines the fact that pure “tourist against resident” situations or strictly homogeneous tourist destinations do not exist. Depending on the degree of irritation and the duration of circumstances that fuel the irritation, residents will express their annoyance. Doxey’s Irridex (1975) has been widely criticised by academics. We agree with Jeroen Bryon (2009) who writes in his critique that Doxey (1975) provides an overly simplistic interpretation, assuming that *more* tourists is the only factor that leads to a higher degree of irritation. In our 2015 study, we then measured various *forms* of irritation in questionnaires which do not only address the quantity of tourists.

We framed the perspective of the resident as his or her *attitude* towards tourists and tourism and linked it to Doxey’s Irritation Index. The

term “attitude” is often described as a person’s knowledge, mindset and behaviour (Schiffman, Kanuk 2006) or a person’s beliefs, intentions and behaviour (Fishbein, Ajzen 1975). According to Thomas M. Ostrom (1969), attitudes are hypothetical constructions that consist of a cognitive component, a conative component (behaviour) and an affective component (feeling). Particularly because perceived crowdedness seems to be linked to feelings and emotions, we have chosen a model that includes the affective component: the Tricomponent Attitude Model (Solomon 2013), also known as the ABC model (see Fig. 1):

- Affect (Feeling): the individual associates and judges the object and its attributes with certain feelings, moods and emotions and judges it accordingly;
- Behaviour: how likely is it that the individual has certain behavioural intentions in relation to the object/subject, or his actual behaviour;
- Cognition (Thinking/Knowledge): what do individuals think and know about a certain object/subject?

The model is mostly used in the context of consumer marketing research to measure the attitudes of consumers towards certain products or objects. In our study, we not only asked about attitudes towards objects (leisure locations), but also about attitudes towards subjects (short-stay or long-stay tourists) and the phenomenon of tourism in general.

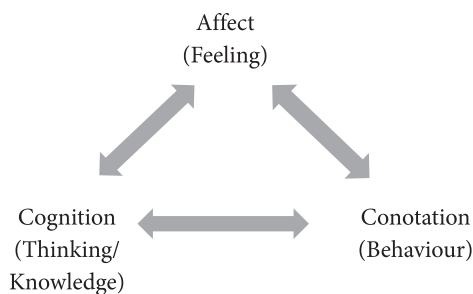


Fig. 1. Model 1 ABC or Tricomponent Model (source: Solomon 2013)

In communication and marketing research, the conative component (behaviour) mostly refers to intended behaviour; in some studies, it refers to the actual behaviour (Communicatie KC 2017). In our study, we asked about the respondent’s actual behaviour, such as whether her she avoids tourist flows or not.

Two feelings hold a central position within our research, namely feelings of pride (being the positive affect) and feelings of irritation (being the negative affect) towards tourism and tourists. Chris Cooper, John Fletcher, Alan Fyall, David Gilbert and Stephen Wanhill (2008: 186–243) cite various general positive socio-cultural influences that tourism may exert. A sense of pride is one of these: “Tourism can inspire pride in a destination’s heritage. Often we forget the value of the things that surround us and only when seen through the eyes of tourists do we revalue our culture” (Cooper *et al.* 2008).

In our study, the attitude component of “feeling” was translated into the degree of both pride and irritation with regard to one’s own neighbourhood, the city centre, events and home-rental platforms for private persons such as *Airbnb.Inc.* In order to better understand the sense of irritation, we also asked about types of annoyance (from overcrowding, excessive noise, littering and lack of safety), time (during the week, weekends, during the day and at night) and location.

The attitude component of “behaviour” was partly measured using the four phases of the Irridex (Doxey 1975), namely: Euphoria, Apathy, Irritation and Antagonism. We translated these into: involvement, no change in behaviour, avoidance and opposition. Involvement was measured by asking whether residents are helpful towards tourists.

The component of “thinking” was translated into questions relating to what residents think about tourism in their own neighbourhood and the city centre, and about events. We also asked what they think about the dispersion of tourism within Amsterdam and the degree to which they have a say in developments in their own neighbourhood.

Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert and Wanhill (2008), referencing the Irritation Index (Doxey 1975) among other sources, have developed the life cycle of a tourist area, see below (see Fig. 2):

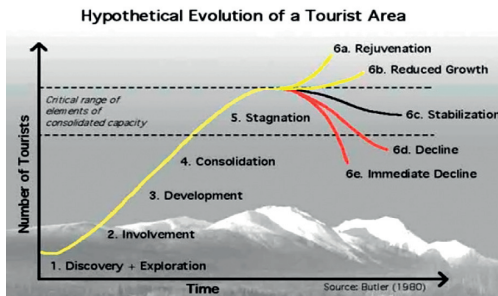


Fig. 2. Doxey's Irritation Index. Author: Richard W. Butler (source: Cooper et al. 2008)

While Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert and Wanhill have refined the term “tourist area” and its development over time, they still use the number of tourists as the only important benchmark. In our 2015 study, we chose parts of the city that are in different phases of development as tourist areas. Standard socio-demographic background characteristics were compiled for each respondent, supplemented by questions about their own city-visiting behaviour, how long they have been living in Amsterdam and whether they live in a rented or an owner-occupied home.

In this way, we aim to measure the degree to which links can be established between the attitudes of residents, the phase of tourism in the area where they live and whether certain background characteristics have an influence on this.

Research method

The study focused on gaining more insight into the attitudes of residents of Amsterdam-Noord and Amsterdam-West towards tourists and tourism. Sub-questions were formulated with the three attitude components, as set out above, in mind. The fourth sub-question related to the

resident's profile (background characteristics). The study was carried out with a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods, known as Mixed Methods (Tashakorri, Teddlie 2003).

In 2015, it was decided to select residents from two city districts bordering on the historic centre that are each in a different phase of tourist development. Amsterdam-West (Westerpark) has been undergoing development for some time and the *Westergasterrein* is well-known venue for events. In various media, events are regularly mentioned as a source of nuisance and disturbance in the whole city and/or in specific districts, like West. The city district of Amsterdam-Noord was chosen because it has been undergoing huge development in recent years and is attracting ever more visitors thanks to new leisure amenities, such as the EYE film museum, events at the NDSM shipyard and hotels (mainly in the budget bracket). At the same time, this city district is experiencing a relatively large inflow of new residents, thanks in part to various new housing construction projects. The residents not only answered questions about their own neighbourhood, but also about Amsterdam as a whole and about the Amsterdam city centre.

The fieldwork was conducted in May and early June 2015. A total of 248 questionnaires were administered, all in hard-copy. Of these, 128 were completed in Noord and 120 in West. The questionnaire was distributed among residents on the bank of the IJ in Amsterdam-Noord and residents around the *Westergasterrein* in Amsterdam-West. Residents were randomly asked on the ferry, in the streets and in the park if they were willing to fill in the questionnaire. The questionnaires were entered using a codebook and analysed in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Unless otherwise stated, the cited differences in results are statistically significant.

In parallel to the questionnaire, eight interviews were conducted with residents in May 2015. Respondents 1 to 6 filled in the

questionnaire and mentioned that they were willing to illustrate their answers in an interview. Respondent 7 was selected based upon her age, due to the fact that we had several respondents who are in their twenties. Since it was difficult to find a resident who rents out his or her house through *Airbnb.Inc*, respondent number 8 was also selected through one of the researchers network. Respondent number 8 can be considered as an outlier (Miles *et al.* 2014) so we could test the patterns within original set of participants. Interviews took place in the respondents' homes, were recorded and then transcribed at a later date. The transcriptions were labelled by hand and related to the theoretical framework. An overview of the respondents is provided below (see Table 1):

During the interviews, the same topics were discussed as in the questionnaire. The main goal was to gather more background information about the residents' motivations and feelings.

Finally, information was gained from various secondary sources, including: *Stad in Balans* (Gemeente Amsterdam 2015), key figures of Amsterdam Marketing, research reports on Amsterdam residents and their attitudes towards tourism and tourists (Gerritsma 1999; Raaf 2008; Pool 2008), *Beleving van drukte in de binnenstad* (perceived crowdedness in the city centre) (Westenberg 2015) and *Het Parool* newspaper.

