The thesis gives input for the understanding of the problematic of tourism, proposing a potential strategy for the region of Amsterdam to distribute tourism more evenly through the city and region. Currently tourism is turning into a pressing problem, since global trends like globalization and economic well-being are leading to a growth of tourism numbers. Since the number of touristic movements is growing more than ever, with a specific focus on cities, inhabitants will have increasing problems with and feel increasing discomfort by staying in the center of touristic destinations. They are driven out of the inner city by increasing renting prices, sensing a loss of belonging and identity, congested public transport and overcrowding, nuisance and stress. The centers will become soulless without its inhabitants who care for the place and its history. Cities are originally built for the people who live, work and spend their free time here: they should not lose their purpose and become “soulless”. This balance has been partially lost in Amsterdam. Municipalities are struggling with the effects while aiming to increase the positive economic impact. Increasing the economic benefits means more visitors, and therefore also more pressing negative impacts if all concentrated in the same area.

The reflection will touch upon 5 aspects: the relation between research and design, the choice of research group and how it relates to the thesis, the larger social context, the complications found during the process and the research limitations.

Relation between research and design
The project uses a very structured approach existing of a few steps to fully understand the more general context related to trends, causes and effects of tourism and the specific context of the site: Amsterdam and its immediate surroundings. The design is supported by two main theories: the Network City layered analysis and Cultural Clusters, complementary to each other, resulting in a strategic proposal for the region.

The problem touches upon many aspects of the city, and therefore a structural method of analysing the current situation was needed, elaborated in the theoretical paper. The theory of Gabriel Dupuy (1981) and method of Kritika Sha (2017) is used to understand the 5 operators in the city: history, governance, technical, economic and social. The paper concludes with a proposal of analysing networks in the city by the means of multiple scales to identify problematic links between the layers. After the identification intervention areas can be situated in order to propose a strategy for the specific context of the place in question. Regarding the cultural clusters, evident is the attraction cultural facilities have on visitors, explained by de Hoog in his book The Dutch Metropolis. A concentration of these kind of facilities leads to clusters, becoming highly touristic areas. It can be stated that this theory can be utilized for the purpose of spreading tourists through the city also: adding new cultural facilities in other areas will attract visitors there.

The combination of both methods - the layered analysis and creating cultural clusters - are used to propose a spatial strategy, including an improved network of nodes and connections.
Choice of research group
I believe that this phenomenon cannot be improved only on the small scale with local interventions, but a large scale comprehensive strategy is needed to deal with the increasing amounts of visitors traveling to host cities and regions. After all, spaces are only able to cope with a certain density and distribution of growing amount of visitors will be necessary. Therefore, this thesis will combine both scales, going from a large scale analysis and strategy to implementation on the smaller scale. Making a strategy for growing touristic regions in Europe directly relates to the theme of the Imagining European Regions studio, where spatial planning, territorial governance and regional design are key. How can European regions deal with the growing amount of visitors in the future to fully use its positive potential and minimize the negative impacts? By developing a method to investigate and propose a potential spatial strategy for the case of Amsterdam the thesis contributes to the current body of knowledge on dealing with tourism migration to urban contexts.

The thesis and the larger social context
Research on tourism impacts is not new, many cases have been investigated in relation to both negative and positive impacts and solutions have been proposed in the form of sustainable tourism and spreading strategies. However, many inhabitants of touristic host cities in Europe have been expressing their discomfort to tourism impacts, despite the municipality’s efforts on strategies to improve the situation. The strategies have had results, but the living conditions are still not according to the needs of the inhabitants. This thesis aims to propose an advanced spreading strategy for the city to enhance the quality of life for the affected citizens and the experience of visitors by adding leisure activities and facilities in other parts of the city, connected by multiple options of transport, while maximizing the potential of economic benefit equally distributed through the area. There is a disconnection between the very local impacts and the larger scale regional and municipal spatial strategy. The theoretical framework about the network layer approach for analysing this specific topic contributes to the literature by connecting the social, spatial and governmental aspects to each other in one method, taking into account the multi-scalar aspect of tourism movements. Amsterdam is the chosen case for this thesis, however the same method can be used for improving the quality of life in other cities coping with these impacts like Barcelona, Venice and Florence. Therefore, the thesis contributes to a larger social context, although critical is to understand that every situation is different and context related research and analysis are necessary to be able to create a strategy for a different area than Amsterdam.

Complications during project development
Each research has its complications and obstacles during the process of conducting it. Regarding data collection the research was unable to collect the more detailed information on the social layer, since the movement of people of tourists and citizens has not been mapped more extensively than the images of Psyllidis (2016) and the survey of the municipality by Hakvoort & Gutiérrez (2016). Parallel to this thesis a project was developing at the municipality of creating a model to simulate crowding in the city. During the last three weeks of the thesis this data was provided with a beta version of the simulation. This information is real-time data and shows different areas of crowding than the survey.
This means that the thesis might have different results related to the strategy and intervention areas if this information was available in an earlier stage. However, even if this information would have been available, it is not providing information on the local scale. The Poel and Boon - Kuddledieren - experiment is used to identify intervention areas on the smaller scale. This source is little reliable due to the small test group of only 30 tourists, biased by the pressing awareness of carrying around a sensor collecting data about their whereabouts and the limited variation of the target group staying at two kinds of accommodation (one hostel and one four-star hotel).

**Limitations**

By appointing new touristic nodes the whole city will become part of the tourist experience. Therefore it is important to notice that carrying out the strategy and spatial interventions of this project is twofold. Creating new clusters in Amsterdam will attract visitors to other parts of the city than the city center and relieve the pressure on the area, but this will also cause more crowding, commodification and friction in the appointed clusters. Especially with the expected growth in 2030, accommodating visitors in the other parts of the city will cause many effects. Even with the new clusters the city will not be able to cope with 45 million, or in worst-case 60 million visitors. What emerges from the conclusions is that the problem cannot be tackled solely by a spatial strategy of a network of nodes and connections, but needs to be accompanied by the implementation of two more products: policies to control the gentrification process and not exceeding the capacity of the area and an edited marketing program. Further research could focus on measuring the capacity of the city, new clusters and other touristic places in the region to facilitate visitors. With this, a proposal could be made with policies, restrictions and spatial interventions to advance the strategy of this thesis. The other is the marketing program, that needs to inform visitors about the possibilities of activities and sightseeing. Without this, I believe the strategy will not achieve the purpose, since people will not know about the possibilities and therefore not visit the proposed areas. The focus on branding the world famous city center needs to be shifted to a larger frame of the city and region to be able to be effective.

Also limiting the research to the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area discards many other potential places in the country, cities like Rotterdam, Utrecht, Den Haag and natural environments like the Waddenzee, Biesbosch and others. Further research could investigate the networks on a larger scale of the country, using the same tools to identify problematic links between the operators of this scale.

Concluding, the thesis contributes to the investigation and understanding of tourism impacts, however limitations are present determining parts of the result which are therefore not fully reliable. Also the strategy cannot be implemented individually. Further research is needed to accompany the spatial strategy to better understand the solutions for preventing gentrification processes, what makes public space appealing to both groups and how to avoid friction on the smaller scale.