

# Gentrification and the residents who are 'in between'

Master research on how gentrification in Assendorp, Zwolle is experienced by residents of social housing.

**Master Thesis Urban Geography (Geo4-3313)**

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## Summary

Keeping in mind the different parts in the gentrification literature (*why and how gentrification occurs; the people who gentrify; gentrification as policy and as urban strategy; people who are displaced by gentrification*), there is an important part missing which is also very interesting for a more inclusive understanding of gentrification and its impacts. So, there is a gap in the gentrification literature: Only a few scholars have paid little attention in their research on the people that are in between the gentrifiers who come to the neighbourhood and the displaced who have to leave because of the incoming gentrifiers. Usually this group of 'in between' residents are forgotten: they are not directly involved in the process of gentrification and are probably therefore regarded as not as interesting as the gentrifiers and the displaced. But the gap in the literature goes even deeper: almost no attention is given to how this group perceives the gentrification process that is happening around them and how they experience the changes that have occurred, are occurring or will occur in their neighbourhood. This research aims to provide insight in exactly this point, by exploring the experiences and opinions of 'in between' residents regarding the changes in the neighbourhood due to gentrification in Assendorp, Zwolle, by using three indicators: housing, facilities & services, and social networks/cohesion & place attachment.

Results from this research show that most of the residents embrace the changes that (will) take place regarding housing and facilities & services, but at the same time are cautious about them, in particular with changes regarding the social network/cohesion & place attachment. Even more: 'In between' residents are thought to be less involved and somewhat protected 'against' gentrification, but they aren't: emotional responses and opinions about changes and especially about possible changes in the future due to gentrification are very much present, and the opinions about the effects and impacts of gentrification on the neighbourhood are quite diverse, and therefore gentrification and the changes that come with it aren't perceived as black and white as thought.

Keywords: gentrification; experiences, residents, social housing, neighbourhood; housing; studentification; facilities; cohesion.

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## Preface & Acknowledgements

Proudly I present to you my graduation thesis of the Master Urban Geography of the University of Utrecht. With this research I finish my study Human Geography & Planning.

This thesis is the result of a research into the experiences of residents in social housing on gentrification. The choice of this topic was easily made. During the intense year of this Master my interest in this specific subject has risen. One important reason for this is the contagious enthusiasm of the teaching staff. Another reason is that I see gentrification and the effects of it everywhere around me; it is a phenomenon that started in the past but still keeps occurring in a variety of forms.

The specific attention for the gentrification experiences of residents in social housing comes from the significant gap in the gentrification literature. The aim of this research is therefore to make an addition to the existing literature and start filling this scientific gap.

I would like to thank several people and agencies who each have contributed in their own way to help me with my graduation research. Firstly, my special thanks to my friend Ivica, who is always there for me, offers a listening ear and if necessary gives me a pep talk or 'kicks my bottom'.

Also thanks to:

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- Brian Doucet, supervisor, for his knowledge, reviews and suggestions.

Marjolein Akse  
2011  
Utrecht/Zwolle

## Bookmark

If there is a reference to findings or results of this research it is done as follows: Master thesis gentrification, 2011.



## Chapter 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Introduction of the topic and gaps

What is it with gentrification that it keeps us - scientists and society - so occupied? The term gentrification isn't so new anymore, so why still the attention? Well; despite the age of the term, gentrification is still very much alive. Not so much in the former ways, but more in the light of the developments taking place in today's cities. So, gentrification remains a topic that is frequently discussed and examined in the field of urban geography.

The literature regarding this issue can generally be divided in a few sub-parts. The first part occurred especially in the early days of gentrification; it discusses mainly the reasons why and how gentrification occurs (Ley, 1987; Smith, 1987). Another part came somewhat later and focuses on the people who gentrify: their choices, satisfactions and habits (Bridge, 2007; Butler & Robson, 2003; Hamnett, 2003). The third and fourth part in the literature are about gentrification as policy and as urban strategy (Atkinson, 2002; Lees, 2000; Rousseau, 2009; Uitermark et al., 2007). The final part is about the people that have been displaced by gentrification (Atkinson, 2000; Freeman & Braconi, 2004; Slater, 2006). Especially the second and last sub-parts have a rather limited view of the gentrification process: only the 'best' and 'worst' impacts and effects on residents and neighbourhoods are shown. Although these 'best and worst' impacts are important for research into gentrification, they are just the extremes of outcomes that are possible.

Keeping in mind the different parts in the gentrification literature as mentioned above, there is an important part missing which is also very interesting for a more inclusive understanding of gentrification and its impacts. So, there is a gap in the gentrification literature. Only a few scholars have paid little attention in their research on the people that are in between the gentrifiers who come to the neighbourhood and the displaced who have to leave because of the incoming gentrifiers. Usually this group of 'in between' residents are forgotten: they are not directly involved in the process of gentrification and are probably therefore regarded as not as interesting as the gentrifiers and the displaced. Most residents that fall into this forgotten group reside in social housing. This can be another reason why they aren't researched as much as they are; residents of social housing are in a way (temporally) 'protected' against gentrification, in particular against displacement (Atkinson, 2002).

But the gap in the literature goes even deeper: almost no attention is given to how this group perceives the gentrification process that is happening around them and how they experience the changes that have occurred, are occurring or will occur in their neighbourhood. Doucet is one of the few scholars who does have an interest, as is shown in his research about the people that are living through gentrification in Leith, Edinburgh, Scotland (Doucet, 2009). The focus in his research was on the subjective experiences of the people who experienced gentrification in their hometown, but where not directly involved or displaced by it. Results from his research show that most of the residents embraced the changes that took place, but at the same time were cautious about them.

Due to the knowledge gap in the gentrification literature, this thesis is about the people who are 'in between' and their experiences regarding gentrification. As said above, a major part of this group lives in social rented dwellings and is therefore likely to be excluded in gentrification research. For a more inclusive understanding of gentrification it is necessary to study the 'forgotten' people who are 'in between' and to understand them in terms of their experiences regarding the impacts of gentrification in their neighbourhood. This research aims to provide insight in exactly this point, by exploring the

experiences and opinions of ‘in between’ residents regarding the changes in the neighbourhood due to gentrification in Assendorp, Zwolle.

In the next section the research objective is presented together with the research questions. Subsequently the scientific and societal relevance is stressed. Then, the case study is shortly explained and finally the methods of research. The format of the thesis is presented also.

## 1.2 Research objective and research indicators

Previous research on the experiences of gentrification is done by several scholars like August (2008), Doucet (2009), Rose (2004) en Uitermark et al (2007). Although this research will be quite similar as those mentioned above, there is one important difference: In The Netherlands a relative large amount of the housing stock (30%) is reserved as social housing for people who are in the lowest strata of society (AFWC, 2006). As gentrification usually involves the revitalisation of owner-occupied dwellings, it is assumed that the residents of social rented dwellings experience a kind of protection against this. The focus in this research will be on residents in social rented dwelling who are ‘in between’ gentrification (see box 1). The aim is to find out how they experience gentrification and the changes that come with it.

