

Households who are forced to move: a displacement of problems?



Universiteit Utrecht

Anne Slob

Faculty of Geosciences Urban Geography

a.slob@geo.uu.nl

Introduction

Urban policies are often area-based and aim at spatially defined areas in order to solve problems in cities. An advantage is that attention can be directed to areas most in need (Andersson & Musterd, 2005). Besides solving problems in targeted areas, there is the risk of displacing problems to other areas, something we call a spatial knock-on effect. A spatial knock-on effect is an effect of an area-based policy for other areas than the ones involved in the policy.

An important topic where spatial knock-on effects might be expected is with urban restructuring policies. This policy aims to create a more diverse population in certain neighbourhoods. Therefore, the housing stock is diversified by demolition, sale or upgrading of social rented dwellings and new construction of more expensive owner-occupied dwellings. This new housing stock may then attract households with higher incomes. The poorer segments of the population are, however, forced to move to another affordable dwelling which might lead to new concentrations, elsewhere in the city. .

Central research questions

- In which way can spatial knock-on effects be observed as a result of area-based restructuring policies?
- How do policy makers and forced movers experience spatial knock-on effects?
- How can the effects stage of area-based restructuring policies be influenced or even be prevented?

Different phases of the project

- Learn more about which theoretical notions of urban change and decline can be used to explain spatial knock-on effects.
- Look at the perception of policy makers regarding spatial knock-on effects.
- Find out and explain about the geographical dispersal patterns of forced movers.
 - *Look at the perception of residents in the receiving neighbourhood. Do they experience spatial knock-on effects and how can they be explained?*

