

# Dispersal patterns of households who are forced to move: where do they move to?



## Introduction

Area-based urban restructuring policy can be seen as an important measure to combat residential segregation. Demolition of social rented dwellings is a crucial element of restructuring policy in the Netherlands. As a consequence, many residents, most of which earn a low income, are forced to move to another dwelling. The question is where these households find a new dwelling. If the deconcentration in targeted areas goes hand in hand with reconcentration of displaced household in other neighbourhoods, the overall effect on segregation might be negligible.

Two contrasting visions:

- 1) Displacement is a threat due to the obligatory character of the move.
- 2) Displacement can be an opportunity for residents to move into more prosperous neighbourhoods.

## Data & Methods

- Analysis of the geographical dispersal of displaced households in The Hague (655 households), Utrecht (455 households) and Leiden (402 households)
- Survey amongst these displaced households to uncover the individual determinants of neighbourhood choice.

## Do households move within the old neighbourhood or not?

- Slightly more than a quarter of the displacees have stayed in the neighbourhood, which is about twice the proportion among all movers (**table 1**).

Table 1. The location of the new dwelling of displaced households compared to all movers out of urban renewal areas

	The Hague	Utrecht	Leiden
<b>Displaced households</b>			
Live in old neighbourhood	26.9	27.5	26.2
Live elsewhere in this city	53.5	62.8	64.8
Live outside this city	19.6	9.7	9.0
Total (100%)	643	360	401
<b>All movers out of urban renewal areas (2001-2006)<sup>1</sup></b>			
Live in old neighbourhood	13.6	15.0	12.1
Live elsewhere in this city	52.3	44.7	52.7
Live outside this city	28.7	43.2	32.2
Total (x1000)(100%)	60,605	14,560	2,709

<sup>1</sup> For Leiden, we only have data for the period 2005-2006. Source: Woningnet, Portaal, Staedion, Municipalities of The Hague, Utrecht and Leiden.

- The fact that 'ordinary' movers are more inclined to leave their neighbourhood is not surprising, as they are more likely to have made a deliberate choice to change their residential environment.
- The proportion of displacees that moved within their neighbourhood is considerably lower than the proportion of people (about half) that wanted to stay in the neighbourhood (**table 2**).

Table 2. Association between the preference to stay within the neighbourhood and the realization of that preference.

	The Hague		Utrecht		Leiden	
	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Preference to stay in the old neighbourhood?						
Lives in old neighbourhood	43.0	15.5	24.2	55.2	39.0	23.5
Does not live in the old neighbourhood	57.0	84.5	75.8	44.8	61.0	76.5
Total (%)	48.4	50.6	51.2	46.0	49.4	54.0
Total (n)	93	84	99	127	82	126

Source: Own survey, 2006

## Geographical dispersion

For the three largest urban renewal projects, we have analysed the dispersal pattern of displaced households that left their neighbourhood. **Figures 1-3** show for each of the renewal areas, where displacees have moved to (the thicker the wedge, the more households moved to that specific location).

- In The Hague, a relatively large proportion of displacees moved to other municipalities (availability of affordable dwellings, priority status for families with children)
- Displaced household do not differ very much from other movers in terms of the kind of neighbourhoods they move to (**table 3**). For many of them, the forced move meant an opportunity to improve their residential environment.

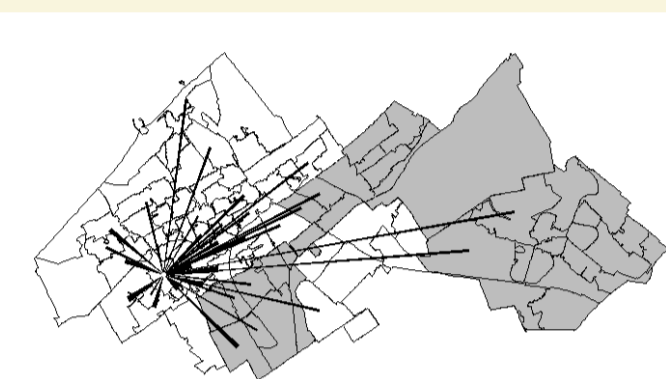


Figure 1. Dispersal pattern of households that are displaced from Morgenstond, The Hague



