Reconsidering Restructuring and Relocation: Searching and Evaluating Waterbed Effects

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Abstract

The existence of deprived urban areas triggers many governments to change the physical and social structure of these areas. Sometimes policies are meant to change the area itself, in other cases the policies are meant to improve the situation of the residents. Urban restructuring policies change the deprived urban areas, usually because low-rent dwellings are replaced by more upmarket alternatives. But the policies also affect the inhabitants: some have to move away and find a new place somewhere else in the city or the region. It is often expected that the movement will lead to a better situation for the displaced persons and households. However, there are also severe doubts about these positive effects. Who really profits? Is there a risk that the displaced re-cluster in certain urban areas? What do they miss when they are forced to move to an area far from where they used to live? So while urban policy makers often stress the positive effects attached to urban restructuring, research has indicated that negative issues will not be absent. In this paper I will give an overview of the possible positive and negative effects of relocations as a consequence of urban restructuring. I will focus on the households that have to move away from the restructured area. The main conclusion will be that there are definitely positive effects of urban restructuring policies for forced movers, but negative side-effects should not be under-estimated. I will base my argument on existing research in the field of urban restructuring and neighbourhood effects, as well as on recent fieldwork data from the Netherlands.

Introduction

In the first three or four decades after World War II, an enormous housing production took place in most European countries. This production was considered necessary because of the housing shortage resulting from the War and the population boom following that War. Many of the new dwellings were built in greenfield areas, in or close to the cities (in many Western European countries) or farther away from the cities (in many Eastern European cities). Most of these neighbourhoods were carefully planned. Large estates, often located in green and spacious environments, were prominent in this stage. Quite a number of dwellings were built in rather monotonous apartment complexes and often they were affordable for households with low to medium incomes. Initially these areas were popular: people moved there, because they liked it (Dekker & Van Kempen, 2004).

Whereas the future for these neighbourhoods initially seemed promising, nowadays they are often perceived to be the most problematic areas of cities in Western European countries. These post-WWII neighbourhoods often face a multitude of...
problems. Dwellings and public space have often been maintained poorly, resulting in discomfort and physical deterioration. Many of the more prosperous families, who could afford more expensive dwellings, moved out of the neighbourhood, leaving the vacant dwellings for a poorer population. The changing composition of households in the post-WWII housing estates has negatively affected the social cohesion in these areas, also because the traditional, more stable population (in terms of duration of stay) was replaced by a more fluent population, with ideas of moving onwards within a few years (Posthumus et al., 2010b). Other problems that have been identified in such areas have to do with increasing unemployment figures, increasing feelings of insecurity, deteriorating public places and a declining reputation and popularity (Dekker & Van Kempen, 2004; Wassenberg, 2004).

In many countries policies have been implemented in order to solve these problems. One of the most radical measures has been the demolition of low-rent dwellings and the rebuilding of more expensive alternatives in order to make a better social mix in these areas. A demolition strategy, combined with a mixing goal, has been quite prominent in a country like the Netherlands as well as in many other European (Ministry VROM, 1997; Ministry VROM, 2000; Ministry VROM, 2007; Van Kempen & Bolt, 2009).

The policy goal is clear: demolition would lead to more mixed neighbourhoods, especially in terms of income. The whole idea of the advantage of a mixed neighbourhood population is based on the fear for the negative effects of spatial concentrations of the poor. The literature on the possible negative effects of these kinds of concentrations is abundant and finds its origin in the literature on American ghettos in general (Wilson, 1987) and more specifically in the literature on neighbourhood effects. (e.g., Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000; Oberwittler, 2007; Macintyre et al., 2008; Galster et al., 2008).

A lot of research into the effects of such policies has already been carried out (e.g., Popkin et al., 2004; Kintrea, 2007; Van Beckhoven & Van Kempen, 2003). In the Netherlands, for example, researchers have looked at the satisfaction of the non-movers in such areas with the changes in the neighbourhoods, and at activity patterns and social contacts of old and new inhabitants of the restructured areas (e.g., Van Beckhoven & Van Kempen, 2003; Kleinhans, 2005; Veldboer et al., 2002; Bolt & Torrance, 2005; Van Bergeijk et al., 2008). Also in other countries a lot of research has been carried out on these topics (e.g., Jupp, 1999; Goodchild & Cole, 2001; Kearns, 2002; Atkinson & Kintrea, 2000; Arthursen, 2002; Arthursen, 2007). Typical results of such research are, for example, that the traditional inhabitants of urban restructuring areas do not have many contacts with the new inhabitants of such areas and that owner-occupiers and renters, as well as natives and ethnic minorities more or less live parallel lives and hardly have any contacts. Most movers are generally satisfied with their new dwelling and their new neighbourhood.