### Box 1. Definition of ‘in between’ residents

‘In between’ residents are tenants of public housing in one of the sub-neighbourhoods of Assendorp in Zwolle, provided by one of the social housing associations (DeltaWonen, SWZ and WOB) who are over the age of 18 and already reside at their current address before 01-01-2009. Residents who don’t fit all the criteria are not eligible for the research.

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

The main research objective of this thesis is: ***a better understanding of gentrification, with particular emphasis on the experiences and opinions of residents, regarding changes in urban residential areas due to gentrification.***

In the gentrification literature a number of indicators -which are associated with change due to the gentrification taking place in the neighbourhood- are frequently highlighted: housing, facilities and services, social networks/cohesion, norms and values, lifestyles and place attachment (Atkinson, 2002; Bridge, 2007; Butler & Robson, 2003; Doucet, 2009; Freeman & Braconi, 2004; Hamnett, 2003; Slater, 2006; Rose, 2004; Uitermark, 2007). Not all indicators are just as interesting for gentrifiers and the displaced as for the residents who are ‘in between’, the group of people that is central in this thesis. Indicators like norms and values and lifestyles are thought to be more relevant for the gentrifiers because these tend to refer to the choices made regarding participating in gentrification (Redfren, 2003). The attention in this thesis is given to the indicators thought to be perceived by the group of ‘in between’ residents, as the most influenced and changed by the external forces of the gentrification taking place in the neighbourhood. These indicators are:

- Housing
- Facilities and services
- Social networks/cohesion & place attachment

These indicators are extensively discussed in chapter 2 (theoretical framework) and chapter 4 (methods).

### 1.3 Scientific and societal relevance

Due to the knowledge gap in the gentrification literature and the lack of interest in the residents who live in social housing and their experiences regarding gentrification in their neighbourhood, this research is conducted. It provides an inside view to the experiences of residents in social housing who are ‘in between’, regarding gentrification in their neighbourhood, and therefore is a new addition to the gentrification literature. A glimpse into the perceptions concerning housing, facilities and services and social networks/cohesion and place attachment is offered.

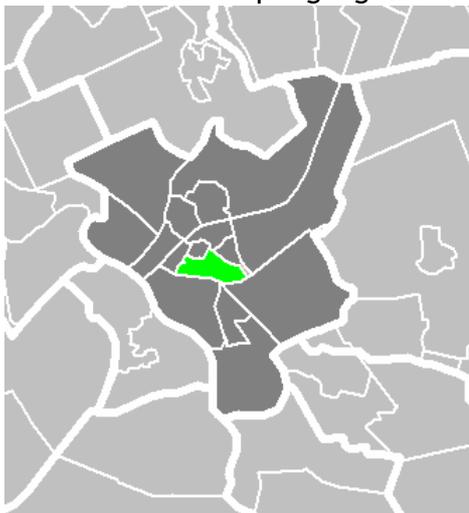
This research expands also the knowledge of gentrification in general and helps to form a more inclusive understanding of the pros and cons of gentrification and its impacts on society.

Therefore, this research is also a benefit for society. Housing associations and governmental institutions can benefit from this new knowledge. For example when large renovation-plans or other major changes will take place in (middle-class) urban neighbourhoods with a substantial number of social housing. The (perceived) impacts of these ‘new’ forms of gentrification onto urban neighbourhoods were until now very much unknown. This thesis is therefore a starting point for further research in this direction.

### 1.4 Case study

The research is conducted in Assendorp, a neighbourhood in Zwolle, which consist of five sub-neighbourhoods: Emmawijk/Stationsbuurt, Oud-Assendorp, Nieuw-Assendorp, Wezenlanden en De Pierik (see map 1 and 2). The neighbourhood is selected for the research into the experiences and perceptions of the residents of social housing who are ‘in between’ gentrification because the gentrification process is new and changes in and of the neighbourhood are resented or are starting to occur. Gentrification in this area is as said quite new and in addition to that some major state-led gentrification projects for the future have been planned. These new projects will also have impact on the existing neighbourhood and its inhabitants.

Map 1. City of Zwolle with Assendorp highlighted.



Map 2. Assendorp with the five sub-neighbourhoods.



Source: Zwolle.nl

Today, Assendorp is one of the most popular areas for living in Zwolle; it is a trendy, dynamic neighbourhood where all kinds of people want to be. Currently Assendorp is (still) a neighbourhood with a lot of variety in its inhabitants: old-residents, students, artists, families, higher-educated people and senior citizens. DeltaWonen, SWZ and WOB (social housing associations of Zwolle) distribute around 1500 social rent houses in this area.

There is also a fair amount of students residing in Assendorp who are also an important factor in the (newest) gentrification literature, namely studentification. Three-quarter of the total housing stock is (privately) owned. In chapter 3, Assendorp will be extensively discussed to give a broader and more complete impression.

Why conduct the research in Assendorp, Zwolle? When one thinks of gentrification, Zwolle isn't the first city in The Netherlands that will come up in ones mind. Still, Zwolle is selected, for five reasons:

- 1) Zwolle fits in the 'third wave' of gentrification, because Zwolle is at a rather peripheral location in The Netherlands, it has only recently been introduced to gentrification and the (local) government is a major player in the process (Hackworth & Smith, 2000). Zwolle has also connections with the concept of new-build projects (Davidson & Lees, 2005), such as the former Ambachtsschool (School of Crafts) and the Jozef Church. There is also one major new-built project planned in De Pierik.
- 2) Zwolle has a large group of higher educated people and professionals, due to the presence of several institutions for higher education.
- 3) Zwolle is experiencing studentification (Smith & Holt, 2007), due to the large numbers of students who live in HMO's (house in multiple occupations) in the city neighbourhoods (Hubbard, 2009).
- 4) Zwolle is growing on three points:
  - Population: Zwolle is the 22<sup>nd</sup> most populous municipality in The Netherlands. Further more the population of Zwolle is characterized by a low proportion of immigrants and a high birth rate (Zwolle, 2010). The projections for the coming years show that Zwolle will continue to be one of the fastest growing municipalities (index 5 and 6 in the appendices).
  - Housing stock: Zwolle is one of the best municipalities in terms of the increasing housing stock (index 7 in the appendices). About half of the total stock consists of owner-occupied dwellings. Zwolle is regarded as a desirable place (index 10 and 11 in the appendices), because of an 'ideal combination of living and working in a city and at the same time being surrounded by nature and still rather close to the Randstad' (Zwolle, 2010).
  - Economy: Zwolle is characterized by a relatively high employment. Zwolle also experienced in recent years a strong employment growth and still has the unemployment rate below the national average (index 13 in the appendices). In the Dutch context Zwolle is in a very good position. In the ranking for Top Locations (index 14 in the appendices), this resulted in 2009 even in first place all Dutch municipalities.
- 5) Municipality aiming on persons/families with higher education and higher income to come and live in the city. The municipality of Zwolle is aiming on higher educated people to come to the city for living and working. In a number of rankings, such as for 'best municipality' in Elsevier and 'economic vitality' in Atlas voor gemeente, Zwolle is in the top three (Zwolle, 2010).