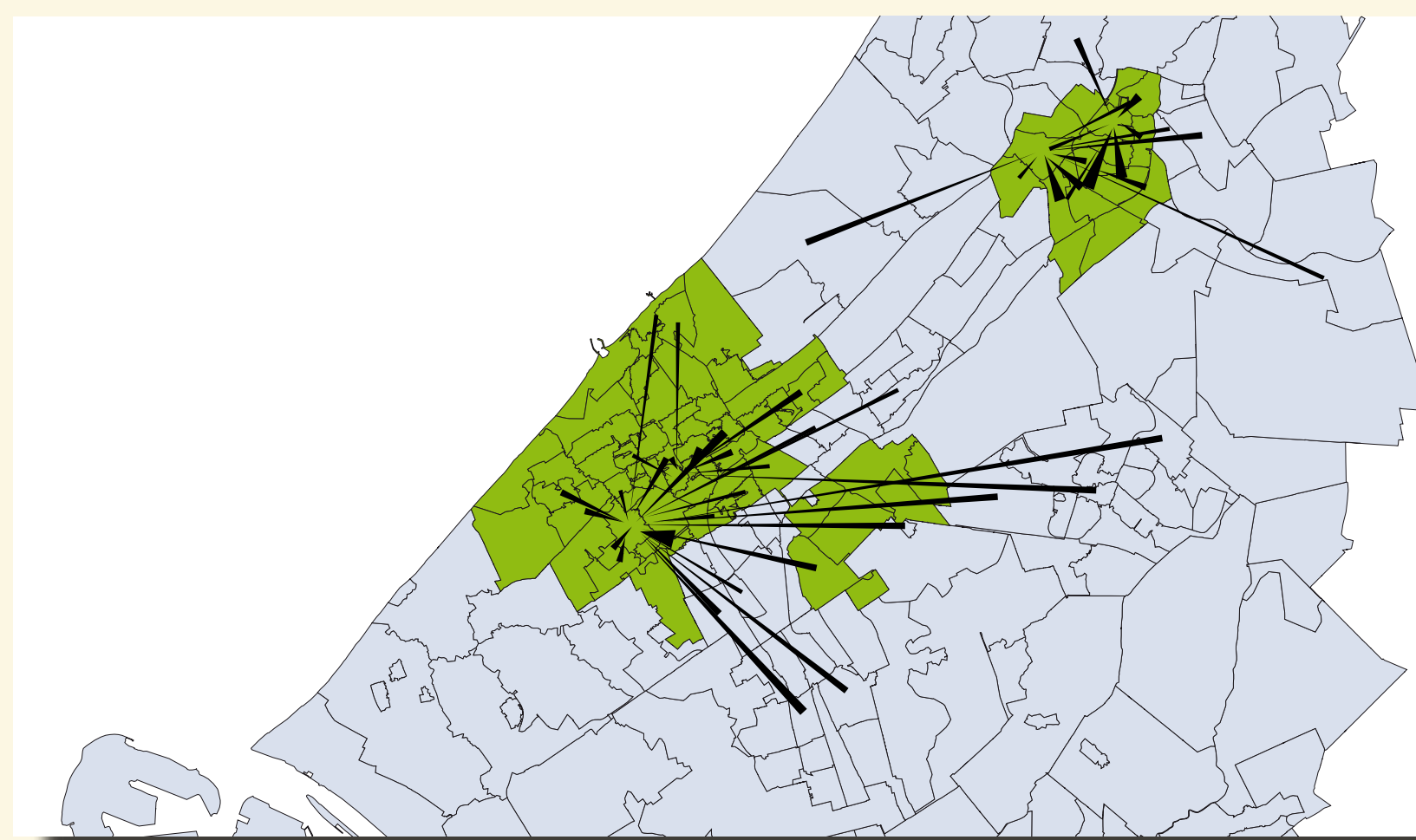


"I don't see new concentrations of forced movers come into existence. I even doubt if the moving pattern would have been different if they were not forced to move. The forced relocation process only speeds up the general moving process" (policy maker of housing association in Den Haag).

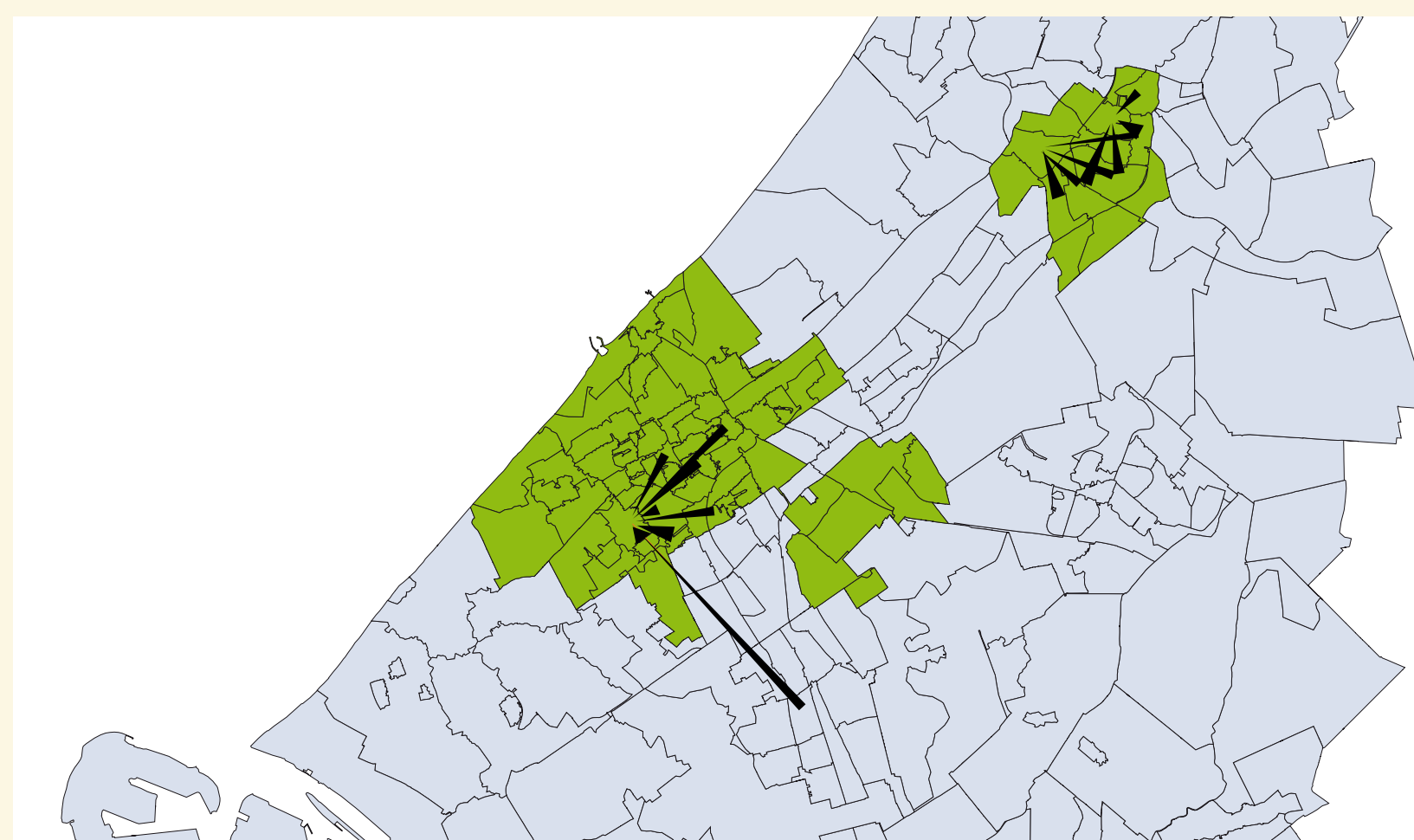
The interviewees however do mention examples of spatial knock-on effects.