We thus do know quite a lot about the effects of restructuring policies on the neighbourhoods that have been restructured. Less attention, however, has been paid to the households that had to move to other neighbourhoods because of the restructuring process, the forced movers or displaced households. In this paper my focus is therefore specifically on these forced movers. This topic is relevant since the main aim of mixing policies both in the Netherlands as well as abroad is to reduce problems in neighbourhoods by mixing their population. When the moves of displaced residents would however result in a similar kind of concentration in other neighbourhoods, problems may not be solved but simply replaced.

In this paper I will give an overview of the possible positive and negative effects of relocations as a consequence of urban restructuring. I will focus on the households that have to move away from the restructured area. The overview is based on the existing international literature on the topic of displacement. I will also use some illustrations from two research projects that are currently running and carried out by ourselves at Utrecht University. One of these projects focuses on the effects of
demolition on displaced youth in the city of Utrecht. The second project focuses on the
effects of displacement of adults. Both projects are based on a survey and in-depth
interviews with displaced individuals.

Effects of displacement: some general backgrounds

Displacement can form an opportunity for residents to improve their living conditions.
As urban restructuring areas are usually among the worst areas in the city, urban
restructuring policies are likely to move people up into more prosperous neigh-
bourhoods. In a study in the Netherlands, Slob et al. (2008) indeed found that displaced
households moved on average to neighbourhoods with somewhat higher mean incomes.
In an overview of projects in 48 cities in the US, Kingsley et al. (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. However, recent research in the Nether-
lands has also indicated that a large number of poor households that are forced to move
from distressed areas because of urban restructuring again end up in an equally
distressed area or in areas that are only slightly better in terms of for example socio-
economic profile our housing value (Posthumus et al., 2010b).

In general, a relocation decision of a household is the outcome of the interplay
between preferences, resources, opportunities, and constraints. In the classic choice-
oriented literature on residential mobility, much emphasis is put on preferences. The
decision to move is made 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 on the housing ladder (e.g. to move into homeownership or to a neighbourhood
with a higher status).

Displacement does not seem to fit fine in this framework. When the decision to
restructure an area is made, everyone is affected. When some parts of a district will be
demolished or heavily refurbished all the households in this target area will have to
move, either temporarily or permanently (Popp, 1976). However, while less obvious,
preferences do play a role in situations of displacement. Some households may be better
positioned than others, because they have better rights or a slightly higher income,
which gives them more choice (Slob et al., 2008).

In research on displacement it is important to find out which groups have a better
position than others. It might for example be expected that low-income households have
fewer opportunities to move to a better place (in terms of housing as well as in terms of
neighbourhood type) than those with (even only slightly) higher incomes. Households
differ by the strength of their position in the housing market (Rex & Moore, 1967),
which reflects their resources. Five types of individual resources can be discerned:
material, cognitive, political, social, and the present housing situation (Van Kempen &
Özüekren, 1998). The residential mobility literature emphasises material resources, as
access to residential environments is largely determined by income.

While preferences and resources refer to individuals and households, opportunities
and constraints comprise factors at the macro level. Opportunities are the options that
individuals and households have, determined by the availability and affordability of
dwellings. In other words, opportunities refer to the ‘choice set’ of available alternatives
(Mulder, 1993). This choice set may differ very much between cities: in urban areas with
a low demand and a high vacancy rate the choice set is much better than in areas with a
high demand, no vacancies and a small supply of suitable dwellings. Constraints reduce
the choice set of households. They can arise from shortages in the housing market or
from fierce competition for the same type of housing (for example, inexpensive social
rented dwellings). In the process of urban restructuring these constraints are essential.
When households are not assisted with finding a new home, or when there is insufficient
appropriate housing, it becomes hard for people to find something that matches their
choices and preferences.
In the remaining part of the paper, I will try to sketch a picture of the existing knowledge on the effects of urban restructuring in general and demolition in particular on residents who have been forced to move, the so-called displaced residents. I will present the results in a structured way, taking nine statements as a starting point. I will use the existing literature and some recent results of our own research activities.

