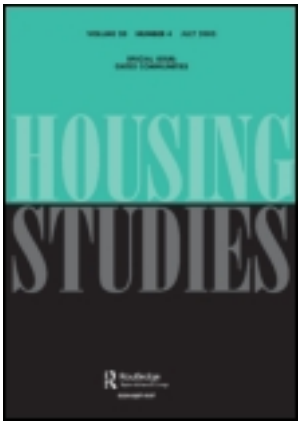

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Urban Restructuring and Forced Relocations: Housing Opportunities for Youth? A Case Study in Utrecht, the Netherlands

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Urban Restructuring and Forced Relocations: Housing Opportunities for Youth? A Case Study in Utrecht, the Netherlands

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ABSTRACT *The existence of deprived urban neighbourhoods leads many governments to adopt policies of urban restructuring aimed at changing the socio-physical structure of these areas. Such policies often take form in the demolition of social rented dwellings and the displacement of residents. Although we know quite a lot about the effects of displacement on adults, little attention has been paid to the effects on youth. This paper provides insight into the effects of urban restructuring on the dwelling and neighbourhood conditions of youth between 12 and 21 in Utrecht (the Netherlands). The situation of forced movers over the last 10 years is compared with a control group of other movers. The findings indicate that many youth who were forced to relocate perceive that they moved to better dwellings. However, the improvements were generally small and more than half moved to low-income neighbourhoods similar to those they had left.*

KEY WORDS: Displacement, youth, urban restructuring, choice-based letting, Utrecht, the Netherlands

Introduction

All cities have neighbourhoods with concentrations of low-income households. Many of these neighbourhoods also suffer from other social ills: high crime rates, loss of a sense of safety, a poor quality housing stock and derelict public spaces (Andersson & Musterd, 2005; van Kempen *et al.*, 2006). In an increasing number of countries, these deprived urban areas have been subject to urban restructuring, viz. a process in which the generally inexpensive housing stock is demolished and more expensive dwellings are built. This means that poorer households have to move away, whereas the more expensive new homes attract households with higher incomes. The area consequently ends up with a population

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that is more mixed in terms of household socio-economic status (SES) and often also in terms of household structure and ethnicity.

A lot of research into the effects of such policies has been carried out. In the Netherlands, for example, researchers have looked at the satisfaction of the 'stayers' with the changes in their neighbourhoods, at the satisfaction of the 'movers' with their new housing situations, and at the activity patterns and social contacts of the old and the new inhabitants of the restructured areas (cf. Bolt & Torrance, 2005; Kleinhans, 2005; van Beckhoven & van Kempen, 2003; van Bergeijk *et al.*, 2008; Veldboer *et al.*, 2002). A lot of research has also been carried out in other countries with respect to these topics (e.g. Arthurson, 2002, 2007; Atkinson & Kintrea, 2000; Goodchild & Cole, 2001; Jupp, 1999; Kearns, 2002). Most studies that follow the displaced households report that movers are generally satisfied with their new dwellings and neighbourhoods. However, displacement has also been shown to result in the disruption of social contacts in the old neighbourhood, and to the forced relocation to a new neighbourhood with a new social structure. Research on neighbourhoods that undergo restructuring shows that the traditional inhabitants of these areas do not have many contacts with the new inhabitants, and that owner-occupiers and renters, as well as natives and ethnic minorities, live more or less parallel lives.

A major limitation of previous research is its almost exclusive focus on the experiences of adults. Youth[1] have received hardly any attention. This is a serious shortcoming, since young people are an important category in urban restructuring areas. They tend to spend a lot of time in the neighbourhood; they maintain a large proportion of their social contacts around neighbourhood-based foci of activity; they sometimes make the area unsafe and they are not only the present but might also be the future inhabitants of the area.

Matthews & Limb (1999, p. 66) give several reasons why geographical research among youth is essential. First, we simply do not know enough about what young people want, need and think. Policies aimed at the neighbourhood are almost always implemented with visions in mind, but generally fail to take into account youth's opinions on how a neighbourhood should look like or the impact these policies have on youth. Second, young people usually use the neighbourhood and its amenities differently from adults. A park or a square often has a different meaning for a young person than for an adult: for adults, it may merely be a place to pass through, whereas for a young person it is a space for meeting and making contact. These meanings can also differ between categories of youth, e.g. between boys and girls and between different age groups (Karsten, 2003). Third, young people usually have less freedom of movement than adults, and thus fewer opportunities to use urban space. They generally have less money and, therefore, cannot use expensive forms of transport. Their movements may also be limited by adults, especially their parents, which results in some places being inaccessible to them, e.g. places that are considered dangerous or that are far from their homes (Karsten, 1998; Valentine, 1997).

The present research, therefore, focused on the effects of restructuring policies on 12- to 21-year-olds. The aim was to find out whether a forced move generates positive or negative effects for youth in terms of dwelling and neighbourhood conditions. The research question was: *What are the effects of displacement on the dwelling and neighbourhood conditions and satisfaction of youth?*

Here, we specifically focus on how youth feel about the dwellings and neighbourhoods they ended up living in after relocating. The research was carried out in Utrecht, the fourth largest city in the Netherlands.

Deprived Areas, Forced Moves and Young People: Theoretical Notions

With the increase in concentrated poverty in urban neighbourhoods over recent decades, and the associated rise in crime and violence, a growing interest has emerged in the impact of neighbourhoods on various social outcomes (for an overview: see Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000). At the same time, increasingly attention is being paid to the relation between young people and their environment. Especially in the British and American literature, 'children's geographies' and 'youth geographies' have become accepted terms for studies that focus on the description and analysis of young people's use of space and on their opinions about various aspects of their environment (Aitken, 1994; Ansell, 2009; Holloway & Valentine, 2000). These two developments have led to research on the effects of growing up in a deprived neighbourhood on several youth outcomes. The underlying notion guiding much of this research is that growing up in deprived neighbourhoods (defined as areas with a low SES) can be a risk for young people. It is assumed that exposure to neighbourhood disadvantage is one of the reasons that young people in deprived neighbourhoods score lower on various social and behavioural indicators than their peers in more affluent neighbourhoods (Jencks & Mayer, 1990).