### 1.5 Methods of research

The research on how gentrification in the neighbourhood is experienced by residents of social housing is conducted in Assendorp, Zwolle. To gain the best understandings concerning the experiences and opinions of the 'in between' residents regarding the

changes in the neighbourhood due to gentrification, a qualitative approach is most appropriate. This is done by using semi structured interviews. Thirteen 'in between' residents have been interviewed: each interview was approximately 30 minutes. The interviews were transcribed before analyse (the subscriptions can be found in the appendices bundle attached to this thesis). In chapter 4, the methods used in this research are described broader.

### **1.6 Format**

In the next chapter a theoretical framework is presented which serves a guide for the actual research. In this chapter several theories about what gentrification is, how it manifests itself and what kind of experiences are involved with it, are given. This is done using the three indicators: housing, facilities and services, and social networks/cohesion and place attachment. The choice for conducting the research in Zwolle is explained in the third chapter and an inside view in Assendorp (the research area) is presented. In the fourth chapter, the methodology of the research is explained. Chapter five, six and seven are the actual data analysis of the research and are followed by the eighth chapter which consists of concluding remarks. The last chapter gives an evaluation about the research. The bibliography and the appendices (not the subscribed interviews; they are in a separate document attached to the thesis) are at the end.

## Chapter 2. Theoretical framework

### 2.1 What is gentrification?

In the academic world several definitions of gentrification are present. The reason for this, according to Hackworth and Smith (2001) is: *“Contemporary gentrification is varied and defies more singular definitions because gentrification now occurs in a variety of sites and takes a myriad of forms.”* Two dictionary-definitions are presented in combination with a number of quotes from scholars about what gentrification entails according to them. These definitions and quotes are integrated here, because they highlight the basics of what gentrification means, certainly in the light of today’s neo-liberal politics and with this thesis that focuses on the experiences of gentrification by residents who are ‘in between’. The most important elements of/in the definition and quotes are underlined. At the end of this section an extended definition is given to cover all the elements of the different definitions into one broad definition that covers gentrification according to the author. This extended definition is also based on ‘general knowledge about gentrification from society’, because gentrification is no longer something exclusively for scientists: it is ‘out there’ and still so actual even popular media in society are deeply involved.

In the American Heritage Dictionary the term gentrification means: *“The restoration and upgrading of deteriorated urban property by middle-class or affluent people, often resulting in displacement of lower-income people.”*

The Oxford Dictionary of Geography goes even a step further. Causes and results of gentrification are included in the definition: *“The rebuilding, renewing, and rehabilitation of depressed areas of the inner city as more affluent families seek to live near to the city centre, trading off space and quiet for access to the goods and services of the city centre. The process has been facilitated by those local authorities which have provided home improvements grants as part of an urban renewal programme. They are repaid by an increased rate, or council tax income. The original inhabitants move out as leases fall in, houses are sold, or landlords harass their tenants into moving. There is often a change of tenure from renting to home ownership.”*

Davidson & Lees (2005): *“New build gentrification is gentrification because it involves middle-class resettlement of the central city, the production of a gentrified landscape, and a lower-income displacement in the adjacent residential communities.”*

Lambert and Boddy (2002): *“...attachment to a distinctive lifestyle and urban aesthetic.”*

Rose (2004): *“The term ‘gentrification’ has generated definitional debates for a generation, but most scholars today employ it as a shorthand for a set of processes {operating at various scales and involving individual, corporate or state actors} generating wholesale or partial transformations of working-class neighbourhoods into spaces and places that appeal to various fractions of the ‘new urban middle class’ and foster new types of consumption and social reproduction practices associated with ‘urbanity’ and centrality”. This middle-class settlement takes place not only through renovation, but also through new construction and adaptive reuse of industrial or institutional buildings. These transformations are closely linked to economic restructuring in advanced tertiary or ‘post-industrial’ cities, which has increased the size of these class fractions relative to the traditional urban working class.”*

Smith (1996): *“Gentrification is no longer about narrow and quixotic oddity in the housing market but has become the leading residential edge of a much larger endeavour: the class remake of the central urban landscape.”*

## Box 2. Extended definition gentrification, according to the author

Gentrification refers to the changes that result when middle-class wealthier people ("gentry") acquire or build property in low income and working class communities. Consequent to gentrification the average income increases and average family size decreases in the community. Gentrification occasionally changes the culturally heterogeneous character of a community to a more economically homogeneous community. It can also result in the eviction of lower-income residents because of increased rents, house prices, and property taxes. Often old industrial buildings are converted and new projects are being built for housing middle-class residences and shops. In addition, new businesses, catering to a more affluent base of consumers, move in, further increasing the appeal to more affluent migrants and decreasing the accessibility to the poor. Political action, to either promote or oppose the gentrification, is frequently the community's response. The process of gentrification is sometimes discouraged by government-sponsored private real estate investment repairing the local infrastructure, via deferred taxes, mortgages for poor and for first-time house buyers, and financial incentives for the owners of decayed rental housing.

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011, with interpretation of text Answer, 2011

## 2.2 Gentrification and everyday-life

A broad definition of gentrification has become clear in section 2.1. The relevance for this research however isn't obvious yet. In these sections the relationship(s) between gentrification as an 'academic phenomenon' and society and everyday-life will become evident.

*"Gentrification has become an integral component of a neo-Liberal mode of urban governance where 'liveability' for the few -elite and upper-middle class workers employed in dynamic and footloose sectors of the economy- trumps more inclusive approaches to inner-city revitalization."* (Wyly, 2003)

### 2.2.1 Waves of gentrification

Gentrification is transformed into a global urban strategy and can be seen in various forms, not only the upgrading of old working-class housing and displacement (see definitions and quotes, section 2.1). It is important to know something more about the different stages where gentrification went through, because the gentrification process that is happening in Zwolle fits only in the third wave of gentrification. In the transformation of the concept, the state, or the municipality has a central role. The state has always been a major player in the gentrification game, its position however has transformed over the years, as is shown in the 'three waves of gentrification'.

'The first-wave' of gentrification occurred in the inner-city of major cities in the developed world as a reaction to the disinvestment in housing in the 1960's. This gentrification was funded by the public sector, because local and national governments sought to counteract the private-market economic decline of central city neighbourhoods (see also '*new urban underclass: the truly disadvantaged*', Wilson, 1987). The help of the government was justified, but the effects were highly class specific: the urban working class got often worse of because of this intervention. The 'second wave' began in the late 1970's. In these days gentrification was used by cities as a form of investment. This was mostly done by attracting the private market rather than directly orchestrating gentrification. This second wave lasted almost to the end of the 1980s, when a wide range of economic and cultural processes at the global and national level started to emerge, which had a large impact on the real estate market. Because of these changes the 'third wave' of gentrification started.

This wave is in four ways different from the early waves:

- Gentrification is expanding both within the inner-city and to more remote neighbourhoods beyond the immediate core.
- Restructuring and globalisation in the real estate industry has set a context for larger developers becoming involved in this process.
- Effective resistance to gentrification is declined as the working class is continually displaced from the inner city and most anti-gentrification groups morph into housing service providers.
- The state is more involved than in the second-wave (Hackworth & Smith, 2000).