**About housing**

*Statement 1: Displacement leads to an upward move in terms of housing conditions*

A housing career can be defined objectively as ‘the sequence of dwellings that a household occupies during its history’ (Pickles & Davies, 1991, p. 466). This definition implies that a housing career should be seen as the occupation of a series of dwellings by a household during its life course. In their housing careers, households generally move upwards (see, e.g., Clark et al., 2003), but they may also move sideways or downwards (Kendig, 1990). Sideward moves are typical of those with lower incomes: if they have no opportunity to take a large step, they can only improve their housing situation in small steps, as Bolt and Van Kempen (2002) have described for minority ethnic groups in Dutch cities. Downward moves are quite common in the later stages of the household lifecycle, when people move to a dwelling lower in the dwelling hierarchy as a consequence of lower aspirations, declining household size or health problems. Downward moves can also be caused by divorce or financial problems following the loss of a job (Crowe & Hardey, 1991; Gober, 1992). In most cases, however, people move house because they feel they can improve their housing situation.

What about forced moves? There are some events in people's life that may lead to the need for a forced move. Some of these events are personal or on the level of a households, such as a divorce or the loss of a job. Other events have to do with the dwelling: a fire may force people to move. Especially when the forced move is a consequence of declining incomes, the chance is big that the next dwelling will objectively and subjectively have a lower quality.

But what about forced moves as a consequence of demolition? Demolition generally takes place in parts of the housing stock that belong to the worst parts of the cities, at least in objective terms.³ This means that there is a big chance that people move to better dwellings when they have to move as a consequence of demolition. This at least holds for situations in which institutions like municipalities and housing associations feel responsible for these households and assist them in finding a new home. In Western welfare states this responsibility also means that these households automatically move to the top of the waiting lists for new housing.

Indeed, recent research in the Netherlands indicates that as a consequence of demolition many displaced households have improved their housing situation. This can be detected in both objective and subjective terms. From a research among displaced youth in the city of Utrecht, it became clear that almost 80 per cent of the forced movers considered their present dwelling better than the previous (now demolished) dwelling (Bolt et al., 2010). Quite a number of them moved from apartments to single-family housing, to dwellings with more rooms than the previous dwellings. Especially this last aspect is important for young people, because one room more may mean the difference between sharing a bedroom with a brother or sister and having a bedroom on their own.

We may safely conclude that displacement as a consequence of urban restructuring often leads to an upward move in terms of housing conditions. But we have to be careful: if there is no assistance and attention for the displaced, there might be a chance that these households end up in much less favourable situations.

³ Inhabitants themselves may have a different opinion: they might see their present housing situation as totally unproblematic.
About neighbourhoods

Studies on the spatial effects of demolition have shown that displaced households tend to move to a wide variety of neighbourhoods. The same studies have however also shown that some neighbourhoods receive many more displaced households than others (Slob et al., 2008; Kingsley et al., 2003; Bolt & Van Kempen, 2010; Posthumus et al., 2010). As such, re-concentration does seem to take place, at least to a certain extent. The statements below refer to the types of neighbourhoods the displaced households move to.

Statement 2: Displaced households move to areas close to the demolished area

Much of the literature points to a short distance between the new and the previous dwelling; many people prefer a dwelling in, or close to their old neighbourhood (Den Breejen et al., 2004; Heins & Lenis, 2004; Kleinhans & Kruythoff, 2002; Varady et al., 2001; Hartung & Henig, 1997).

A study by Heins and Lenis (2004) shows that over 70 per cent of the forced movers return to their old neighbourhood (Heins & Lenis, 2004). Of course, this means that the new dwellings in the neighbourhood offer opportunities for these people. In many cases new dwellings will (deliberately) not be affordable for those with lower incomes. Others have found that a relatively large share of forced movers tend to move to neighbourhoods surrounding those where the urban restructuring policies have been carried out. Neighbourhoods located further away were clearly less often invaded (Den Breejen et al., 2004).