A wide range of domains of well-being have been used to examine neighbourhood effects on young people, such as educational outcomes, behavioural and emotional problems, and sexuality and childbearing (Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000). It is assumed that deprived neighbourhoods are characterised by negative role models, a lack of social networks that could be a source of social capital, a lack of social control, a lack of good quality institutional resources and a negative reputation, and that these aspects have a negative effect on a young person's social outcomes.[2]

Research on educational outcomes generally shows that young people in deprived neighbourhoods have worse results at school (Dornbusch *et al.*, 1991), are more likely to drop out (Brooks-Gunn *et al.*, 1993) and are less likely to end up with a high level of education (Duncan, 1994; Garner & Raudenbush, 1991). Moreover, living in a deprived neighbourhood is often associated with a variety of problem behaviours. Research by Simons and colleagues (1996) on youth in years 9 and 10, for example, indicates that living in a neighbourhood that has a low SES is associated with higher rates of behaviour problems among boys and girls and of delinquent behaviour among boys. Finally, growing up in a deprived neighbourhood has been shown to be related to youth's sexuality and fertility outcomes, such as an earlier timing of first intercourse and an elevated level of teenage pregnancies (Anderson, 1991; Billy *et al.*, 1994).

However, a growing number of scholars conclude that neighbourhood effects on young people are rather modest once individual and family-level factors are taken into account (see Elliot *et al.*, 2006; Furstenberg *et al.*, 1999; Jencks & Mayer, 1990; Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000). Especially European studies have identified only minor effects of the neighbourhood on young people's well-being; some even found no effects (see Friedrichs *et al.*, 2003).

Although the effect of the neighbourhood on social outcomes has not been indisputably proven, it is widely assumed that being able to move away from a deprived neighbourhood increases a person's quality of life. From this perspective, displacement is believed to form an opportunity for residents to improve their dwelling and neighbourhood conditions. As the neighbourhoods where urban restructuring takes place are usually among the worst areas in the city, urban restructuring policies are likely to move people to less deprived

neighbourhoods. In an overview of projects in 48 cities in the USA, Kingsley and colleagues (2003) found that most relocated households ended up in neighbourhoods that were less poor: the average poverty rate dropped from 61 to 27 per cent. Moreover, Ludwig, Duncan & Hirschfield (1998) showed in the context of the American Moving to Opportunity experiment that among 11- to 15-year-olds who moved to less deprived neighbourhoods, crime rates for drug offences, truancy, running away from home, disorderliness and weapon offences were significantly lower than the rates for youth who remained in public housing in poor neighbourhoods.

In a study in the Netherlands, Posthumus and colleagues (2010) found that a large number of poor households that were forced to move from deprived areas to make way for urban restructuring ended up in equally deprived areas or in areas that were only slightly better in terms of SES and housing value.

Forced Moving and Housing Choices

A household's relocation decision is generally the outcome of an interplay between preferences, resources, opportunities and constraints. The classic choice-oriented literature on residential mobility places much emphasis on preferences. The decision to move is taken when a certain level of dissatisfaction with the present situation is reached (Brown & Moore, 1970), but it may also stem from the aspiration to move up the housing ladder (e.g. to become a homeowner or move to a neighbourhood with a higher SES). For a move to actually take place, a trigger or motive for moving is a necessary condition. This can take the form of, for example, a change of job or a change in the household composition (Mulder, 1993).

Displacement does not seem to fit well within this framework. Because everyone is affected when the decision to restructure an area is taken, we cannot speak of individual triggers to move (Mulder, 1993; Popp, 1976; Short, 1978). However, although the forced movers have the obligatory character of their move in common, they generally react in different ways. In the context of forced moving, preferences can thus still play a role, albeit a less obvious one. Some households may have already decided to move for other reasons before they were served their eviction notices: for them, urban restructuring may present an opportunity (Kleinhans, 2003). Moreover, even households that would have wanted to stay are likely to have some preferences with regard to a new dwelling and a new neighbourhood (Bolt *et al.*, 2009).

Housing choices are based not only on preferences, but also on opportunities and constraints at the macro level, as well as on the resources of households. A household's desire to move to a certain place can be constrained by such factors as shortages in the housing market or competition between households for the same type of housing, for example, inexpensive social rented dwellings. The availability and the affordability of dwellings are largely dependent on national housing market policies. The retreat of the welfare state since the mid-1980s in many West European countries has led to fewer additions to the social rented stock and consequently to fewer housing opportunities for low-income households. Moreover, a retreating welfare state might also result in declining housing subsidies, which prevents low-income households from gaining access to housing that is more expensive than they could otherwise afford (Özüekren & van Kempen, 2002). Furthermore, the housing opportunities of households are constrained by allocation rules:

households are dependent on their position on a waiting list and need to meet the suitability criteria in terms of household size and income.

Households' resources determine the extent to which they can overcome housing market constraints (Rex & Moore, 1967). In the residential mobility literature, the emphasis is especially on material resources, since access to good housing and a good neighbourhood is largely determined by income. Resources are important for the final housing choice: households with higher incomes usually end up in better dwellings in better neighbourhoods than those with lower incomes. In the context of displacement, it may also be expected that households with higher incomes who still live in social rented dwellings are better able to move to other housing sectors, especially the owner-occupied sector. Households with low incomes generally have little choice and are consequently more likely to end up in deprived neighbourhoods after restructuring (Bolt *et al.*, 2009). For youth who still live at home, their parents' low income reduces the probability of ending up in good housing in a good neighbourhood.

Cognitive resources can also have an effect on the housing choice. Knowledge of housing market opportunities differs between categories of people. Highly educated people may have more opportunities than those with a relatively low educational level, because they might be more capable of finding and using information, and of dealing with the complexity of the housing allocation system. This increases the probability of finding a new dwelling that meets the household's preferences. Some households also try to negotiate with the housing association for better housing conditions, and some succeed at this (Meerts *et al.*, 2011). The ability to negotiate might also be related to the level of cognitive resources. Ethnic minority groups tend to be disadvantaged in terms of cognitive resources, because of the lack of information about housing opportunities in their languages (Kullberg, 2002; van Kempen & Özüekren, 1998). To achieve equal housing opportunities for all groups, it is therefore crucial that housing associations provide sufficient support and assistance with moving and finding a new home.

Furthermore, the housing situation at the time of the move can be an important resource for households that are forced to move. In the Dutch housing market, households that are forced to move get priority over regular home seekers when suitable dwellings become available. However, in most cities—including Utrecht—they can only make use of this priority status for houses that are comparable to their current dwelling type (Kleinhans & van der Laan Bouma-Doff, 2008; Posthumus *et al.*, 2012). The likelihood of moving to a single-family dwelling is, therefore, generally greater for households that are already living in single-family dwellings than for households in multifamily dwellings.