### 2.2.2 Urban strategy and 'social mix'

The 'third wave' of gentrification is still going on. Especially the role of the state is interesting in today's light. Gentrification is increasingly promoted in policy circles -i.a. in the UK, the Netherlands, Scandinavia and the United States- on the assumption that it will lead to more socially mixed, less segregated, more liveable and sustainable communities, despite fierce academic debate about whether or not gentrification leads to displacement, segregation and social polarisation (Galster, 2007; Lees, 2008). The idea of social mix receives strong support from the general public, because it is associated with images of social harmony and equality. By conducting research in Toronto (Canada) regarding the impact of gentrification due to the policy of 'social mixing', August (2008) is keen on finding evidence (or just the opposite) that supports the effectiveness of this approach. In other words: is gentrification due to the 'social mix' approach effective in increasing social benefits for all residents, especially for residents who fall into the lower strata of society? August (2008) concludes his rapport by saying: *"I have tried to show that recent applications of social mix ally more with neo-liberal strategies of urban governance, and the principles espoused by neo-liberal ideology, than they do with the progressive and equality-oriented principles behind the historic promotion of the idea."*

Also Zwolle is very active in the field of 'gentrification as urban strategy', as becomes evident from the major new-build, renovation and restructuring plans (SWZ, 2011; Zwolle, 2011). The question is however: why promote social mix by encouraging gentrification when academic results are contradictory regarding the effects and results?

Encouraging gentrification and thereby 'social mix' -as a tool of urban policy- is advocated today for three main sets of reasons. The first reason is fiscal and has to do with property taxes as a source of income for the municipality. The municipality will seek manners to increase its tax-income by attracting new middle-income residents and especially by increasing the percentage of homeowners. A common way of doing so is by stimulating or encouraging gentrification: in other words by replacing 'poor' residents in old housing stock (including tenants of social housing) for middle-class residents who usually become home-owner (Atkinson, 2002; Bailey, 1997; Uitermark, 2007). Municipalities offer incentives to developers to build infill housing on vacant or 'brownfield' sites or convert defunct industrial or institutional buildings (Seo, 2002; Davidson & Lees, 2005). Depending on the scale and the income levels targeted, this may range from developing entirely new social spaces and neighbourhoods only mend for wealthy residents, to creating small pockets of middle income neighbourhoods within existing low/modest-income neighbourhoods (Uitermark, 2007). This latter form has an architectural style that blends in into the existing build environment (Rose, 2004).

The municipality of Zwolle is also active in the field of 'gentrification as urban strategy'. As is indicated in section 1.4 the city is focused on attracting more persons with a higher education and income to the city. A way of doing so is by creating an urban environment where wealthier people feel at home. It is not only about fulfilling the quantitative wishes of the wealthier people regarding dwellings and residential areas, but also about the

qualitative ones: wealthier people desire a certain urban atmosphere where they can identify themselves with or where they can derive their identity from (Arnoldus, 2002; Rofe, 2003). These 'symbolic' values are important in (re)creating urban residential areas and are therefore connected to the second reason for encouraging gentrification as urban strategy.

The second reason has to do with imaging the city. In the current economy of global competition, the label 'liveable city' is wanted (Florida, 2003; McLeod, 2002). A lot of post-industrial cities have a growing interest in marketing themselves as being built for 'every one; all neighbourhoods harmoniously supporting a blend of incomes, cultures, age groups and lifestyles' (Rousseau, 2009). In reality the cities are aiming at young and highly mobile (one-person) households with an occupation in the 'new economy'. As a pre-condition to attract 'key workers', the housing stock needs to be transformed. This will (certainly) result in the outward migration of 'unwanted' (mainly poor) urban residents to more peripheral neighbourhoods. By doing so, the municipality creates an extreme form of socio-spatial polarization, which is contrary to the image of the city as 'liveable' (McLeod, 2002; Rousseau, 2009). This socio-spatial polarization caused by the imposition of 'social mix' onto the city can create tensions between residents with different economic backgrounds or lifestyles who reside in the same neighbourhood. These tensions can generate uncomfortable experiences of the neighbourhood and its residents. Spatial proximity can then increase social distance and leads to people developing a sense of the difference between themselves and 'the other'. A withdrawal from the neighbourhood into residents who are alike or moving away to a neighbourhood where the residents are more similar to themselves are results of this (Feijten, 2009; Graham, 2009; Rose, 2004; Uitermark, 2007; Wilson, 1987).

The third reason involves access to facilities, services and jobs. It is thought that 'social mix' decreases the socio-spatial inequalities regarding these subjects: by mixing neighbourhoods (variety of buildings, functions and residents) the undesirable 'neighbourhood effects' can be tackled down while the individual chances of upward social mobility increases. By mixing residents with different economic backgrounds and lifestyles, mutual interactions increases, what has a positive effect on the social mobility of the residents who fall into lower social strata. Academic evidence for these assumptions is unfortunately not sufficient (Bauder, 2002; Feijten, 2009; Friedrichs, 2003; Graham, 2009).

The idea of social mix receives strong support from the general public, because it is associated with images of social harmony and equality. By conducting research in Toronto (Canada) regarding the impact of gentrification due to the policy of 'social mixing', August (2008) is keen on finding evidence (or just the opposite) that supports the effectiveness of this approach. In other words: is gentrification due to the 'social mix' approach effective in increasing social benefits for all residents, especially for residents who fall into the lower strata of society? August (2008) concludes his rapport by saying: *"I have tried to show that recent applications of social mix ally more with neo-liberal strategies of urban governance, and the principles espoused by neo-liberal ideology, than they do with the progressive and equality-oriented principles behind the historic promotion of the idea."*

### **2.2.3 New-build projects as gentrification**

In the research-area in Zwolle mild forms of new-build projects and conversions are present, such as the Jozef Church, the former Ambachtsschool and the Wilhelminaschool (see chapter 3, section 3.2). And as said in section 2.1 new-build projects are part of gentrification -certainly in the light of the 'third wave' of gentrification- according to the author. In the academic world however the opinions are divided as is apparent from the discussion between Lambert & Boddy (2002) and Davidson & Lees (2005) about whether or

not new-build residential developments in city centres, are a form of gentrification. Lambert & Boddy (2002) argue that new-build projects “*stretching the term and what it set out to describe too far.*” New-build residential developments in city centres don’t fit under the term gentrification because, “*different groups of people are involved, different types of landscapes are being produced, and different socio-spatial dynamics are operating.*” These new projects are conducted by developers who have the economic capital to do so. Another difference between these new-build projects and ‘traditional’ gentrification is the location. New-build projects are often built on brownfield sites or on vacant and/or abandoned land: as such they do not directly displace a pre-existing residential population. Indirect displacement can take place by these new-build project through ‘invasion and succession’ (Davidson & Lees, 2005).

However Davidson & Lees (2005) argue that these new-build projects are just examples of gentrification. This is so, because the definition of the term ‘gentrification’ has evolved in the last decade. New-build residential developments in city centres fit within gentrification because, “*it involves middle-class resettlement of the central city, the production of a gentrified landscape, and a lower income displacement in the adjacent residential communities.*” The new-build projects are marketed for high-earning middle classes with sufficient cultural and social capital. New-build project cause displacement, but this displacement is not direct. Indirect displacement can be a form of ‘exclusionary displacement’ where lower income groups are unable to access property because of the gentrification of the neighbourhood. Another form of indirect displacement is ‘socio-cultural displacement’ whereby the gentrifiers the control of the community apparatus take (Davidson & Lees, 2005).