Research in the United States also indicates that, in general, people want to move over short distances. Research in Baltimore, Newport News, Kansas City, and San Francisco reveals that many residents chose to stay in the same area. The Baltimore project led to an average moving distance of around three kilometres and only seven percent moved by a distance of eight kilometres (Varady & Walker, 2000). In Philadelphia households appeared to move away within a maximum of around three kilometres from their old dwelling.

A few reasons for a choice to settle in or very close to the old neighbourhood can be mentioned. The first relates to social contacts (Kleinhans & Kruythoff, 2002; Popkin et al., 2004). For many people proximity to family, friends, work and sport facilities is important (Kleinhans & Kruythoff, 2002). In general, those with more social ties in the neighbourhood are more likely to stay there than those with fewer ties (Kleit & Manzo, 2006). Knowledge about other neighbourhoods can be put forward as a second reason. Households who are not familiar with areas other than their own neighbourhood are more likely to stay put. It appears that education is important here: the lower the education level, the less likely are households to have knowledge about other areas (Kleinhans & Kruythoff, 2002). The third important factor relates not to the household’s preferences, but to the opportunities on offer. Because of their low incomes, many forced movers are unable to move to an owner-occupied dwelling: they are therefore dependent on the (social-) rented sector. Affordable dwellings are not evenly spread over the city, but concentrated in a few neighbourhoods. Alternative dwellings are offered in these specific neighbourhoods and nowhere else (Van der Schaar & Den Breejen, 2004: Van Kempen et al., 2010). Migration patterns in four American cities reveal that residents only moved further away because of the lack of affordable housing in the immediate vicinity (Varady & Walker, 2000).

Taking this all together, there is a big chance that forced movers indeed will end up in areas close to the place they used to live before the process of demolition. Only when the areas do not offer the right (affordable) possibilities, forced movers are forced to look somewhere else. The provision of more and better information about opportunities elsewhere might help to disperse households.
From our own research on displaced households in Dutch cities (Van Kempen et al., 2010) it can indeed be seen that moves over short distances as a consequence of demolition are quite common (figure 1). But on the other hand we should be careful: quite a few households do find their homes at larger distances from the demolished area.

**Figure 1: Dispersal patterns of displaced households in Ede, Breda and Rotterdam**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ede – Burgen</th>
<th>Ede – Horsten</th>
<th>Ede – Uitvindersbuurt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breda – Heuvel</td>
<td>Breda – Driesprong</td>
<td>Breda – De Geeren Noord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotterdam – Zuidwijk</td>
<td>Rotterdam – Lombardijen</td>
<td>Rotterdam – Hoogvliet-Zuid</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Woonstede, WonenBreburg, Maaskoepel (Van Kempen et al., 2010)*

*In Ede and Breda only those flows that account for at least 2% of all moves are depicted.*

*Since Rotterdam consists of more neighbourhoods, the flows that account for at least 1.5% of all movers are depicted.*

*In Ede not all neighbourhoods are depicted. A smaller area is depicted since the outskirts of this municipality are very large; very few displaced residents move to these outskirts.*

**Statement 3: Displaced households move to areas with a large inexpensive housing stock**

The relatively unpopular dwellings that are listed for demolition tend to be occupied by residents with a low income (Bolt et al., 2009). Their restricted budget will force them to choose for another inexpensive dwelling when they are forced to move. Neighbour-

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4 This is not always and automatically the case, however. In a country like the Netherlands, the social rented dwellings that have been listed for demolition are not always inhabited by the poorest sections of the population. Also households with middle-incomes live in these dwellings. In most cases these households started to live in the dwelling when they did have a rather low income, but they did not move when their income started to increase.
hoods to which many displaced residents move are therefore characterized by a large inexpensive housing stock. A large number of researchers show evidence of this (Bolt & Van Kempen, 2010; Pendall, 2000; Varady & Walker, 2000; Hartung & Henig, 1997; Venkatesh et al., 2004; Kleinhans & Van der Laan, 2008; Van Kempen et al., 2010).