Below, we set out the most important results of the questionnaire per attitude component, combined with quotes from the interviews. In

each case we examine whether there are differences linked to neighbourhood and/or background characteristics. Considering the amount of respondents as well as the quantitative as the qualitative part, we can't generalize the results to the whole population. However, we did recognize tendencies and meaningful patterns in the quantitative data that are illustrated with quotes from the interviews.

Feelings of pride and irritation relating to the neighbourhood and the city

The majority feel pride

Of all respondents, 66% agree or agree strongly with the following statement: "It gives me a sense of pride that my neighbourhood is attractive to (short-stay or other) tourists". There is no significant difference between the residents of West, who have been receiving more visitors and for longer, and those of Noord (see Fig. 3). In 1998, 80% of city centre residents agreed with this statement, while in 2008 this fell to 71% in the city centre and to 66% in the Plantage neighbourhood. Despite the increased criticism of rising tourism, the percentage has remained at 66%. In 2015, we also examined whether there is a difference in terms of pride regarding tourists in the city centre and those in the resident's own neighbourhood. No such difference was found. If we examine specific forms of tourism such as events and home-rental platforms for

Table 1. Respondent interviews (source: created by authors)

| City district | Name (only first names were used) / age / tenant or home owner / number of city trips per year |
|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Amsterdam-Noord | Karel de Kleine, age 21, tenant, 1 |
| | Marleen Piket, age 23, tenant, 1 to 2 |
| | Esther Huis, age 20, tenant, 1 to 2 |
| | Koos Verhulst, age 57, home owner, chairman of Overhoeks neighbourhood association, 3 to 4 |
| Amsterdam-West | Joke van den Paard, age 21, tenant, 1 to 2 |
| | Christine Nagel, age 27, tenant, 2 to 3 |
| Amsterdam East | Philippa Care, age 52, 2 to 3 |
| City centre | Andreas Bitte, age 21, tenant and also lets via Airbnb.Inc., 2 |

private persons such as *Airbnb.Inc*, then 62% are proud of the quantity of events in Amsterdam, but only 32% are proud of *Airbnb.Inc*-related tourism.

Sense of irritation particularly strong in the city centre

The majority still have positive feelings about tourism in their own neighbourhood and the city centre. The picture changes somewhat when

we look at the level of irritation. Less than 6% are or highly or extremely irritated by tourists in their own neighbourhood, but 27% are by tourists in the city centre. Events are perceived by 17% as highly or extremely irritating, while the figure for *Airbnb.Inc* is 12%.

The residents in West (see Fig. 4), where the development of tourism is more advanced than in Noord, are more annoyed by tourists in their own neighbourhood, and above all by those in the city centre, than the residents in Noord (see Figs 5, 6).

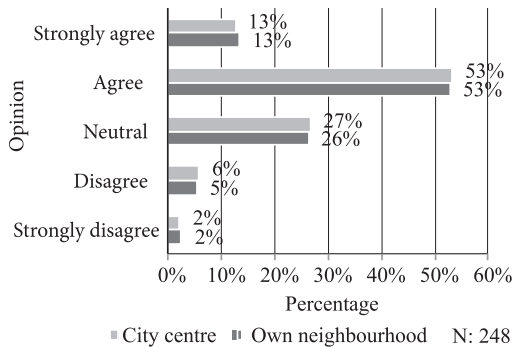


Fig. 3. Sense of pride: in one's own neighbourhood as compared to the city centre (source: created by authors)

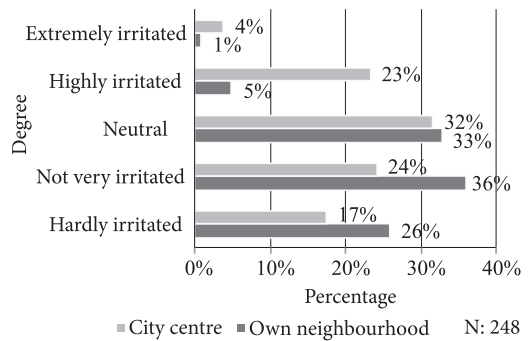


Fig. 4. Irritation in own neighbourhood versus city centre (source: created by authors)