Thus, it is essential in the process of urban restructuring to take into account both the housing market constraints and the variation in resources between households. If there is insufficient appropriate housing, or households lack the necessary resources to find a suitable dwelling, it becomes hard to move people from the area.

Effects of Forced Relocation on Young People

Not much knowledge is available on what young people think about the effects of a forced relocation. In the American context, some research has been done on the effects of the HOPE VI programme on young people. The programme aims at de-concentrating poverty, and is thus very similar to the Dutch policy of urban restructuring. The idea behind the programme is that households move to neighbourhoods with lower concentrations of

poverty, where they will enjoy improved dwelling and neighbourhood conditions, and that through more contacts with positive role models they will strengthen their social economic position (cf. Popkin *et al.*, 2004b).

Most evaluations of HOPE VI show that it has been successful in terms of dwelling and objective neighbourhood characteristics. Most households that were forced to move ended up in better housing and in neighbourhoods that were less poor and much safer (Gallagher & Bajaj, 2007; Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000; Popkin *et al.*, 2004b). On the other hand, research by Clampet-Lundquist (2007) among 12- to 18-year-olds in a Philadelphia neighbourhood shows that this group did not always experience the move as positive. After living for a long time in a certain neighbourhood, it was difficult to build a new life in the new neighbourhood. They had to get used to new values and norms, organised activities were still unknown and new friends were difficult to make. They experienced a lower feeling of being at home in their new neighbourhood. The move had a negative effect on the levels of social cohesion and control in the neighbourhood, and because of the youth's limited contacts with their new neighbours, the presumption that they would be influenced by positive role models is a dubious one.

Gallagher & Bajaj (2007) report similar findings. Over a period of 4 years, they followed 6- to 14-year-olds who moved from HOPE VI neighbourhoods, and found that children in displaced households showed a very high level of social isolation. However, Gallagher and Bajaj add that this does not necessarily have to be negative, since it could protect them from negative neighbourhood influences. In their study on the impact of moving on school-age children, Popkin and colleagues (2004a) indicate not only that the change of neighbourhood is sometimes experienced negatively by these children, but also that changing schools created stress and academic challenges.

A point that is implicitly made in the literature is that time can be an important variable. Just after moving, young people might be less satisfied with their move than they will be a few years later, as it takes time to get used to a new neighbourhood, find new leisure activities and make contacts with local people and local institutions. The research by Gallagher & Bajaj (2007) shows that even after 4 years, some of the youth (who were now between 10 and 18 years of age) were still not fully adjusted to their new neighbourhoods. Although many said that they had made new friends, many also indicated that they did not have close friends in their new neighbourhoods.

All in all, it seemed reasonable to expect that not all youth would be completely happy about moving to a new area. Even when the previous area was known as a poor or deprived area, the new area would not necessarily be a better place to live, at least in the eyes of youth. Moreover, residential mobility has generally been found to lead to a wide range of negative outcomes for youth, such as an increase in violent behaviour (Haynie & South, 2005), school dropout (Astone & McLanahan, 1994) and negative influences on long-term educational and occupational achievements (Hagan *et al.*, 1996). These negative outcomes are usually explained by the disruptive effects of a move on the social ties of both parents and youth.

The Policy of Urban Restructuring in the Netherlands

The current policy of urban restructuring in the Netherlands originated in the 1997 White Paper on urban restructuring, which outlined a policy aimed at bringing an end to spatial concentrations of the poor in urban neighbourhoods, particularly those built between 1945

and 1965. In contrast to earlier urban renewal efforts, the objective of the Big Cities Policy (Grotestedenbeleid) was to achieve a socially mixed population (Ministerie VROM, 1997). At its core lay urban restructuring. The aim was to upgrade and sell off social rented dwellings, to carry out selective demolition and to build more expensive dwellings (Kleinhans, 2003; Ministerie VROM, 1997). Retaining and attracting middle-class households would increase the social and economic vitality of the city by reducing the concentration of unemployment and by promoting liveability, public safety and entrepreneurship in the worst neighbourhoods (van Beckhoven & van Kempen, 2003).

The latest incarnation of Dutch urban policy is focused on the country's 40 most problematic neighbourhoods. This plan also reveals the government's grim view of the concentration of low-income and ethnic minority households (Ministerie VROM, 2007, p. 3, own translation): 'Many districts have an overrepresentation of households that are clearly disadvantaged. Such districts mostly also have an overrepresentation of non-Western minority residents.'

The official documents make it abundantly clear that one of the central aims of urban policy is to change the social mix in neighbourhoods through urban restructuring, which necessarily results in the displacement of a large number of households. This forms the background to the present research on the effect of urban restructuring policies on the dwelling and neighbourhood conditions and satisfaction of youth.

The Allocation System

Before presenting the research design and results, a brief explanation of the Dutch allocation system is required. In most Dutch cities, the allocation of social rented dwellings is based on a choice-based letting system (Kullberg, 2002). A list of all the available social rented dwellings is published in a newspaper or on the Internet. Interested households may apply for these dwellings if they meet the suitability criteria, which are intended to ensure that households get the type of dwelling that is most suitable for them. More concretely, these suitability criteria mean that the household size must match the number of rooms and that the household income must match the rent level of the dwelling. The final procedure is straightforward: the household that has been on the waiting list the longest gets the dwelling.

For displaced residents, however, the situation is somewhat different, because housing associations offer them a certificate of urgency that gives them priority over regular house seekers who are looking for a social rented dwelling. If a regular house seeker and a forced mover both apply for the same dwelling, it is allocated to the latter. However, this priority advantage is generally limited to social rented dwellings that are comparable in size and type to the dwelling a household is forced to leave. The housing association demarcates the available options in the 'option profile'. For example, in most cases the priority status cannot be used to move from an apartment to a single-family dwelling (Kleinhans & van der Laan Bouma-Doff, 2008). In general, urgency certificates are valid for a year; during this period, displaced households can apply for any dwelling that matches their option profile, belonging to any housing association in the city region. If a household has not found an appropriate dwelling within a year, the housing association will discuss with the household the dwellings that are available in an attempt to arrive at an acceptable solution to the problem. Furthermore, housing associations are obliged to compensate households

for their moving costs. The amount differs per housing association, but is generally around €5000.