#### **2.2.4 Studentification as gentrification**

As said in section 1.4, Zwolle has a relatively large amount of students who study at one of the several institutions for higher education in the city. A major part of the students live in HMO’s (houses of multiple occupations) in the city’s neighbourhoods.

Because of their preference for cheap housing on the outskirts of the city and around the campus, students can be seen as ‘gentrifiers-to-be’. This gentrification has led to luxury HMO’s around the centre, surrounded by many facilities and services. The number of students has risen considerably in recent decades; the number of HMO’s even more. ‘Normal’ family neighbourhoods are taken over by the creation of HMO’s. The community in these neighbourhoods is experiencing tension by the arrival of the students: the social cohesion in these areas is weakened and ‘normal’ residents do not longer feel at home here, what can cause an out-migration to other parts of the city. These results are quite similar as those when ‘normal’ gentrification in the neighbourhood takes place (Feijten, 2009; Hubbard, 2009; Rose, 2004; Smith, 2007). The growing demand for student accommodation hasn’t only led to the conversion of residential houses to HMO’s; it is also leading to the construction of purpose-built dwellings (PBD’s), designed specifically for students. The construction of HMO’s and PBD’s are seen as a form of gentrification, especially because the housing for students becomes much more similar to the residences of the residents who are graduated. Moreover, the construction of these houses leads indirectly to the relocation of residents currently present in the neighbourhood. The institutions of higher education are cooperating with private investors to build these PBD’s. The availability of shops, facilities and public transport are of greater importance than the actual location of the residence. PBD’s can therefore also be built on the outskirts of cities. The build of PBD’s can release some of the pressure on the neighbourhoods invaded by students in HMO’s. Because of the presence of HMO’s the influx of ‘ordinary’ families and ‘normal’ residents into the neighbourhood is declining (Hubbard, 2009; Smith, 2007).

**2.3 Impacts and effects of gentrification**

In the previous sections a broad inside into gentrification was presented. The main focus was on the concepts of gentrification, the implementation by the state because of political interests and the everyday visibility and characteristics of gentrification. This section addresses what we know about the impacts and effects of gentrification. These impacts and effects are outlined based on the three indicators central in the thesis: housing, facilities and services, and social networks/cohesion & place attachment. It also becomes evident that we don't know some things either about the impacts and effects of gentrification and especially how they are experienced by residents who are 'in between', although we do have some expectations of course.

**2.3.1 Housing**

*“It is no longer possible to ignore the ways in which housing renewal policies contribute to the restructuring of urban areas. The scale of investment in renewal and the way in which this is achieved (through private or social approaches) determine who is able to live in a particular area. Renewal policy plays a fundamental role in determining the socio-spatial structure of cities.”* (Bailey, 1997)

In table 2.1 a summary of broad neighbourhood impacts of gentrification on housing is shown. Atkinson (2002) has conducted research in Britain to discover impacts of gentrification on neighbourhoods due to *“the British urban renaissance agenda which stresses the need for social mix in cities through the encouragement of the middle classes back to the city”* (see also section 2.2.2). Looking at the table, a few conclusions can be drawn: although there are negative effects, there are also quite some positive effects due to (state-led) gentrification. It is remarkable that some positive impacts have negative consequences on the neighbourhood, such as ‘increased property values’ and ‘increased local fiscal revenues’.

Table 2.1 Housing

Positive	Negative
Increased property values	Displacement through rent/price increases
Reduced vacancy rates	Loss of affordable housing
Increased local fiscal revenues	Greater take of local spending through lobbying/articulacy
Encouragement and increased viability of further development	Unsustainable speculative property price increases
Rehabilitation of property both with and without state sponsorship	Displacement and housing demand pressures on surrounding poor areas

Source: Atkinson, 2002.

To highlight one negative effect of gentrification: Greater take of local spending through lobbying/articulacy: *“Middle-class groupings are viewed as being closer to the local political process and know how to ‘work’ it better than lower-class groupings.”* (Atkinson, 2000)

The results in table 2.1 are largely invisible impacts -although resolute- on the neighbourhood, which are noticed for instance by the residents who have to pay a higher rent. It is important to keep in mind that these impacts are formed by global research in Britain. These by Atkinson (2002) acquired results work as a guidance for this research due to a lack of available data regarding experiences of residents in social housing who are ‘in between’ gentrification.

Other useful data concerning perceived changes on housing due to gentrification is found in the work of Doucet (2009). He has conducted qualitative research in Leith (Edinburgh,

Scotland), to find out how residents -who lived through the process of gentrification-, feel about all the changes that took place (al still take). One major finding in his research is that the image of the neighbourhood is changed drastically. The respondents indicated to have fear of increasing housing prices (especially for new entries/young to the housing market and of displacement (indirect, “*where are my children going to live?*”, because it becomes too expensive). The respondents do acknowledge that the consequences of gentrification aren’t unique to their neighbourhood (it reflects broader changes in society). There is however one major point brought up by the respondents concerning the effects of gentrification: the new housing is a better class of housing, which brings about a better environment.

In Montréal (Canada) Rose (2004) has conducted a qualitative research into the experiences of ‘gentrifiers’ concerning the social diversity and social and affordable housing as results of implied gentrification due to the policy of ‘social mix’. The results of her research are rather divers: one part of the interviewees is indifferent to the diversity surrounding them, because they came to live in the area for totally utilitarian reasons; another part express unease with the current presence of marginalized groups and/or with the presence of existing public housing in their immediate neighbourhood; a third group is tolerant: any social housing, even low-rent public housing is acceptable as long as it fits in to the streetscape architecturally and is well maintained; and many of the interviewees would welcome further condominium development because it would increase property values and improve the overall physical and social fabric of the area; none of them paused to consider the impact of such upgrading on the accessibility of the neighbourhood for less-well-off groups. The results from Rose’s research are helpful in the research of this thesis. It is although very important to keep in mind that Rose interviewed gentrifiers, not the residents who have been displaced or those who are ‘in between’.

Studentification is in the research included in the indicator ‘housing’, although it has connections with the third indicator (social networks/cohesion & place attachment) too. ‘Normal’ family neighbourhoods are taken over by the creation of HMO’s (house in multiple occupations) where students live in. The community in these neighbourhoods is experiencing tension by the arrival of the students: the social cohesion in these areas is weakened and ‘normal’ residents do not longer feel at home here, what can cause an out-migration to other parts of the city. These results are quite similar as those when ‘normal’ gentrification in the neighbourhood takes place (Feijten, 2009; Hubbard, 2009; Rose, 2004; Smith, 2007). The growing demand for student accommodation hasn’t only led to the conversion of residential houses to HMO’s; it is also leading to the construction of purpose-built dwellings (PBD’s), designed specifically for students. The construction of HMO’s and PBD’s are seen as a form of gentrification, especially because the housing for students becomes much more similar to the residences of the residents who are graduated. Moreover, the construction of these houses leads indirectly to the relocation of residents currently present in the neighbourhood (Hubbard, 2009; Smith, 2007).