1. Forced movers move within target areas of urban policies and move from one deprived neighbourhood to another deprived neighbourhood. One reason is the concentration of social rented dwellings in these neighbourhoods.
2. Forced movers might cause trouble in their new neighbourhood. Residents in host neighbourhoods complain about the attitude of the new residents.

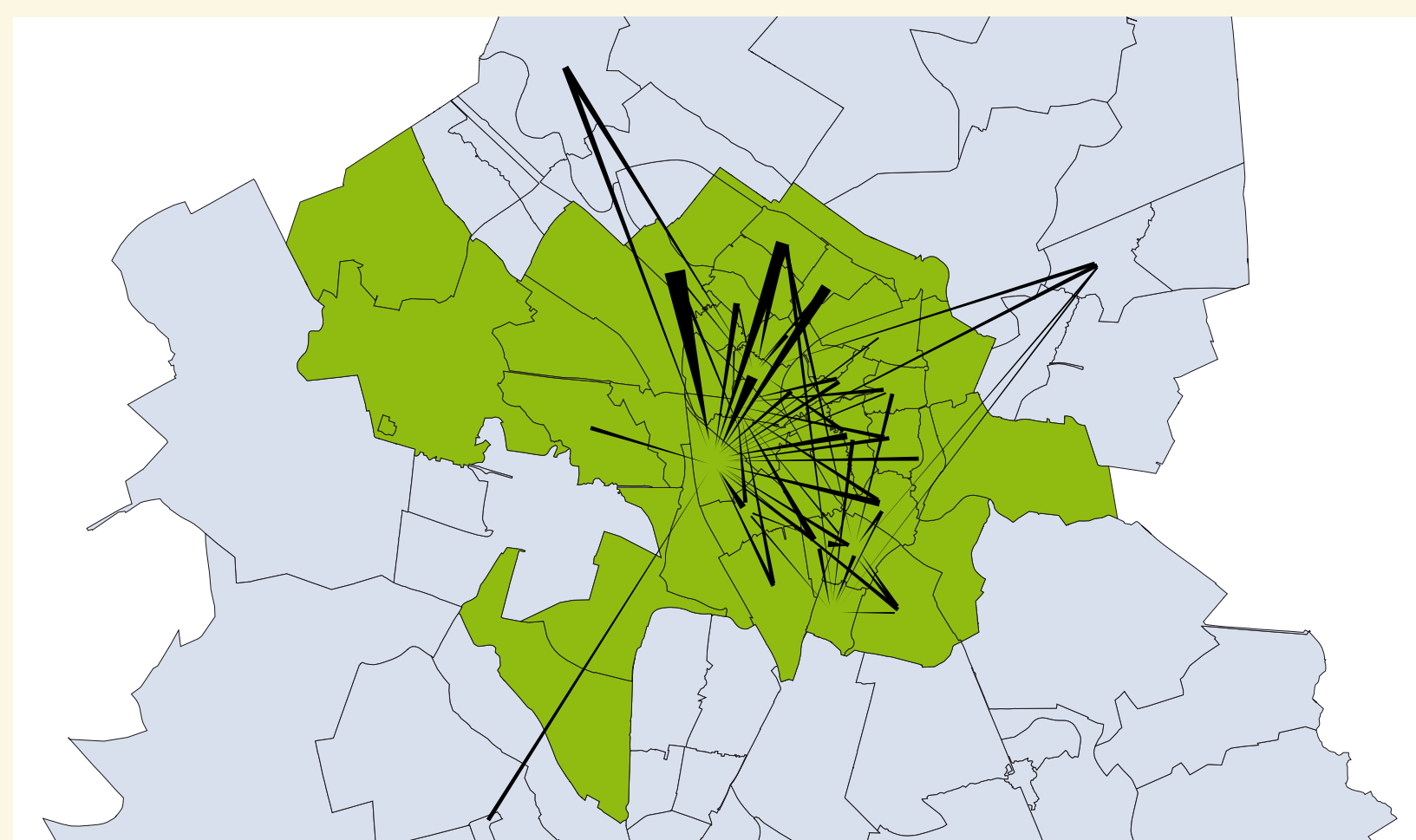
"Criminality rates have increased in villages close to the newly build extension area of Leidsche Rijn. In De Meern, where I live, we can not leave our radio in the car anymore" (policy maker of housing association in Utrecht).