Research Design

Research City

The research was carried out in Utrecht, which is the fourth largest city in the Netherlands (after Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague). It is centrally located in the country and has 316 277 residents (Gemeente Utrecht, 2012). There are considerable differences between its neighbourhoods in terms of socio-economic and ethnic compositions.

Compared to the other three large Dutch cities, Utrecht has a relatively low proportion of poor people: 12 per cent of children younger than 17 years live in families that are dependent on benefits, compared to 24 per cent of children in Rotterdam, 18 per cent in Amsterdam and 15 per cent in The Hague (Verwey Jonker Instituut, 2008). In Utrecht, 35 per cent of children younger than 17 years live in deprived neighbourhoods. This is considerably smaller proportion than in Rotterdam, Amsterdam and The Hague, where the percentages are 63, 65 and 44 per cent, respectively (*ibid*.). Utrecht also has a relatively low proportion (21 per cent) of non-Western immigrants compared to Rotterdam, Amsterdam and The Hague, where the figures are 37, 35 and 33 per cent, respectively (Gemeente Utrecht, 2010a). The segregation index of non-Western immigrants in Utrecht (37.4) is similar to that in Rotterdam (38.5) and Amsterdam (36.3), and lower than that in The Hague (46.1) (Bolt *et al.*, 2006).

There are about 49 300 dwellings in Utrecht's social rented sector, representing 42 per cent of the total housing stock (Gemeente Utrecht, 2010b). Although there is a shortage of social housing, since the year 2000 the municipality's policy has been to restructure early post-WWII neighbourhoods. The aim is to demolish 9500 social rented dwellings and build 9000 new dwellings; of these, 3000 will be for the social rented sector. This has resulted in the displacement of many households and a growing number of households with priority status on the housing list: between 2001 and 2009 the percentage of social rented dwellings allocated to households with a priority status increased from 21 to 35 per cent (Bestuur Regio Utrecht, 2011). In this paper, we look at how this policy of urban restructuring and the concurrent displacement affects youth who were forced to move.

The Research Group

The research group comprised youth who had been aged 12 to 21 years when they had been forced to move because their dwellings were to be demolished. In general, their parents had been forced to relocate and they had gone with them. However, some of the respondents had already been living independently. We chose a lower limit of 12 years of age, because at that age young people normally leave primary school and embark upon secondary education. This change is usually accompanied by a changing spatial perspective: the young person's action space gradually expands, because important activity spaces are now located not only close to home, but also in a much wider environment. Our reasoning was that this changing perspective can influence a young person's opinions about their housing conditions. Moreover, as we used a retrospective approach, including younger children might have led to higher levels of recall bias, since it would have been more difficult for them to remember

long-ago experiences. The upper age limit for our research group was set at 21 years, because especially among 18- to 21-year-olds there is a fair chance that at least some will have already left home and got jobs and their own homes. Again, such important changes may influence opinions on the housing situation.

Although the forced movers were our main research group, we also identified a control group, namely peers who had not been forced to relocate. This group was divided into two subgroups: those who had moved voluntarily from dwellings that were not going to be demolished, and those who had not moved at all.

Data, Measurements and Methods

The data were gathered by means of questionnaires completed by members of the research group and the control group between June and December 2009.

The Mitros Housing Association[3] had given us access to the names and addresses of households that had been forced to move between 1998[4] and 2009 because of demolition activities. These data showed that the rate of forced moves was especially high in seven areas of the city. We, therefore, decided to select our respondents from these seven areas, most of which are characterised by large numbers of social rented dwellings, relatively low rents and a large percentage of low-income households.

A municipal database allowed us to find out which of these households contained children between 12 and 21 years of age at the time of the residential move. It also made it possible to find youth who had not been forced to move. We selected the respondents for the control group from neighbourhoods in which demolition activities had taken place and from which the research group had been selected. The respondents in the target group were all social renters; the control group consisted of residents of rented dwellings as well as owner-occupied dwellings. The target group (forced movers) comprised 433 potential respondents and the control group comprised 859 potential respondents. The response rate of our questionnaire was 26.0 per cent (29.6 per cent for the target group and 24.2 per cent for the control groups). We finally ended up with 336 completed questionnaires.

We used both objective and subjective dependent variables in our research. Concerning the change in objective dwelling characteristics, we decided to use the characteristics of upward mobility in the housing market as outlined by the Dutch Council for Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (VROM-raad, 2006) and to focus on moves from multifamily to single-family dwellings[5], from social rented dwellings to owner-occupied dwellings, and to dwellings with more rooms. We are aware that not all households consider these changes a step up in the housing market. Some categories of households, such as those with nest-leaving children, might prefer to move to a smaller dwelling. However, for our research group (mostly youth living with their families) moving to a larger, single-family dwelling with a garden is generally considered a step up in the housing market (Clark & Dieleman, 1996). Moreover, a study by Koster & Mulderij (2011) shows that most youth would also prefer to move to a single-family dwelling.

Objective improvements in the neighbourhood were measured by dummies indicating whether displaced households moved to another deprived neighbourhood. We defined deprived areas on the basis of housing value per square metre, percentage of households with a low income, percentage of pupils in a disadvantaged situation and percentage of individuals on benefits. The combined scores on these variables determine the rank of each neighbourhood among Utrecht's 112 neighbourhoods. We defined the 15 areas with the

worst scores as deprived areas. Five of the seven areas that were selected for our research (because of the high rate of forced movers) belong to this group of most deprived neighbourhoods. The subjective improvements after moving were measured by the evaluation of the new dwelling and neighbourhood compared with the old dwelling and neighbourhood by the respondents themselves, ranging from much better to much worse.

In our research, we used bivariate tests to compare the housing situation of youth before and after the move and compare the research group and the control groups. To establish which factors influence the objective and subjective improvements in dwelling and neighbourhood conditions, we conducted a number of regression analyses. Since the dependent variables were measured on a binary scale, logistic regression analyses were used to predict whether improvements had (1) or had not (0) taken place in dwelling and neighbourhood conditions and to find out which individual, household and neighbourhood characteristics play a role in predicting these outcomes.

Results

The Characteristics of Movers and Stayers

Table 1 shows that there are some significant differences between our research group and the two control groups. The forced movers more often belong to a non-Western minority ethnic group (often Moroccan), and they, as well as their parents, often have a low level of education and they less often belong to the category of employed.