Statement 4: Displaced households move to areas with a low socio-economic status
Displaced residents tend to move to neighbourhoods with a low socio-economic status. Again, the explanation for this is that displaced households will often have a weak socioeconomic position. For this reason they are forced to move to inexpensive dwellings which are overrepresented in certain neighbourhoods and which can be seen as concentrations of households with low incomes and a relatively low education. This means that as a consequence of demolition and forced moves, some areas will see increasing concentrations of low-income households. The forced move to a neighbourhood with a low social-economic status is not always a negative choice. It is possible that displaced residents prefer to live in such neighbourhoods, because they like to live amongst people that are "just like them". When many neighbours face similar difficulties they would be more willing to help another (Trudeau, 2006).

Existing research does make clear that displaced households do disproportionately move to areas with concentrations of low socio-economic status (Oakley & Burchfield, 2009; Hartung & Henig, 1997; Pendall, 2000; see also Van Kempen et al., 2010). The motivation for this move is however not always very clear. Much more qualitative research is needed to find out if such a move has to do more with a negative or a positive choice.

Statement 5: Displaced households move to areas with large shares of minority ethnic groups
Neighbourhoods that receive many displaced residents are characterized by a large share of ethnic minorities (Oakley & Burchfield, 2009; Hartung & Henig, 1997; Pendall, 2000; Goetz, 2002). One explanation for this finding is that minorities are overrepresented in neighbourhoods with an inexpensive housing stock because of their relatively weak socioeconomic position. Another explanation is that the large share of displaced residents that belongs to an ethnic minority (Bolt et al., 2009) results in their over-representation in neighbourhoods with a large share of minorities. This may be due to a preference to live among co-ethnics, but also to factors that restrict their choice on the housing market (Phillips, 1998; Freeman, 2000). As ethnic minorities have on average less well-developed language skills than natives, and are less familiar with societal institutions and regulations, they tend to have more difficulties with the search process for a new dwelling (Bolt & Van Kempen, 2010). Furthermore, discrimination (Galster, 1999) and fear of racial harassment (Krysan & Farley, 2002) may also bring about that ethnic minorities are less successful than natives in obtaining a better place and thus "choose" for a limited number of neighbourhoods.

Statement 6: Displacement leads to re-concentration in distressed areas
From the above it is clear that it might be expected that re-concentrations of displaced households in a number of neighbourhoods can be expected. Despite the fact that a number of households seem to have the possibility to escape to different types of neighbourhoods, a lot of these households will have not much choice and have to choose for neighbourhoods in which affordable dwellings are available. These areas are almost automatically also the areas with a concentration of households with low incomes and minority ethnic groups.

In our recent research on displaced adolescents in Utrecht (Bolt et al., 2010), the Netherlands, we can indeed detect that re-concentrations seem to be emerging (figures 2 and 3). Although the number of neighbourhoods to which the displaced move is quite
substantial, a number of neighbourhoods receive considerably more movers than other neighbourhoods. These are basically the areas that are close to the area in which demolition took place (see also earlier in this paper) and the areas that can be characterised as distressed areas. These areas have a relative over-representation of affordable dwellings and low-income households.

Especially the forced movers relatively often end up in one of the major distressed areas of the city. The major destination areas are almost without exception areas with a majority of (affordable) rented dwellings. Those who did not move because of demolition, but for other (more voluntary) reasons, were on average more able to move to other areas in the city, although quite a significant part of these households also moved to disadvantaged areas. Sixty percent of the displaced youth moving out of a dwelling in a distressed area moved to another dwelling in a distressed neighbourhood, as against 39 percent of the other movers.

Figure 2: Destination areas of forced movers (left) and other movers (right) from the urban restructuring areas of Nieuw-Hoograven (Utrecht) (Source: Bolt et al., 2010)

Figure 3: Destination areas of forced movers (left) and other movers (right) from the urban restructuring areas of Zuilen-noord (Utrecht) (Source: Bolt et al, 2010)
But, there is something more to say here. While we just concluded that displaced adolescents more often re-concentrate in distressed areas, a deeper analysis reveals that this conclusion is premature. When comparing forced an voluntary movers and when looking at the effect of a number of variables simultaneously (by way of a logistic regression analysis) the importance of a forced move totally disappears. Then it turns out to be that the education level of the young people themselves and of their parents is the most significant variable: those with a lower education more often end up in a distressed area. Moreover, ethnicity matters: belonging to a non-western minority ethnic group significantly increases the chance to end up in a distressed area (Bolt et al., 2010; Bolt et al., 2011). This analysis makes clear that looking at a result, or a map, in a too simple way might very well lead to wrong conclusions.