There are a few things ‘missing’ in the literature regarding impacts and effects of gentrification in the neighbourhood on ‘housing’, for example about changes made to dwellings. It would be a rather good presumption -according to the author- that gentrifiers take good care of their dwellings in term of maintenance etcetera. This could have a positive effect on other residents in the neighbourhood too, in terms of copying ‘good behaviour’.

**2.3.2 Facilities and services**

*“Extensive gentrification in urban areas threatens the sustainability of community networks and of those services which excluded groups rely on.” (Atkinson, 2000)*

In table 2.2 a summary of neighbourhood impacts of gentrification on facilities and services is shown (Atkinson, 2002). Looking at the table, two conclusions can be drawn: first, there are only two negative effects on facilities and services in the neighbourhood due to (state-led) gentrification. And second, one would expect some positive impacts on the neighbourhood too, although maybe contradictory with the negative counterparts, but there aren't any according to Atkinson (2002).

Table 2.2 Facilities and services

Positive	Negative
	Commercial and industrial displacement
	Increased cost and changes to local services

Source: Atkinson, 2002.

The first result in table 2.2 is a visible and ‘hard’ result in the neighbourhoods due to gentrification. The second result is less visible, but much noticed by the residents in the neighbourhood which it concerns. Atkinson (2002) hasn't deeply researched the impacts and effects of (state-led) gentrification on facilities and services: he did this only minor in his research conducted in London concerning changes in the neighbourhoods and (indirect) displacement due to gentrification (Atkinson, 2000). His conclusion about changes in facilities and services due to gentrification is: *“Shops and services were also affected. A new service infrastructure had sprung up around the wealthy new residents. Bars replaced pubs and delicatessens replaced grocers, increasing the cost of living or distending the scope of shopping trips. Such changes are often perceived as improving an area, yet they belie the reality that social problems have not been resolved.”*

Compared with other studies regarding changes in the neighbourhood due to gentrification, Doucet (2009) pays quite some attention to amenities and services. He argues that shops, services and amenities can change their character and clientele very rapidly, what results in a polarized retail space: one for the poor and one for the rich. Because of this, some residents may feel that the new amenities *“are not for them”* (e.g. too expensive). Gentrification however can also have positive effects on amenities and services: it can turn ‘food deserts’ into places where more fresh fruit and vegetables are available, it can provide new job opportunities for (local) residents and because the arrival of new stores, restaurants and services (*“not necessarily for them”*), it can improved the image of the city. The study conducted by Doucet is a very useful guide for the research that is central in this thesis, because the research area has a well used central shopping-street, and impacts and effects of gentrification on here would be rather obvious.

There are a few things ‘missing’ in the literature regarding impacts and effects of gentrification in the neighbourhood on ‘facilities and services’, for example about small businesses attached to homes. It would be a rather good presumption -according to the author- that gentrifiers change the supply of businesses and thereby the availability of facilities and services, because they start a business (at home) themselves. This could be due to a certain (higher) education whereby one can be self-employed, or due to a hobby or skill, such as artwork (Ley, 1984).

**2.3.3 Social networks/cohesion & place attachment**

*“Any sense of a traditional community has largely disappeared.”* (Bailey, 1997)

In table 2.3 a summary of neighbourhood impacts of gentrification on social networks/cohesion and place attachment is shown. A few conclusions can be drawn: there are quite some negative effects, but also some positive ones due to (state-led) gentrification. It is remarkable that the positive effects ‘decreased crime’ and ‘increased social mix’ are contradictory with their negative counterparts (Atkinson, 2002).

Table 2.3 Social networks/cohesion & place attachment

Positive	Negative
Stabilisation of declining areas	Community resentment and conflict
Increased social mix	Loss of social diversity (from socially disparate to rich ghettos)
Decreased crime	Increased crime
	Secondary psychological costs of displacement
	Under-occupancy and population loss to gentrified areas

Source: Atkinson, 2002.

To highlight one negative effect of gentrification: Increasing crime. *“Increasing crime levels are related to the breakdown of close-knit communities from the impact of the turnover of residents.”* (Atkinson, 2000)

The results in table 2.3 are mostly visible impacts on the neighbourhood; also visible for residents who don’t live in the particular neighbourhood. Due to the lack of data covering experiences of ‘in between’ residents regarding changes in social networks/cohesion and place attachment due to gentrification, these by Atkinson (2002) acquired results work as a guidance for the research in Assendorp, Zwolle. Atkinson however isn’t the only scientist that has shown interest in the impacts of gentrification on the social networks/cohesion and place attachment in neighbourhoods and the experiences of residents regarding these impacts and changes.

According to Arnoldus (2002) residents don’t longer want to stay in their neighbourhood when gentrification has changed a lot: they don’t feel at home anymore.

Research regarding the perceived changes in the neighbourhood due to restructuring, according to long-term residents, is done by Uitermark (2007). Results from this work cover the perceived social impacts on the neighbourhood, because he made use of the indicators: social cohesion, social involvement, population composition, neighbourhood facilities, social atmosphere, neighbourhood reputation and liveability (neighbourhood defined as clean, safe, and well maintained). Long-term residents were asked how they perceived the indicators, when looking at the situation in the neighbourhood before and after the restructuring. Social cohesion came out worst: a net change of -21. Also the net change of social involvement wasn’t good: -16. Only the neighbourhood reputation and the liveability had a (only minor) positive net change: 0.12 and 0.34. The general conclusion that can be drawn from this is that long-term residents of neighbourhoods that have experienced restructuring perceived (the changes in) the neighbourhood worst than before. Results from Uitermark’s research (2007) are a good fit to the research that is central in this thesis, because restructuring is also a tool often used in Zwolle. Residents who are ‘in between’ don’t experience gentrification often ‘the hard way’ (by direct displacement or evictions) but more ‘indirect’ through restructuring projects (often combined with rent increases).

As mentioned in section 2.3.1, Doucet (2009) has conducted research to find out how residents -who lived through the process of gentrification- feel about all the changes that took (al still take) place in their neighbourhood. One of the indicators he used was social cohesion and interactions. Two positive outcomes of his research are that the respondents acknowledge that the consequences of gentrification aren't unique to their neighbourhood (it reflects broader changes in society) and the influx of new people into the neighbourhood which creates social diversity.

Also mentioned in section 2.3.1 is the research of Rose (2004) in Montréal (Canada). The outcomes of her research as mentioned in the section about housing, do have overlap with social networks and cohesion too. One other major outcome regarding social networks and cohesion is that gentrifiers are experiencing day-to-day tensions and resentment from being middle-class in a poor neighbourhood. They also experience semi-mutual appreciation, although there is little communication between the different groups of residents ("*distant but peaceful coexistence*"). And again: the results from Rose's research are helpful in the research of this thesis. It is although very important to keep in mind that Rose interviewed gentrifiers, not the residents who have been displaced or those who are 'in between'.