In the remainder of the paper, we focus on how the move was evaluated by both displaced youth and other movers. The stayers are excluded. Table 1 shows how the forced movers and the other movers differ from each other on some core housing characteristics. It can be seen that most of the forced movers had lived in multifamily dwellings, and that all of the forced movers had lived in rented dwellings. This is not surprising, since these are the types of dwellings that are typically slated for demolition.

Where Did They Move to? Dwellings

One step that can be taken on the housing ladder is from a multifamily dwelling to a single-family dwelling. The analyses (Table 2) show that a significant number of forced movers were able to move to single-family dwellings. This indicates a significant improvement in their housing situation, in terms of the normal housing hierarchy. Another step up the ladder is the move to a dwelling with more rooms. Table 2 shows that forced movers are largely able to move to dwellings with more rooms, more so than other movers. An interesting point here is that a large proportion of the other movers moved to dwellings with fewer rooms. A possible explanation for this is that some of these moves were triggered by a change in the family composition, such as youth leaving the home or a divorce. A final—and as it turns out, more difficult—step on the housing ladder is a move from a rented dwelling to owner occupation. It turns out that not many of the forced movers were able to buy a dwelling. The other movers were better able to do so. It further turned out that particularly for youth who lived on their own, or moved to a dwelling of their own after displacement, it was more difficult to take a step upward on the housing ladder—that is to move to a single-family dwelling or to an owner-occupied dwelling—than for those that moved with their parents. This is probably related to the fact

Table 1. Descriptives

	Forced movers (1)	Other movers (2)	Non-movers (3)	Total non-displaced (2 + 3)
Gender				
Male	45.7	41.5	40.0	40.8
Female	54.3	58.5	60.0	59.2
Ethnicity				
Native, Western ethnic group	31.2	58.9	51.5	55.3
Non-Western minority ethnic group	68.8	41.1	48.5	44.7
Mean age at time of research	21.6	25.6	20.7	23.2
Level of education (obtained or following)				
Low	38.6	27.1	33.7	30.3
High	61.4	72.9	66.3	69.7
Level of education of parents				
Low	53.9	35.5	52.5	43.8
High (at least one parent)	32.0	47.7	31.7	39.9
Unknown	14.1	16.8	15.8	16.3
Main activity				
Education	60.0	29.2	60.0	44.2
Work	27.5	55.7	31.0	43.7
Inactive	12.5	15.1	9.0	12.1
Mean age at the time of move	16.5	19.9	–	–
Average length of residency in old dwelling*	9.9	9.0	13.9	–
Type of old neighbourhood*				
Deprived neighbourhood	87.5	80.4	79.2	79.8
Non-deprived neighbourhood	12.5	19.6	20.8	20.2
Type of dwelling: old dwelling*				
Multifamily dwelling	74.0	62.3	34.7	49.0
Single-family dwelling	26.0	37.7	65.3	51.0
Rental or owner-occupied: old dwelling*				
Rental	100.0	88.7	80.2	84.6
Owner-occupied	0.0	11.3	19.8	15.4
Household type in old dwelling*				
Without parents/family	14.8	26.7	3.1	15.4
With parents/family	85.2	73.3	96.9	84.6
	$N = 128$	$N = 107$	$N = 101$	$N = 204$

Source: Own fieldwork (2009).
*For the non-movers, the old dwelling/neighbourhood is also the current dwelling/neighbourhood.

that this group has less financial resources and to the fact that they generally move alone and thus cannot apply for larger single-family dwellings.

We conducted a logistic regression analysis on the probability of moving to a single-family dwelling in order to gain insight into the factors that influence the possibilities for upward mobility in housing (Table 3). As mentioned, forced movers are more likely than other movers to move from multifamily dwellings to single-family dwellings. It has to be noted, however, that this difference cannot be attributed to their priority status, since that status is valid only when a household moves to a comparable dwelling (i.e. another

Table 2. Changes in dwelling and neighbourhood characteristics (%)

	Forced movers	Other movers
Moved to less deprived neighbourhood	35.7	49.1
Moved to similarly or more deprived neighbourhood	64.3	50.9
Moved from multifamily to single-family[a]	52.1	31.8
Did not move from multifamily to single-family[a]	47.9	68.2
Moved to from rental to owner-occupied[b]	6.3	28.7
Did not move from rental to owner-occupied[b]	93.7	71.3
More rooms[c]	43.6	33.9
Similar number of rooms[c]	40.2	33.9
Fewer rooms[c]	16.2	32.3
Moved with parents	94.4	61.4
Moved to own dwelling	5.6	38.6
	$N = 126$[d]	$N = 106$[d]

Source: Own fieldwork (2009).
Note: Moved to less deprived neighbourhood: $p < 0.05$, Cramer's V = 0.135; moved from multifamily to single-family: $p < 0.05$; Cramer's V = 0.202; moved from rental to owner-occupied: $p < 0.01$, Cramer's V = 0.304; number of rooms: $p < 0.05$, Cramer's V = 0.185; moved with parents: $p < 0.01$, Cramer's V = 0.407.
[a] Only households that lived in multifamily dwelling in old neighbourhood.
[b] Only households that lived in rented dwelling in old neighbourhood.
[c] Only those who moved with their parents.
[d] N = highest of all.

multifamily dwelling). There thus have to be other factors that explain this difference. The logistic regression analysis reveals that the odds of moving to a single-family dwelling (versus a multifamily dwelling) is positively associated with already living in a single-family dwelling, with moving to an owner-occupied dwelling and with moving with parents (the displaced youth are underrepresented in all three of these categories; see Table 1). Furthermore, length of residence in the previous dwelling is positively associated with the odds of moving to a single-family dwelling. As explained, if no residents with a

Table 3. Logistic regression analysis on the probability of moving to a single-family dwelling

	B	Sig.	Exp(B)
Forced mover	0.860	0.033**	2.363
Old dwelling was single-family dwelling	0.667	0.070*	1.949
In new dwelling with parents	1.794	0.000***	6.015
New dwelling is owner-occupied	1.245	0.010**	3.473
Length of time in old dwelling	0.076	0.004***	1.079
Age at time of move	0.032	0.602	1.033
Has followed/follows higher education	−0.135	0.704	0.874
Education of parents (ref = low)			
High	0.511	0.161	1.667
Unknown	0.715	0.141	2.044
Non-Western minority	−0.266	0.446	0.766
Constant			0.034

Source: Own fieldwork (2009).
*$p < 0.10$; **$p < 0.05$; ***$p < 0.01$.
Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.367$.

certificate of urgency apply for a social rented dwelling, allocation is based on the position on the waiting list. For those households already living in social rented dwellings, this position is based on the length of residence. It turned out that the average length of residence was a little longer for forced movers than for other movers. However, even when controlling for the length of residence and the other factors mentioned above, the forced movers still had a higher probability of moving into a single-family dwelling. Possibly, this is related to the fact that forced movers are more likely than other movers to get assistance or advice from the housing association when they apply for a dwelling, which then leads to a larger range of alternatives. They might also have more bargaining power to negotiate a better quality dwelling: because the housing association wants them to move, they might offer a single-family dwelling in order to speed up the move (cf. Posthumus *et al.*, 2012).