**Statement 7: Displacement leads to less satisfaction with the neighbourhood**

In our research on displaced youth in the city of Utrecht we found out that with respect to the comparison of the new neighbourhood compared to the old neighbourhood, the displaced seem to be less satisfied than with the dwelling. While 80 per cent of the young displaced movers were satisfied or even very satisfied with the dwelling, only 45 per cent of the young people found the present neighbourhood better than the previous one. Quite a number of young people do not see an improvement when comparing their new to their old neighbourhood (Bolt et al., 2010).

To find out more about the backgrounds of this result, we used logistic regression analysis. It turned out that being a displaced young person or being a voluntary mover is not relevant. Also the household and personal characteristics do not have a significant influence (with the exception of the age at the time of moving). But two aspects emerge as being very important. First and foremost it becomes clear that if the move is to another distressed area, the chance for being positive is much lower than for those who move to a different kind of neighbourhood. This seems logical, because common sense is that nobody wants to move to a distressed area. Earlier we already indicated that quite a number of the forced moves do take place from one to another distressed area. Secondly, there is a negative relation with the duration of stay in the previous situation: those who have stayed longer in the previous dwelling are less positive about their new neighbourhood than those who have lived there for a relatively short time. Probably this has to do with the fact that when people stay longer in a neighbourhood they get used to the place, make friends and have all kinds of activities in that neighbourhoods. Starting a new life in the new neighbourhood may then be more difficult in such a situation (Clampet-Lundquist, 2007).

**There is more than housing and neighbourhoods...**

While the literature on the effects of forced relocations on the housing type and neighbourhoods is gradually becoming quite extensive, there is not so much literature on the possible broader effects of displacement. Some big changes might however be expected when people move from one to another area. One of the most problematic issues might be that people’s activities and social networks will change, because the people and facilities that were easily accessible in the previous neighbourhood might be too far away now. This might mean that a totally new life has to be set up. So-called disruptive effects may appear when people have to move: they cannot continue with the life they were used to, they have to find alternatives for different aspects of their life, for example in the field of social contacts and activities.

Residential mobility has been found to lead to a wide range of negative outcomes, like violent behaviour (Haynie & South, 2005) and influences 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 adolescents. Residential mobility makes it difficult for parents to
monitor teenager’s behaviours, as they are less familiar with the new friends and their
new friends’ parents (Coleman, 1988). Next to that, mobile adolescents turn out to have
fewer close friends than non-mobile adolescents (Haynie and South, 2005). Social ties
are found to be even more disrupted among families that were forced to move (as a
consequence of urban renewal) than among those who chose to move (Goetz, 2003).

Clampet-Lundquist (2007) investigated the effects of a move on the lives of 12-
18 year olds in the American city of Philadelphia. These young people moved from a
very poor neighbourhood to a less poor one. Some important results of Clampet-
Lundquist’s research are:

- Many family members lived in the area where the young people lived previously
  (before they moved). In many cases their parents’ parents had also lived in the
  neighbourhood. This intergenerational community caused a strong feeling of
  home. This feeling is lacking in the new neighbourhood.
- The young people knew a lot of people in the old neighbourhood. Parents also
  knew their friends’ parents. This led to social control and social cohesion. In the
  new neighbourhood this is much less the case: people lead more parallel lives.
- The young people who moved hardly have any contact with their new
  neighbours in their new neighbourhood. They greet each other, but that is about
  it. The idea that the positive role models would develop is thus built on thin ice.
- Many activities were organised for young people in and close to the previous
  neighbourhood. A lot of the young people made use of these activities. This is
  less the case in the new neighbourhood and the young people miss this.
- After living a long time in a familiar neighbourhood, it turned out to be
  problematic to find a nice way of life in the new neighbourhood. There are new
  values and norms, organised activities are still unknown and new friends are
difficult to make in the eyes of the newcomers. Starting a new life is not easy for
a large number of young people.