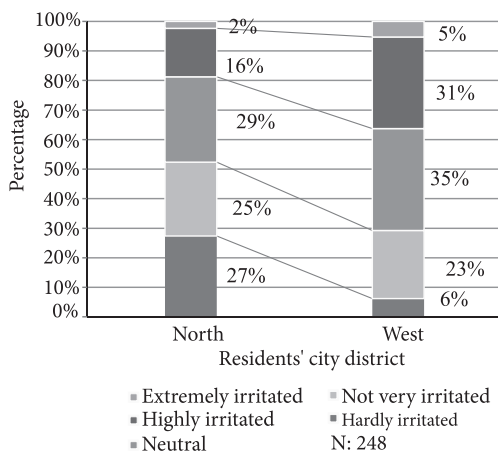


Fig. 5. Irritation in own neighbourhood: Noord versus West *t*-test Sig. (2-tailed): 0.22m (source: created by authors)

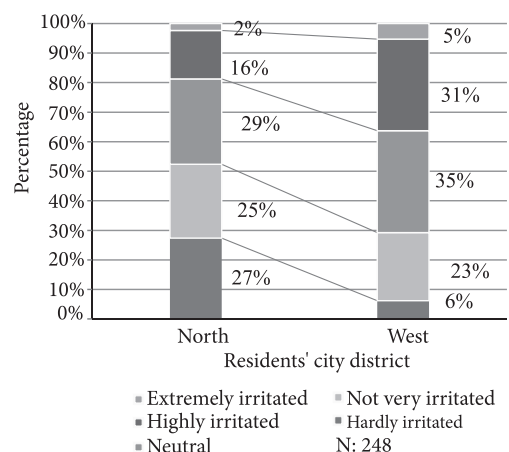


Fig. 6. Irritation in the city centre: Noord versus West *t*-test Sig. (2-tailed) 0.000 (source: created by authors)

Joke van den Paard, who lives in West, puts it as follows: “I like it here, but I won’t stay here all my life, partly due to the tourists. They generally behave well – it’s not that they are rowdies – but they don’t know the rules of the city: tourists on bikes, for instance, often create dangerous situations [...] they smoke weed when they can’t deal with it and they always have too much baggage with them, which blocks your way”. The city district of Noord is in the early phase of its life cycle as a tourist area (Cooper *et al.* 2008), as also indicated by the following quotes. Karel de Kleine from Noord says, “I’m proud that Amsterdam is such a vibrant town. [...] My neighbourhood is not really that vibrant yet, there’s a very big difference”. When asked if he would mind to see tourism increase in Noord, he answered: “Well, you can definitely see it’s increasing, but as far as I’m concerned, it shouldn’t increase a huge amount”. Marleen Piket: “Noord used to be uninteresting for tourists. It’s not as bad as the other parts of Amsterdam, I think. It hardly bothers me, just now and again tourists in public transport don’t know where they need to go and then really get in your way. And things are getting a little more crowded. But that’s mostly in Amsterdam itself, not in Noord”.

Background characteristics

We also examined whether the degree of the respondents’ own experience with tourism, their origin and family composition influence their feelings about tourism in the city. Respondents who themselves have regularly undertaken city trips abroad have more positive feelings than those who have not. This applies to their own neighbourhood, the city centre, events and to *Airbnb.Inc.* No such difference is found when it comes to negative feelings (irritation). About half of the respondents were born in Amsterdam, but that does not lead to different answers. A quarter of the respondents has lived in Amsterdam for more than ten years and are more irritated by events than those who have

lived there for a shorter period. There is no significant statistical difference for the other background characteristics.

Single persons and cohabiting persons *with* children are more often irritated by tourism in the neighbourhood, in the city centre and by events than single persons and cohabiting persons *without* children. The latter group is also more proud of the fact that many tourists stay in the city using *Airbnb.Inc.* It should also be mentioned that in this study only 12% are extremely or highly irritated by *Airbnb.Inc.* users, while 35% are neutral and 53% are not very or hardly irritated.