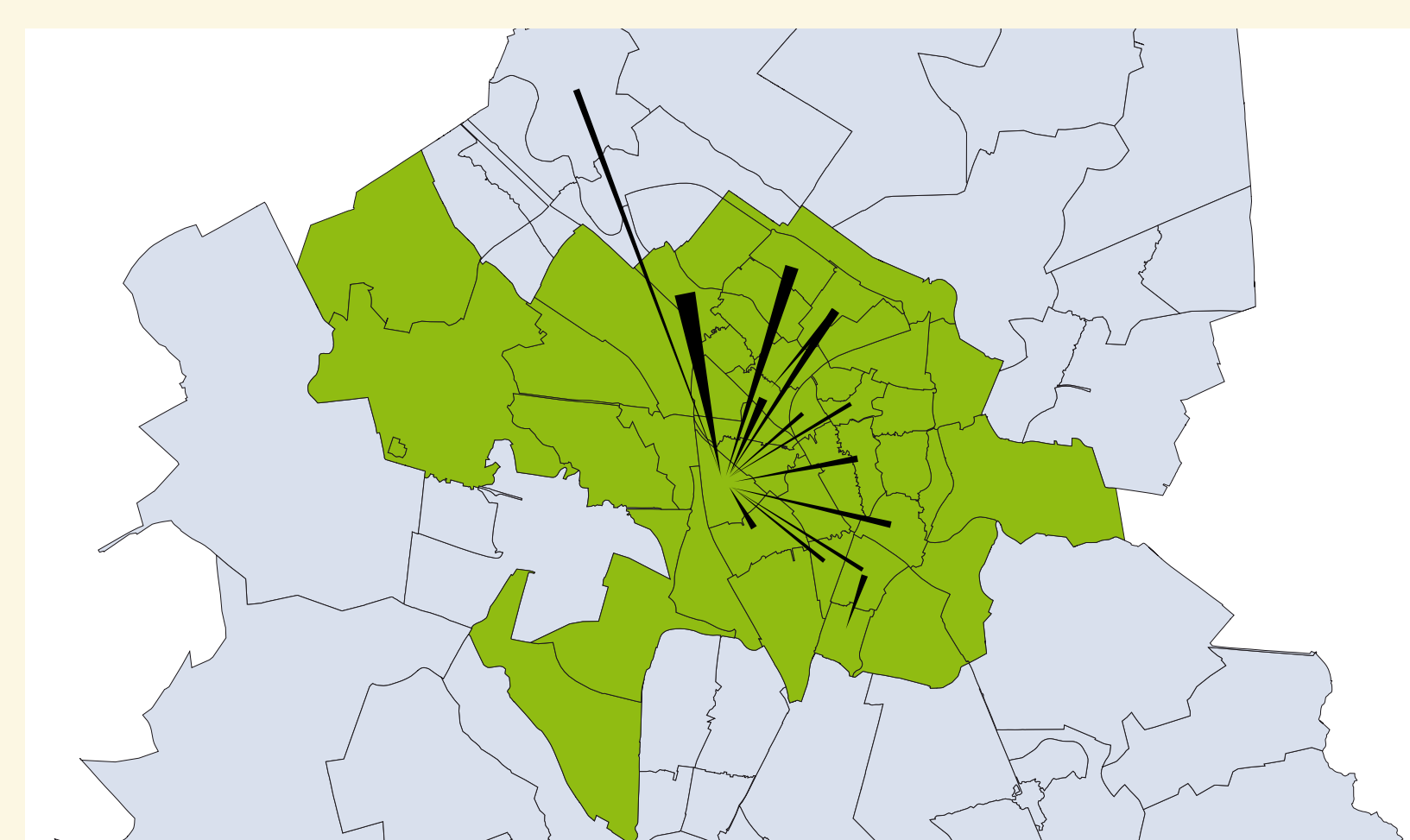
Moving patterns in Den Haag and Leiden



Moving patterns with more than 5 households



Moving patterns in Utrecht



Moving patterns with more than 5 households

The perception of policy makers: spatial knock-on effects or not?

40 face-to-face interviews were carried out with policy makers in Den Haag, Utrecht and Leiden. Most policy makers share the opinion that urban restructuring policies cause a more evenly spread of different types of households over the city, which is one of the goals of the policy:

The focus on forced movers: dispersal patterns after a forced movement

Based on a survey of forced movers in Den Haag, Utrecht and Leiden we see that many households choose to move to a different dwelling in their old neighbourhood (table 1).

When looking at households who move to another neighbourhood, different dispersal patterns exist:

- Forced movers usually move a short distance away from their previous dwelling because they prefer a dwelling close to their old neighbourhood.
- Forced movers only move to a selective number of neighbourhoods which might be caused by the supply of the (social rented) housing stock.



	Den Haag	Utrecht	Leiden
Yes	41.7	29.9	41.5
No	58.3	70.1	58.5
Total abs. (100%)	156	154	118

Table 1. Do forced movers live in their old neighbourhood or not? (%)

Difficulties, questions and problems for the next phases

- How can spatial knock-on effects really be identified? Residents in receiving neighbourhoods may identify an increase in problems in their neighbourhood but how to relate this to the group of forced movers.
- Is it bad if problems are spread over a larger area on purpose? Policy makers may choose to spread problems because this makes it easier to handle.