At the end of her article Clampet-Lundquist makes clear that time can be important. Just
after a move young people are more dissatisfied with their move than a few years later.
But this does not mean that after some years all problems have disappeared.

We have formulated two statements in the field of social contacts and activities.

**Statement 8: Displaced households stop with all kinds of activities as a consequence of
their forced move**

Because of a move away from their present neighbourhood, people might be forced to
quit certain activities. Especially young people may be forced to stop with all kinds of
activities, because the location of the activity might be too far now from the present
home. Taking part in sports activities is a case in point. When the football club is too far
from home, it may become too difficult to go there. When the fitness club is too far away,
the frequency of going there may decrease.

From our research among adolescents in Utrecht it indeed appears that about 30
per cent of the adolescents who were forced to move quit with their organised sports
activity after moving house or lowered the frequency of organised sports activities.
Forced movers also undertook fewer other activities, like visiting community centres
(Bolt et al., 2011). For those who quit sporting or decreased the frequency of sporting
we tried to find the explaining variables. Not surprisingly, the distance between the old
and the new dwelling is an important factor: the longer the distance, the bigger the
chance of a change in the activities of the adolescents. Immigrants have a bigger chance
to stop and also the time that the adolescents lived in the old area is an influential
variable.
Statement 9: Displaced households lose friends as a consequence of their forced move

From our own research on adolescents in Utrecht (Bolt et al., 2011), we found out that before the forced move about 60 per cent of the adolescents had most of their friends living with their own neighbourhood. Especially adolescents with a relatively low level of education had a bigger chance to have friends within the neighbourhood. The same holds for young people with a non-Dutch background (mainly Moroccans and Turks). Also, young people who have lived a large number of years within the same neighbourhood, had a bigger chance to have more friends in the neighbourhood. This is a logical outcome: the longer one lives in an area, the longer the time has been for making friends.

A forced move does change this. A half year after the forced move, less than a quarter of the adolescents had most of their friends living in their (new) neighbourhood. Quite a number of young people (about a quarter) stated that they lost friends after the move, because they were not able to keep the contact because of an increased physical distance. Still, about 20 per cent of the young people have most of their friends in the old neighbourhood.

At the same time, about half of the forced movers stated that they have made new friends in the neighbourhood. This especially happens when the differences between the mover and the people in the area are not too big. Obviously, making friendships is more easy when people of the same age are available in the new neighbourhood. Also, people are more often “on the street” more easily make new friends.

From our research we have concluded that a forced move does not have a very disruptive effect on the social lives of adolescents. Just after the move the young people do experience some big changes, but the longer term effects are quite small for most of the adolescents who experienced a forced move.

Discussion and conclusions

A policy aimed at restructuring urban areas leads to changes in these areas, with respect to the built environment, as well as with respect to the population. As a consequence of a changing housing supply (often affordable dwellings make place for more expensive alternatives), some households are not able to live in the area anymore, while the new dwellings attract households that were previously not interested in living in these areas. A more mixed population in generally the result of these restructuring policies.

This paper did not focus on the effects of the restructuring policies on the areas themselves, but on the households who had to move away from the neighbourhood as a consequence of these policies. Increasingly researchers have focussed on these households. One reason for this research attention is simply because these households are the target group of urban policy, like in the US. Another reason for this increasing attention is that researchers, and increasingly also politicians and policy makers, have found out that there might be a good chance for unwished side-effects of urban restructuring policies. These side-effects might be coined waterbed effects. The idea is that area-based policies do change neighbourhoods, but the effects of these policies cannot be found only in the targeted areas themselves, but also elsewhere in the city or even urban region. One of the main questions asked in the growing tradition of waterbed research is if urban restructuring aimed at de-concentration of low-income groups in targeted areas leads to new spatial concentrations elsewhere in the city. Another question is: if these concentrations can be detected, should they be seen as problematic?

The main results of the overview in the paper can be very briefly summarised: as a consequence of area-based urban restructuring policies there is indeed a tendency that forced movers re-concentrate in a limited number of areas in the rest of the city. These are often areas with affordable dwellings and with an over-representation of
socio-economically weak households and minority-ethnic groups. Now the interesting question becomes: is this a bad development or not?