Types of nuisance and disturbance

General

The respondents who were irritated by tourism were asked which types of nuisance they perceived². Overcrowding was the most frequently cited (46%), both as regards their own neighbourhood and the city centre. In their own neighbourhood, excessive noise came second at 24%, followed by littering (22%) and lack of safety (8%). In the city centre, littering came in second place at 21% and excessive noise came third (19%), followed by lack of safety (14%). In Amsterdam-West, excessive noise, litter and safety issues are cited more frequently as types of nuisance in the respondents’ own neighbourhood than is the case in Amsterdam-Noord.

Events

When it comes to events, just under 20% of respondents are negative or very negative. The most frequent type of nuisance during events

² Of all 250 respondents 160 answered this question, which offered a choice from four types of nuisance: overcrowding, excessive noise, littering and lack of safety. The percentages indicate the distribution of the number of yes-answers to a type of nuisance.

is overcrowding (37%). Excessive noise and littering (both 26%) share second/third place, while lack of safety scores 8%. Note that the respondents in Noord (62%) are bothered much more by excessive noise associated with events than those in West (42%). There is no statistical significant difference for any of the background characteristics. Due to the small numbers, it is not statistically significant, but respondents older than 50 seem to have a less positive attitude to events than younger respondents.

While respondents often tend to say at first that they are not troubled, many do actually mention a number of typical situations. Marleen Piket is a case in point: “of course, you notice that things have got much more crowded around here; especially at the ferry. And very occasionally I hear the music. But that’s usually with very big festivals such as Volt. [...] Then you get bottles and beer cans lying around. Usually, this is all cleaned up nice and quickly, but sometimes rubbish does actually lie around for days”.

Home-rental platforms

The dominant problem with private home-rental platforms such as *Airbnb.Inc* is excessive noise (53%), followed by overcrowding (23%), lack of safety (14%) and littering (11%). Residents in Amsterdam-West (39%) perceive significantly more overcrowding as a consequence of *Airbnb.Inc* than those in Amsterdam-Noord (13%). In contrast, there are more people in Noord (69%) who perceive excessive noise than in West (43%).

In the apartment complex in the Overhoeks neighbourhood (Amsterdam-Noord), several residents rent out their homes via *Airbnb.Inc*. The chairman of the neighbourhood association, Koos Verhulst, is concerned about this: “They should really impose the same rules on their tenants, but sometimes that doesn’t happen and that means you get visitors sitting on

the balcony drinking and smoking at 2 or 3 o’clock at night.” Although Andreas Bitte lives in the city centre, his experience of renting out via *Airbnb.Inc* gives a good perspective on why he rents out his apartment: “My flatmate is pretty good at earning money; he had the idea that I could stay in his room and my room is rented out and we split the money. That’s always worked out well for me”.

Times and locations

We asked when (at what time) people were irritated by tourists. In the respondents’ own neighbourhood, the weekend scores highest at 40%. During the day and at night both score 23%, and 15% during the week. In the city centre, irritation occurs mostly during the day (32%) and at the weekend (30%), and less at night (17%) and during the week (20%). In the case of events, the weekend clearly scores highest (47%). When it comes to *Airbnb.Inc*, the night (41%) and the weekend (36%) score high.

We also asked about the location where the respondents are most irritated by tourists (see Fig. 7), and here multiple answers were possible. Mostly frequently cited is the Central Station, followed by the shopping streets in the city centre and the squares and parks in the city centre.

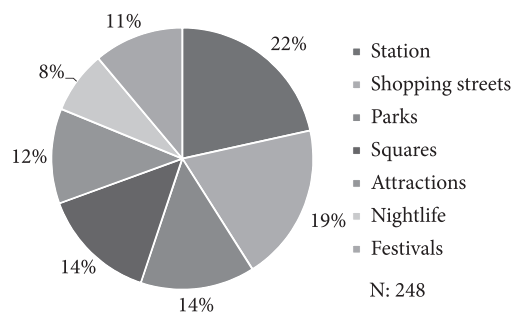


Fig. 7. Where are people irritated by tourists in the city centre? (source: created by authors)

What people think about tourism in their own neighbourhood and the city centre

More than 50% of all respondents think positively or very positively about (day) tourism in their own neighbourhood; 10% experience this as negative or very negative. With regard to tourism in the city centre, these percentages are significantly different: 40% are positive or very positive and 27% are negative or very negative (see Fig. 8). Tourists in the city centre are clearly rated more negatively than those in one's own neighbourhood.