## Chapter 3. Case study

In this chapter the central focus point is the research area of Assendorp in Zwolle. First the reasons for choosing Assendorp to conduct the research in are explained. Secondly an impression of the area is given by the sub-neighbourhoods of Assendorp because it is possible that differences come up in the data analysis that could be ascribed to differences in the neighbourhood themselves. The three research elements (housing, facilities and services, social networks/control and place attachment, see the theoretical framework chapter 2) are integrated into the general information. Some of the sub-neighbourhoods are less described than other, due to the availability of specific information and their relevance in this research.

### 3.1 Why research in Zwolle?

In this section the substantive reasons for choosing Zwolle are presented. Why conduct the research in Assendorp, Zwolle? When one thinks of gentrification, Zwolle isn't the first city in The Netherlands that will come up in ones mind. Still, Zwolle is selected, for five reasons:

- 1) Zwolle fits in the 'third wave' of gentrification (Hackworth & Smith, 2000) and has connections with the concept of new-build projects (Davidson & Lees, 2005).

Zwolle isn't a major city nor is it in the 'core' or Randstad of The Netherlands. However, Zwolle does have a glorious history of craftsmanship and trade: Zwolle was an important Hanze-town in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century and an important place for transit trade in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century Zwolle lost its importance for the Dutch economy (Berkenvelder, 1980; Bureau Hanzesteden, 2011). Cities which became important in the industrial sector in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and continued to be of great importance in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, became notorious for decline on all fronts of economy and society and therefore experienced gentrification as first worldwide around the 1960's. These cities are part of the first wave of gentrification. Because of the rather peripheral location and the resent introduction with gentrification, Zwolle fits in the third wave.

In Assendorp a number of projects have been rebuild over the last 10 years, such as the former Ambachtsschool (School of Crafts), the former Wilhelminaschool and the Jozef Church (see pictures 5 and 7). All these buildings had a distinctive function in the past, but have now been transformed into buildings mend for residential functions. There are no new-build projects (when considered the specifications put down by Davidson & Lees (2005)) in Assendorp. There are however a few restructuring sites in Assendorp that can be regarded as new-build projects: the former houses/apartments are demolished and new buildings are constructed on the same site, mend for higher strata of society. In De Pierik a major restructuring-project is announced whereby 58 detached houses will be demolished to make room for larger houses of which around 50% is mend for social rent (for higher strata and not for the current tenants)(Stougie, 2011). More about these projects can be found in section 3.2.

- 2) Zwolle has a large group of higher educated people and professionals.

In Zwolle a few institutions of higher education are present, such as the Hanze College, Christian College Windesheim and ArtEZ College of Arts (Zwolle, 2011). Because of these educational institutions Zwolle has a relatively large group of higher educated people and professionals, who belong (or will belong) to the higher strata of society (index 1 and 2 in the appendices).

3) Zwolle is experiencing studentification.

Due to the large number of students in Zwolle a lot of students live in HMO's (house in multiple occupations). These houses are in 'normal' neighbourhoods and were initially rented to families but serve now as student accommodation because housing associations and private homeowners make more money this way (Hubbard, 2009). Zwolle is experiencing studentification (Smith & Holt, 2007).

4) Zwolle is growing in three ways:

*Population*

Zwolle is the 22<sup>nd</sup> most populous municipality in The Netherlands. Compared the other major municipalities, Zwolle has a high proportion of residents younger than 15 years old and a relatively low proportion of people over 65 years old (index 2 and 3 in the appendices). Further more the population of Zwolle is characterized by a low proportion of immigrants and a high birth rate. Of the 25 largest municipalities in The Netherlands, the population of Zwolle (after four other municipalities) had the highest increase in the last 10 years. The projections for the coming years show that Zwolle will continue to be one of the fastest growing municipalities (index 5 and 6 in the appendices) (Zwolle, 2010). So, Zwolle is one of the few cities in The Netherlands that is experiencing growth: not only literally by the number of inhabitants, but also physically and economically.

*Housing stock*

Zwolle is one of the best municipalities in terms of the increasing housing stock. In the statistics of Zwolle is shown that between 1999 and 2009 the housing stock rose by 7.200 houses which is an increase of 16,3 % (index 7 in the appendices). Only five of the 100.000+ municipalities in The Netherlands had an even higher increase (Zwolle, 2010). About half of the total stock consists of owner-occupied dwellings. The prices of the dwellings are on average slightly lower than in most of the major cities in The Netherlands. Inhabitants of Zwolle give on average a 7,8 for the appreciation of their property: this is extremely high in comparison with other major cities in the Dutch context (Zwolle, 2010, index 8 and 9 in the appendices). Zwolle is regarded as a desirable place (index 10 and 11 in the appendices). Also because of an 'ideal combination of living and working in a city and at the same time being surrounded by nature and still rather close to the Randstad' (Zwolle, 2010). This attractiveness becomes for instance visible in the new-build neighbourhoods in the suburbs mend for the higher strata of society such as Stadshagen (picture 1).

Picture 1. Air-photo of Stadshagen, Zwolle



Source: skyscrapercity.com

In the rankings in Elsevier for 'best municipality', Zwolle is in 2009 at the 28th position of all 441 Dutch municipalities. This is 11 places higher than in 2008. Zwolle scored particularly well on the supply of amenities, care and economy. Of 100,000+ municipalities in 2009 only Amsterdam is ranked higher in the list (index 12 in the appendices).

### *Economy*

Zwolle is characterized by a relatively high employment. Put against the working population, it has - after two municipalities - the most jobs of the 100,000+ municipalities. Zwolle also experienced in recent years a strong employment growth and still has the unemployment rate below the national average (index 13 in the appendices). In the Dutch context Zwolle is in a very good position. In the ranking for Top Locations (index 14 in the appendices), this resulted in 2009 even in first place all Dutch municipalities. Compared to other large municipalities Zwolle has a relatively small number of self employees and starting entrepreneurs. The guiding policy for starting entrepreneurs however is relatively well appreciated. In addition, the entrepreneurs in Zwolle grading the municipal business climate with a 7. No other major municipality that participated in the study achieved such a high score (Zwolle, 2010, index 15 in the appendices). In the period from 2003 to 2008 the number of jobs in Zwolle increased over 6600. In percentages this means a growth of 8.6%! This puts Zwolle in the fourth position of the large municipalities. In five of 25 largest municipalities the number of jobs even decreased (a bit) (Zwolle, 2010, index 16 in the appendices).

- 5) The municipality is aiming on persons/families with higher education and higher income to come and live in the city.

The municipality of Zwolle is aiming on higher educated people to come to the city for living and working. In a number of rankings, such as for 'best municipality' in Elsevier and 'economic vitality' in Atlas voor Gemeente, Zwolle is in the top three (Zwolle, 2010). One way of attracting the target group is by building new houses for a higher segment (like in Stadshagen). Another way is by promoting Zwolle as 'the best place for living in'. One way of aiming on the focus-group is by making use of 'luxury goods' for certain lifestyles like clothes and foods. Zwolle is high ranked in the culinary index (index 17 in the appendices).