Although after controlling for a number of demographic and housing variables, ethnicity does not seem to have a significant effect on the probability of moving to a single-family dwelling, further analyses show that of the forced movers, significantly more non-Western minorities than native Dutch people were able to move from multifamily to single-family dwellings. Especially for non-Western minorities, being forced to move thus offers an opportunity to take a step up the housing ladder: 57.1 per cent were able to move to single-family dwellings compared to only 37.5 per cent of native Dutch people ($\chi^2(1, N = 128) = 6.133$, $p < 0.05$). Another interesting point is the increase in the number of rooms. Within the group of forced movers, especially those with non-Western backgrounds were able to move to dwellings with more rooms: 51.3 per cent of the non-Western minorities were able to move to dwellings with more rooms compared to only 28.2 per cent of the native Dutch people ($\chi^2(1, N = 128) = 4.638$, $p < 0.05$). These outcomes might possibly be explained by the fact that non-Western minorities generally have larger families and, therefore, prefer to move to a larger dwelling. Since the option profile of households is also partly determined by household size, having a large family might enlarge the choice set of these households and allow them to choose larger dwellings.[6]

The Evaluation of the Old and New Dwelling

So far we can thus conclude that displacement leads to objective improvements in dwelling characteristics, but how is the change of dwelling experienced by the displaced youth? Table 4 shows that a large majority of the youth who were forced to move think

Table 4. Evaluation of the new dwelling compared to the old dwelling (%)

	Forced movers	Other movers
Much worse	2.5	7.2
Worse	9.0	19.6
Similar	9.0	17.5
Better	39.3	33.0
Much better	40.2	22.7
	$N = 122$	$N = 97$

Source: Own fieldwork (2009).
$p < 0.01$; Cramer's V = 0.269.

Table 5. Logistic regression on the evaluation of the new dwelling compared to the old dwelling (better/much better vs. similar/worse/much worse)

	B	Sig.	Exp(B)
Forced mover	1.246	0.002***	3.478
Age at time of move	0.016	0.803	1.016
Has followed/follows higher education	−0.064	0.860	0.938
Education of parents (ref = low)			
High	0.260	0.490	1.297
Unknown	−0.324	0.506	0.724
Non-Western minority	−0.102	0.767	0.903
From rental to owner-occupied	1.230	0.018**	3.422
Difference in number of rooms	0.197	0.093*	1.218
Old dwelling was single-family dwelling	0.515	0.208	1.673
In new dwelling with parents	−0.086	0.865	0.918
Length of time in old dwelling	−0.011	0.712	0.989
Constant			0.831

Source: Own fieldwork (2009).
*$p < 0.10$; **$p < 0.05$; ***$p < 0.01$.
Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.197$.

that their new dwellings are better than their old dwellings. This is a good news for policy-makers, because it indicates that there has indeed been an improvement for youth with respect to their housing situation.

We carried out a logistic regression analysis to find out which factors influence the opinion of the new dwellings compared to the old dwellings (Table 5). This showed that a move from rented accommodation to owner-occupation and a move to a bigger dwelling are positively associated with satisfaction—which is not very surprising. The most interesting point here, however, is that even after controlling for a number of individual, household and neighbourhood variables, being in the category 'forced movers' is still a significant variable in explaining the evaluation of the new dwelling compared to the old dwelling. Youth who were forced to move generally evaluated the change in dwelling conditions more positively than other movers. It has to be noted here that forced movers generally come from the worst housing; therefore, the evaluation of the new dwelling compared to the old dwelling might be more positive.

Where Did They Move to? Neighbourhoods

Quite a lot of the respondents moved with their families to other disadvantaged areas in the city (Figures 1 and 2). Especially the forced movers relatively often ended up in one of the city's most deprived areas. The major destination areas were almost invariably the areas where the majority of all dwellings are affordable social rented dwellings. Although a larger proportion of the other movers were able to move to other areas in the city, quite a significant proportion of these households moved to disadvantaged areas. Sixty per cent of the displaced youth who moved out of deprived neighbourhoods moved to other deprived neighbourhoods, as opposed to 39 per cent of the other movers. In Utrecht, 21 per cent of residents live in deprived neighbourhoods: for both forced movers and other movers in our selected neighbourhoods, the probability of moving to another deprived neighbourhood is thus higher than for households in average Utrecht neighbourhoods. Interestingly, youth

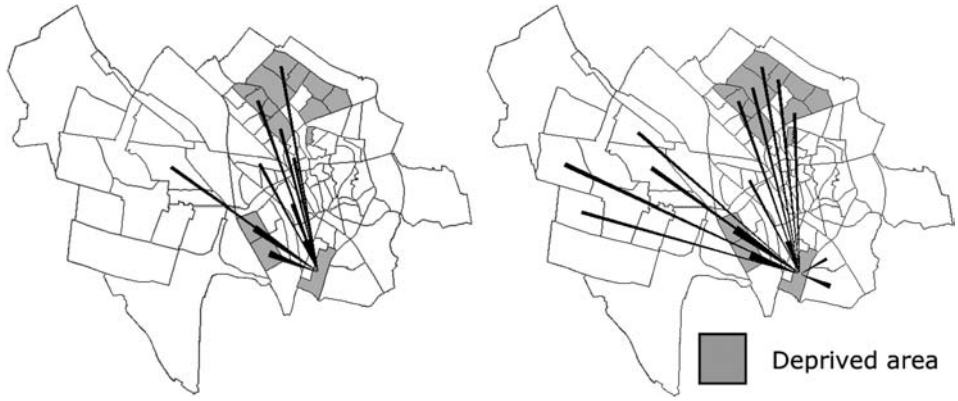

Figure 1. Destination areas of forced movers (left) and other movers (right) from the urban restructuring areas of Nieuw-Hoograven (Utrecht).

who lived on their own, or moved to a dwelling of their own, were more likely to move to a less deprived neighbourhood than those who lived with their parents.