The city district of West has been receiving tourists for longer and in greater numbers than Noord. Residents of West (see Fig. 9) think less positively about tourism in their own neighbourhood than those in Noord do. People in West are even more negative with regard to tourism in the city centre. Of the residents in Noord, 51% regard tourism in the city centre as positive or very positive, as compared to 28% in West. This means that thinking and feelings about tourism correspond strongly.

The residents in West perceive more overcrowding due to *Airbnb.Inc* (39%) than those in Noord do (13%). In contrast, there are more people in Noord who perceive excessive noise (69%) than in West (43%).

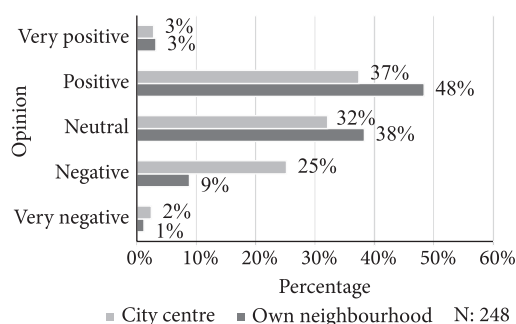


Fig. 8. What people think about (day) tourists: in their own neighbourhood versus in the city centre (source: created by authors)

Background characteristics

In order to establish whether the respondents' living situation influences the way they think about tourism, we investigated whether people who live in rented accommodation think differently about tourism than people in owner-occupied homes. We found that people in owner-occupied homes are more positive about tourism in their own neighbourhood and in the city centre than tenants of rented accommodation. This might be because home owners expect the value of their home to rise as the neighbourhood becomes more attractive. This requires further research.

Public participation in decision-making

Of the respondents, 65% feel that they have a sufficient say in decisions regarding their neighbourhood. They think more positively about tourists in their neighbourhood and events in the city than the 35% who believe that they do not have enough say. This latter group is also more irritated by tourists in their neighbourhood and in the city centre and by *Airbnb.Inc* users. In Noord, the percentage of respondents who believe that they have a sufficient say in decision-making is higher (70%) than in West (58%).

When asked about issues in which they should have a greater say, there is a huge spread in answers: improvements to public space (9x), events-related issues (7x), public participation (7x), more information (4x), difficulty finding a parking space (3x) and enforcement (2x).

As chairman of the Overhoeks neighbourhood association in Noord, Koos Verhulst is actively engaged in providing input for – among other things – the events policy: “What we believe is missing most is a municipal policy that transcends the city districts, so that we can examine the cumulative effect of all these events on the city as a whole”.

Dispersion of tourists

With regard to the dispersion of tourism in Amsterdam, 26% have positive or very positive views and 30% negative or very negative views. The respondents in Noord have a more positive opinion about dispersion than those in West. 79% agree that tourism must be dispersed over the various city districts in Amsterdam, and 21% are in favour of concentration of tourism in the city centre. In Noord, 32% prefer concentration in the city centre, compared to 9% in West. Philippa Care takes a broader view and says: “Dispersion is better; it’s good for the local economy and it reduces overcrowding in the city centre”.

With regard to the dispersion of tourists in de city, Karel de Kleine (from Noord) says: “Now it’s a bit of both, I think. Most tourists are in the city centre, but there are also some in the other parts of Amsterdam. I think it’s good the way it is now: keep them mostly in the city centre, but you need a few attractions in other areas as well. For my part, we don’t need a lot more tourists in Noord; I think it’s great the way it is. So I’d choose centralisation”.

Behaviour regarding tourists and events

In order to establish the extent to which tourists influence the behaviour of residents, respondents were invited to choose from four possibilities:

- involvement;
- avoidance;
- opposition;
- no change in behaviour.