Figure 2. Dispersal pattern of households that are displaced from Pedagogenbuurt, Utrecht

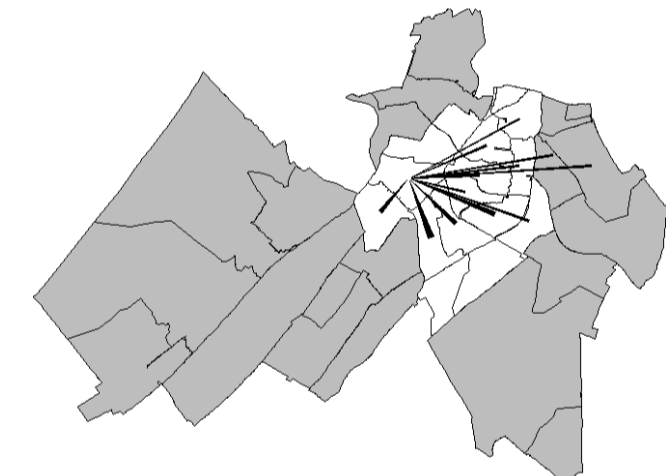


Figure 3. Dispersal pattern of households that are displaced from Hoge Mors, Leiden

\* The grey areas in the figures are neighbourhoods that belong to a different municipality than the urban renewal areas (neighbourhood of origin). The figures only show flows that consist of at least three households.

Table 3. Characteristics of destination neighbourhoods for displaced households and other movers

	Displaced households		Total number of out-movers (2001-2006)
	Moved within neighbourhood	Moved out of neighbourhood	
<b>The Hague: Morgenstond</b>	(n=83)	(n=153)	(n=9196)
Average income per resident (*€1000,-)	11	12	11
Average % housing turnover	18	15	17
% non-western minorities	38	36	43
% social rented dwellings	80	56	48
Average house value (*€1000,-)	94	131	129
Average distance to Morgenstond (*100 meters)		35	35
<b>Utrecht: Pedagogenbuurt</b>	(n=99)	(n=226)	(n=7679)
Average income per resident (*€1000,-)	24	25	26
Average length of residence	8	8	8
% non-western minorities	36	33	29
% social rented dwellings	67	52	49
Average house value (*€1000,-)	104	112	120
Average distance tot Pedagogenbuurt (*100 meters)		43	43
<b>Leiden: Hoge Mors</b>	(n=35)	(n=168)	(n=1516)
Average income per resident (*€1000,-)	14	13	13
Average % housing turnover	115	116	129
% non-western minorities	23	18	17
% social rented dwellings	56	53	50
Average house value (*€1000,-)	108	116	119
Average Distance tot Hoge Mors (*100 meters)		28	25

Source: Staedion, Woningnet, Portaal; municipalities of The Hague, Utrecht & Leiden

## Desegregation by demolition?

- Almost half (44 %) of the displaced household in our sample has moved to a neighbourhood with a substantially higher average income, only 9 % moved to a poorer neighbourhood.
- Singles and residents with a long duration of residence (position within the housing allocation system) are very unlikely to move downwards in the neighbourhood hierarchy.
- Belonging to a minority ethnic group reduces the propensity to move to more affluent neighbourhoods
- Higher income groups are less likely to move to a poorer neighbourhood than low income groups. Nevertheless, even households in the lowest income category move, on average, to substantially more affluent neighbourhoods.

## Conclusions

- 1) Good news (from a policy perspective) is that displaced households do not reconcentrate in a limited number of neighbourhoods.
- 2) Urban restructuring leads to a desegregation of low income groups: even the lowest income category amongst the displacees has seized the opportunity to move to a more affluent neighbourhood.