We conducted a logistic regression analysis in order to gain an insight into the factors that influence the probability of moving to a deprived neighbourhood (Table 6). The analysis revealed that the destination neighbourhood is largely related to SES (as measured by the level of education of both respondents and their parents) and ethnic background. Youth with a low level of education and those whose parents have a low level of schooling are more likely than others to move to deprived neighbourhoods. The same applies to youth from non-Western backgrounds. As can be seen in Table 1, the forced movers are overrepresented in both these categories.

Whereas bivariate analyses show that forced movers are more likely to move to other deprived neighbourhoods than other movers, when the level of education and ethnic background are controlled for, the difference between the forced movers and the other movers is no longer significant. This means that a higher percentage of the forced movers

Figure 2. Destination areas of forced movers (left) and other movers (right) from the urban restructuring areas of Zuilen-noord (Utrecht).

Table 6. Logistic regression analysis on the probability of moving to a deprived neighbourhood

	B	Sig.	Exp(B)
Forced mover	0.192	0.587	1.212
Old neighbourhood is deprived	−0.233	0.579	0.792
Length of time in old dwelling	−0.012	0.651	0.988
In new dwelling with parents	0.441	0.337	1.554
Age at time of move	0.047	0.425	1.048
Has followed/follows higher education	−1.159	0.000***	0.314
Education of parents (ref = low)			
High	−1.018	0.002***	0.361
Unknown	−0.217	0.630	0.805
Non-Western minority	0.889	0.005***	2.432
Constant			0.793

Source: Own fieldwork (2009).
*$p < 0.10$; **$p < 0.05$; ***$p < 0.01$.
Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.249$.

ended up in deprived neighbourhoods not because the move was involuntary, but because households with a low SES and households that belong to ethnic minority groups are overrepresented in this group.

The Evaluation of the Old and the New Neighbourhood

Although forced moving generally resulted in greater satisfaction with the dwelling, the experienced improvement in neighbourhood conditions was rather modest. Quite a number of the respondents did not see an improvement when they compared their new neighbourhood to their old neighbourhood (Table 7). Unlike the results for the evaluation of the dwellings, there are no significant differences between displaced youth and other movers.

We also used a logistic regression analysis to find out which variables are responsible for the evaluation of the new neighbourhood (Table 8). As shown above, being displaced does not have a significant effect on the evaluation of the new neighbourhood compared to the old neighbourhood. Of the individual and household characteristics, only age at the time of move has a significant effect: older youth generally evaluated their new neighbourhood more positively than those that were younger. Two aspects of the dwelling and neighbourhood characteristics emerge as being very important. First, if the move was

Table 7. Evaluation of the new neighbourhood compared to the old neighbourhood (%)

	Forced movers	Other movers
Much worse	4.2	4.1
Worse	22.5	13.4
Similar	27.5	35.1
Better	29.2	28.9
Much better	16.7	18.6
	$N = 120$	$N = 97$

Source: Own fieldwork (2009).
$p > 0.1$; Cramer's V = 0.127.

Table 8. Logistic regression on the evaluation of the new neighbourhood compared to the old neighbourhood (better/much better vs. the same/worse/much worse)

	Model 1			Model 2		
	B	Sig.	Exp(B)	B	Sig.	Exp(B)
Forced mover	0.287	0.473	1.333	0.164	0.732	1.178
Age at time of move	0.108	0.096*	1.114	0.083	0.281	1.086
Has followed/follows higher education	−0.343	0.374	0.709	−0.239	0.588	0.787
Education of parents (ref = low)						
High	−0.277	0.450	0.758	−0.199	0.655	0.820
Unknown	−0.479	0.395	0.619	−0.172	0.770	0.842
Non-Western minority	−0.263	0.474	0.769	−0.036	0.933	0.965
In new dwelling with parents	0.724	0.158	2.062	−0.107	0.860	0.899
New neighbourhood is deprived	−0.982	0.010**	0.374	−0.505	0.258	0.603
Length of time in old dwelling	−0.075	0.007***	0.927	−0.044	0.204	0.957
New dwelling is better than previous dwelling				0.970	0.044**	2.637
Public transport is better in new neighbourhood				0.408	0.367	1.505
Shops are better in new neighbourhood				1.104	0.015**	3.018
Higher safety in new neighbourhood				2.008	0.000***	7.448
In the new neighbourhood, people get better along with each other				0.490	0.330	1.632
The population composition is better in the new neighbourhood				0.968	0.039**	2.634
Contacts between people are better in the new neighbourhood				−0.095	0.840	0.910
Constant			0.483			0.040
Nagelkerke R^2	0.124			0.492		

Source: Own fieldwork (2009).
Note: Those who moved within their own neighbourhood have been excluded from this table.
*$p < 0.10$; **$p < 0.05$; ***$p < 0.01$.

to another deprived area, the probability of being positive is much lower than it is for those who moved to a non-deprived neighbourhood. This is not surprising, given the preferences of most housing seekers to move to the best possible neighbourhood in terms of SES. Second, there is a negative relation with the duration of stay in the previous situation: those who had been in their previous dwellings for a long time were less positive about their new neighbourhoods than those who had been in their previous dwellings for a relatively short time. This is probably related to the fact that the longer people live in a neighbourhood, the more they get used to the place, the more friends they make and the more they engage in all kinds of activities in that neighbourhood. Starting a new life in a new neighbourhood may then be more difficult (cf. Clampet-Lundquist, 2007).

We added a number of subjective variables to our logistic regression analysis in order to find out why the move to a deprived area is so influential in explaining the evaluation of the new neighbourhood in comparison to the old neighbourhood (Table 8, model 2). One of the most interesting findings is that the safety of the neighbourhood is a significant variable. Those who feel that they are now in a safer area compared to their previous neighbourhood were much more likely to evaluate the change in neighbourhood more positively than those who now feel that they are in a relatively unsafe neighbourhood. The lack of safety in deprived areas is also the main reason why people who had moved to these areas were much less likely to evaluate their new neighbourhoods positively than people who had moved to non-deprived areas. Once perceived safety is controlled for, moving to a deprived area no longer has an effect on satisfaction with the neighbourhood. Satisfaction with the dwelling, the population composition and the shops in the neighbourhood also increase the likelihood of being satisfied with the new neighbourhood.