This was asked regarding the respondents’ own neighbourhood, the city centre, events and *Airbnb.Inc.*

With regard to their own neighbourhood (see Fig. 10), 45% are involved and 35% do not change their behaviour. Eighteen per cent avoid and 2% show opposition. In Noord, more people show involved behaviour (49%) than in

West (40%), but this difference is not statistically significant. When it comes to tourists in the city centre, however, we do see a difference between Noord and West. In Noord, respondents are clearly more involved (37%) than in West (17%). The residents in West have a more frequent tendency to avoid tourists (41% as compared to 27%). Marleen Piket from Noord: “It depends on what I myself am doing at that moment. If I’m engaged in something important, then I’ll avoid them. But if I’m not really busy with something, then I’ll be happy to show them the way”.

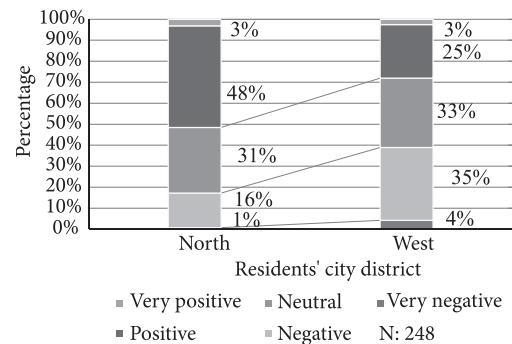


Fig. 9. Thinking about (day) tourists in the city centre: Noord versus West *t*-test Sig. (2-tailed): 0.000 (source: created by authors)

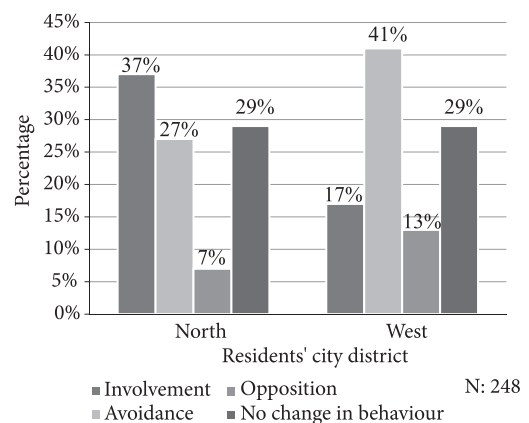


Fig. 10. Behaviour influenced by tourists in the city centre: Noord versus West (source: created by authors)

The following figure clearly shows that respondents who have negative or very negative views about tourism in the city centre exhibit notably different behaviour than those who are neutral or have positive or very positive views (see Fig. 11). Negative thinking leads to avoidance behaviour, and those who take a positive view of tourism in the city centre exhibit significantly more involvement.

Background characteristics

With regard to tourism in one's own neighbourhood, residents aged over 50 more frequently exhibit avoidance behaviour (31% as compared to 17%) and respondents aged under 50 more frequently do not change their behaviour (37% as compared to 15%). When it comes to tourism in one's own neighbourhood, those born in Amsterdam are less likely to change their behaviour (42% as compared to 28%) and exhibit less avoidance behaviour (11% as compared to 25%) than those who moved to Amsterdam later.

Andreas Bitte, 21 years old, expresses an opinion regularly heard in the public debate: "Well, on the one hand I understand it – personally I don't go to tourist bars and cafés, that's a different crowd, more jovial – but if it bothers you, you shouldn't live here. When you get a bit older, then I certainly understand if you want to

move away". The majority of respondents state that they have consciously changed their behaviour, such as Esther Huis from Noord: "I mostly avoid them, because people are often drunk and annoying during events. I always find it sensible to give them a wide berth, especially at night if I'm alone. I want to avoid trouble if I can".