First and foremost it is important to say something about the housing conditions. Without any doubt an overwhelming majority of forced movers state that the new dwelling is better than the old (demolished) one. This should come as no surprise, because in general the demolished dwellings may expected to be of a lower quality than those that will not be demolished. But it is quite important to keep this in mind: it is a major result of the policy of urban restructuring leads to better housing conditions of many forced movers. This means that a move to an area that has concentrations of households with low socioeconomic status and a move to an area with relatively cheap dwellings does not automatically imply negative feelings about the dwelling.

Second, forced movers seem to be less positive about the neighbourhood than about the new neighbourhood. This has to do with the fact that people were used to living in a neighbourhood. Often they have stayed for a long time in one neighbourhood and this means that they got used to living there, partly had their friends, had good neighbourly contacts, etc. A more or less sudden move to another neighbourhood does create disturbances. From our own research there are clear indications, however, that these disturbances are of a temporarily nature.

Third, building on the previous conclusion, the question of time seems to be an important one. Initially, when the announcement of demolition is made, many households are not very willing to move. An almost automatic second reaction is that they want to move only over a short distance and would like to stay in the neighbourhood if possible. But when a move took place to another place, many people do get used to living in that new place after a certain number of months (sometimes years). Moving back to the old neighbourhood is no option anymore. The question of time is also important with respect to social contacts. Initially forced movers do seem to lose friends when they move to another neighbourhood. But it does generally not take too long before they found new friends. Especially young people are quite flexible (Bolt et al., 2011).

Finally, it is important to keep in mind that despite the tendency of re-concentration in a limited number of neighbourhoods is generally quite visible (see the maps earlier in the paper), it is also clear that not every household seems to concentrate in those areas. Many households do move to other areas, often with a somewhat higher socio-economic status.

In research on the effects of urban restructuring on forced movers, some broader questions should be addressed.

1. Good research into the effects of forced moves needs good research designs. Both quantitative and qualitative techniques need to be employed, preferably in combination. A quantitative approach cannot do without multivariate analyses, because only in this way it would be possible to find out if the forced move in itself is an independent factor explaining the outcomes. Also, it is important to use control groups, for example voluntary movers or households that did not move. A qualitative approach is important to find out what people themselves think about their move and their new situation. We might find out that forced movers do move more to distressed areas than to other areas, but it remains to be seen if the movers themselves see this as a very problematic issue.

2. If waterbed effects do exist and if waterbed effects have detrimental or positive effects is partly a matter of interpretation of outcomes. When 80 per cent of the

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5 Partially these friends live in the new neighbourhood, but we should also keep in mind that friend also live in other parts of the city of even much further away (even in other countries). This means that a move to a different neighbourhood does not necessarily affect social contacts.
forced movers are satisfied with the new dwelling, the outcome is clearly positive, but when we see 50 per cent moving to distressed areas and 50 per cent to other areas, it remains to be seen how we interpret this. A small majority (let's say 52 percent) with a positive opinion on, for example, the character of the new neighbourhood, also implies that a rather large minority is negative. A deeper analysis to find out the compositional differences between the different categories is always necessary, because we then might find out that especially certain population groups are more negative than others.

3. A major issue is about the real aim of area-based urban policies. There are two extremes: urban policy should aim at the improvement of areas or urban policies should aim at the improvement of the situation of people. A focus on improvement of the area does not necessarily mean that the present inhabitants profit (the area might become too expensive for the present inhabitants). A focus on the improvement of the situation of people, might not necessarily lead to improvements of an area: the built environment may stay as dilapidated as it was or people might just move away when their socio-economic position is improved.

Urban restructuring and area-based policies will probably never stop. There is always a need to improve areas and improve the situation of people. More attention for those areas that are not designated as a target area and for those people that are forced to move because of demolition is necessary. Looking only at the effects of policies on the targeted areas is a too limited view. Especially when we know that forced movers will disproportionately end up in areas that, like the areas they lived before, do not belong to the best areas of the city – in terms of built environment and in terms of population – it is important to find out how to prevent that specific groups end up in such a situation.

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