Conclusions

The main aim of the research was to establish the effects of demolition on the dwelling and neighbourhood conditions and satisfaction of youth. The conclusion is that, in general, they were able to improve their position, especially in terms of dwelling conditions.

When they compared the old situation to the new situation, many youth stated that they liked the new dwelling better than the old dwelling. In general, displaced youth are more often satisfied with their new dwellings compared to their old dwellings than other movers. It can also be concluded that being forced to move offers an opportunity for especially non-Western minorities to improve their dwelling situation. Households from a non-Western background are more likely to move to single-family dwellings and to dwellings with more rooms than native Dutch people.

These results are of course good news. Until now, most Dutch studies have emphasised the negative effects of urban restructuring, at least for adults, such as lower levels of satisfaction and social cohesion in the neighbourhood of origin, limited social interaction between old and new inhabitants, and the disruption of social ties (see Bolt *et al.*, 2009; Slob *et al.*, 2008; van Beckhoven & van Kempen, 2003; van Bergeijk *et al.*, 2008). Our research shows that there are also positive sides to this policy, as it might indeed lead to improvement of the dwelling conditions of the displaced and to improved satisfaction among youth with their dwelling and neighbourhood conditions, at least in the context of Utrecht. A crucial factor in this matter is the institutional context in which the displacement takes place: the choice-based letting system and the compensation mechanisms in the relocation process make it possible for a large proportion of displaced

households to find better dwellings (see also Kleinhans & van der Laan Bouma-Doff, 2008).

However, it is also necessary to make some reservations with respect to the results of this study. First and foremost, it should be repeated that as regards neighbourhoods, the objective improvements that are made are rather limited. There are a large number of moves from one deprived area to another deprived area (the so-called horizontal moves). It is clearly not the case that youth are able to move to neighbourhoods that are much better than the previous ones. They are mostly almost equal in terms of average income, population composition and amenities. The areas they move to are often among the most disadvantaged areas of the city. Non-Western minorities and youth with a low SES (as measured by their level of education and their parents' level of education) are especially likely to again end up in deprived neighbourhoods.

This finding gives reason for concern, as the Dutch housing allocation system is intended to provide equal housing opportunities for those in need of social housing. For policy considerations, it is therefore important to find out whether the relocation to other deprived areas is a matter of preference or a matter of constraints, such as the availability of housing or a lack of information about housing opportunities after demolition. All in all, policy-makers should realise that the idea that demolishing substandard dwellings leads to a massive movement of people to better neighbourhoods is an erroneous one. This policy is unlikely to result in many new opportunities for youth to acquire bridging capital and meet positive role models. Therefore, a large positive effect of urban restructuring on the educational, occupational and other social outcomes of youth should not be expected.

Second, although the opinion of the new dwelling was in general quite positive, the evaluation of the new neighbourhood compared to the old neighbourhood was less often positive (though it was still the case that around twice as many movers rated their new neighbourhood as better, than rated it as worse). This might be because it is difficult for youth to get used to a new neighbourhood, especially if they had lived for a long time in their old neighbourhood. They might miss their friends in the old neighbourhood and it is difficult to build new friendships. Safety and the population composition of the neighbourhood seem to be crucial variables in generating satisfaction with the new place. This is not so very different from the results of research among adults (van Bergeijk *et al.*, 2008). It has to be noted, however, that for younger children who are still going to primary school, the impacts of residential mobility on their satisfaction with the new dwelling and neighbourhood conditions might be more pronounced, because their action space has not yet extended far beyond the neighbourhood context. For future research, it will therefore be interesting to focus on the effect of displacement on this group of younger children.

Finally, it should be noted that at the city level the increasing displacement of households as a result of the restructuring of neighbourhoods is leading to a growing tension in the housing market: an increasing number of movers with certificates of urgency are competing for social rented dwellings. This development is reinforced by the reduction in the availability of affordable social housing, as a result of the restructuring policy that makes forced relocation necessary (van Kempen & Priemus, 2002, p. 247). It can, therefore, be expected that the likelihood of being able to improve the dwelling and neighbourhood conditions of households, and hence the satisfaction of youth with these conditions, will only decrease.

If policy-makers want to improve youth's dwelling and neighbourhood conditions by demolishing the social rented stock and moving the inhabitants to other dwellings, this

might be a successful strategy in terms of dwelling satisfaction. However, not much more should be expected. If policy-makers expect a better mix of household types in neighbourhoods as a consequence of demolition, they should be aware that the displaced movers do not spread evenly over the city but tend to re-concentrate in deprived areas.

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Notes

[1] Definitions of the specific age range that constitutes 'youth' vary across studies. Moreover, we are aware of the fact that youth is a socially constructed concept, of which the age markers might differ between cultures (Wyn and White 1997; Cope 2008). In line with the existing sociological studies of young people in 'Western countries', we chose to use the term youth to mean people aged 12–21.

[2] We will not elaborate further upon the mechanisms behind neighbourhood effects. A lot of authors have paid attention to these mechanisms (e.g. Sampson and Groves, 1997; Garner and Raudenbusch, 1991; Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn 2000; Ainsworth 2002; Kohen et al. 2002; Kohen et al. 2008).

[3] Of the three housing associations in Utrecht, Mitros has been the most active in demolition activities.

[4] We chose this period as in these years there was extensive demolition in Utrecht. We are aware that there might be some recall bias, as it might have been difficult for respondents to remember how they had experienced the move several years previously. However, when we compared the respondents who moved before 2002 with those who moved in 2002 or later, we found no significant differences in their satisfaction with dwelling and neighbourhood conditions.

[5] In the Dutch context, single-family dwelling is a term used for a dwelling which does not share a roof with another dwelling (i.e. there are no dwellings above or under a single-family dwelling). Dwellings that do not meet this criterion, such as apartment buildings, are multi-family dwellings. A single-family dwelling may share a wall with one (semi-detached house) or two (terraced house) other dwellings. Most single-family dwellings in Dutch cities are terraced houses.

[6] Unfortunately, we do not have data on household size, which means we cannot control for this variable.

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