Conclusions

The theme of overcrowding is a complex issue. Our case study³ provides insight into how residents perceive and experience tourism. The majority of respondents in Amsterdam still have positive feelings and a sense of pride about tourism in their neighbourhood and city. According to them, this is part of Amsterdam and it is in fact one of the city's attractive aspects. However, overcrowding and irritation are increasing, especially in the city centre. More than a quarter of respondents are very or extremely annoyed by tourists in the city centre. This chiefly relates to overcrowding, but excessive noise, littering and lack of safety also play a role. The locations correspond to the busiest points (the city centre) and the times of day correspond with the times that the residents are at home (the weekend) or in the city centre for work or recreation (daytime).

There are also some clear differences. Respondents from a relatively new tourist area (Noord) show a more positive attitude towards tourists and tourism than those who live in an area that has received tourists for longer and in greater numbers (West). There are clear links between the attitude components of feeling and thinking. Negative thinking about tourists correlates to more feelings of irritation and less sense of pride. Those who have these negative feelings also take a less positive view of the degree of public participation in decisions concerning their neighbourhood. Thinking (knowledge and experience) and feelings lead to

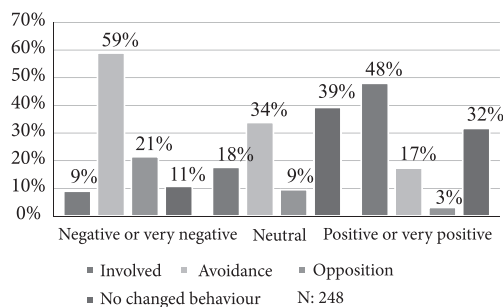


Fig. 11. Behaviour influenced by tourists in the city centre according to feelings about tourists (source: created by authors)

³ Our study has been published in 2016 in a Dutch only magazine for *Leisure Studies*.

differing behaviour. Residents who have more positive feelings and views about tourism are more involved and exhibit less avoidance and opposition behaviour.

At the moment, the balance is still mostly positive, and it is in everyone's interest to keep it this way. There seems to be a positive relationship between the residents' perceived participation in decisions concerning their neighbourhood and the way they think about tourism. Once negative feelings become dominant, the sense of irritation increases and it becomes much more difficult to find solutions. Entering into dialogue with the residents of a neighbourhood at the start of tourism development there can serve to prevent future problems.

More and more cities anticipate on the: "concept of creative tourism that blurs the distinction between the notions of "local" and "tourist" [...] in which the tourist becomes a contributor to the local life rather than a passive consumer" (Rabazauskaitė 2015). We will take these blurring lines into account in our future studies and contribute to the "City in Balance" discussion both in Amsterdam and on international platforms.

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AMSTERDAMO GYVENTOJAI IR JŲ POŽIŪRIS Į TURISTUS IR TURIZMĄ

Roos GERRITSMA, Jacques VORK

Amsterdame vis auga perpildos fenomenas, o turizmas yra viena iš to priežasčių. Tiek viešųjų diskusijų metu, tiek savivaldos institucijose pabrėžiamas vis didėjantis patirties ir žinių poreikis, siekiant surasti būdus, sudarančius sąlygas pasiekti tinkamą pusiausvyrą tarp įvairių suinteresuotų subjektų. Šiame straipsnyje susitelkiama į miestų gyventojų kaip suinteresuotų subjektų vaidmenį, aptariami jų požiūriai į turistus ir į plėtrą, susijusią su turizmu, jų pačių gyvenamuosiuose rajonuose ir likusiose miesto dalyse. Terminas „požiūris“ gali būti suskaidytas į tris sudėtines dalis: jausmą, elgesį ir mąstymą. Šio tyrimo rezultatai yra pagrįsti tiek kiekybiniais, tiek kokybiniais tyrimais (apklausomis ir pusiau struktūruotais interviu) ir turimų duomenų analize. Galima daryti išvadą, kad dažniausiai gyventojų požiūris į turistus ir turizmą yra teigiamas. Požiūrių skirtumus daugiausia lemia miesto rajonas, kuriame gyvena respondentai, bei asmeniniai jausmai ir mąstymas. Tolesniame tyrime, kuris bus vykdomas artimiausiais metais, bus išsamiau nagrinėjamas perpildos klausimo kompleksiskumas.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: elgesys, jausmai, perpilda, mąstymas, urbanistinis turizmas.