### **3.2 The sub-neighbourhoods of Assendorp**

Today, Assendorp is one of the most popular areas for living in Zwolle; it is a trendy, dynamic neighbourhood where all kinds of people want to be. Currently Assendorp is (still) a neighbourhood with a lot of variety in its inhabitants: old-residents, students, artists, families, higher-educated people and senior citizens (Meindersma, 2001). DeltaWonen, SWZ and WOB (housing associations of Zwolle) distribute around 1500 social rent houses in this area. There is also a fair amount of students residing in Assendorp who are also an important factor in the (newest) gentrification literature, namely studentification. Three-quarter of the total housing stock is (privately) owned.

#### *Emmawijk/Stationsbuurt*

This sub-neighbourhood of Assendorp is also called Parkwijk, because of the park De Eekhout. The composition of this area is quite different from the rest of Assendorp: The average income is higher and there are almost no student houses. There are a few law firms and notary offices located in the stately mansions throughout the neighbourhood. The buildings date back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Most of the residential buildings are privately owned (SWZ, 2011). This area isn't included in the research.

Picture 2. Stationsstraat in Emmawijk/Stationsbuurt.



Source: maxxvastgoed.nl

### *Oud-Assendorp*

Oud-Assendorp is the oldest part of Assendorp. The first residential buildings were built in the 1850's. Zwolle was one of the fastest growing cities of the Netherlands and because of the large influx, the city had to supply housing for the various groups of people. Different types of dwellings were built because a distinction was made between various kinds of people and their profession (workers, supervisors and management) (DeltaWonen, 2011).

Picture 3. Old workers housing in Oud-Assendorp, current student housing.



Source: Hoksbergen.nl

The area between the Stationsweg and the Terborchstraat (the area around the Assendorperplein) is the wealthiest district of Oud-Assendorp and has little interaction with the rest of Assendorp. Real-estate prices are out of proportion in comparison to the rest of this area. In Oud-Assendorp are some firms and offices just as in Emmawijk/Stationsbuurt. There are also a lot of shops in this area: the Assendorperstraat is the liveliest street of the whole neighbourhood. The Van Karnebeekstraat is a street in development: exclusive shops, boutiques and art-galleries are upcoming. This sub-neighbourhood is important for this research, because gentrification is happening: almost all dwellings around the Assendorperplein are owner-occupied and this trend is spreading also: social rent dwellings in this area are sold more often by housing associations. Also a lot of students live in HMO's in this neighbourhood: studentification is reality. And the supply of shops is changing: more luxurious shops are present and more independent shops like Turkish kebab-shops disappear.

Picture 4. Assendorperstraat.



Source: Tom van Dijke, De Stentor

### *Nieuw-Assendorp*

This part of Assendorp is built from the 1930's onwards. The neighbourhood is rather homogeneous, because most of the inhabitants are families. Student housing in this area is not very common, except the recently completed renovation and modification of the Wilhelminaschool. This old school building is converted into 25 units for students of the Conservatorium of Zwolle (Mollen, 2010). Also another building in Nieuw-Assendorp is converted: the Jozef Church is transformed into apartments for the middle-class people (see picture 5). This area is also very important for the research, also because dwellings more often are on the list for extensive renovations and more students come to live here.

Picture 5. Converted buildings: right Wilhelminaschool, left Jozef Church.



Source: Zwolle.nl, 2011

### *De Wezenlanden*

The sub-neighbourhood De Wezenlanden is one of the newest neighbourhoods of Assendorp. The area hosts the Isala hospital, location De Weezenlanden, the provincial government building, the court and the police. Near the court and police a number of high rise apartments are build. This area has the smallest amount of inhabitants (of which a relatively large amount of elderly people). The central park in the neighbourhood De

Wezenlanden has had a renovation to create a more open and accessible area for the inhabitants (SWZ, 2011).

Picture 6. Park De Wezenlanden.



Source: Panoramio.com

### *De Pierik*

Although De Pierik is another sub-neighbourhood of Assendorp, the inhabitants see themselves as individuals with their own character. Most of the buildings date back to the 1920's, 1930's and 1950's and this area is just like De Wezenlanden rather new in comparison with the other sub-neighbourhoods. In this area are also a few high rise apartment buildings which date back to the 1950's and 1960's. According to the magazine Elsevier, De Pierik was in the 1990's a typical white neighbourhood with a relatively large amount of elderly people (17%). Today the neighbourhood sees an influx of young families, who see the neighbourhood as attractive because of the green zones. De Pierik has also gain attention from the 1990's onwards, because of the squatting of the old Ambachtsschool (School of Crafts). The Ambachtsschool was build in 1931-1932 in the style of 'Het Nieuwe Bouwen' ('Functional Construction': architectural period from 1915-1960 in which purpose building was strictly functional, without decoration that conceal the structure) (architectenweb.nl). The old Ambachtsschool is recently completed and is now inhabited by residents who fall into a higher stratum of society. The initiator of this project is SWZ. The National government, the Province of Overijssel and the municipality of Zwolle gave also financial support to realise this project (SWZ, 2011).

Picture 7. Ambachtsschool under construction.



Source: SWZ, 2011

The ground floors of the building are converted to art studios and business units for artists. The rest of the building is converted to 35 'Artlofts' (housing for artists and 'normal people'). The idea is to combine living, working and lifestyle in just one building. The character and identity are preserved to create 'a building of international standing one can find in world cities like London and Amsterdam'.

(Promotion clip of the 'Artlofts' can be found on:[http://www.swz.nl/mn/89/p/Artlofts/m/flvfilm/promo\\_artlofts\\_streamclip\\_16-9\\_550x309px.flv/](http://www.swz.nl/mn/89/p/Artlofts/m/flvfilm/promo_artlofts_streamclip_16-9_550x309px.flv/)) (Promotion clip is in Dutch).

This sub-neighbourhood is important in this research: In De Pierik a major project is planned. This state-led/housing association-led gentrification project consist of the demolition of 58 homes: 16 single-houses and 42 duplex-houses and is part of the neighbourhood revitalizing project that started in 2007 (Stentor, 2011). Housing associations are increasingly selling social rent dwellings in this area: residents here do have some experiences with gentrification and changes that come with it. Studentification is also beginning to take place, although not as intensive as in Oud-Assendorp.

More information about the sub-neighbourhoods of Assendorp (social, economic and demographic) is available in the appendices.

## Chapter 4. Methods

Experiences are of a subjective nature. Therefore a qualitative approach was most appropriate for this research. The data consists of semi-structured interviews with residents of social rented dwellings in Assendorp - the group of residents who fit the research-profile "residents who are 'in between'" the gentrification process occurring in their neighbourhood (see box 3).

### Box 3. Definition of 'in between' residents

'In between' residents are tenants of social rental housing in one of the sub-neighbourhoods of Assendorp in Zwolle, provided by one of the social housing associations (DeltaWonen, SWZ and WOB) who are over the age of 18 and already reside at their current address before 01-01-2009. Residents who don't fit all the criteria are not eligible for the research.

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

To conduct the research in Assendorp, Zwolle, information about the social housing stock was needed because only one quarter of all the residences in Assendorp belongs to the social-rent sector. It is very difficult to make a distinction between social rented and private occupied dwellings based on visible characteristics of the dwellings. Therefore contacts were made with the social housing associations: DeltaWonen, SWZ and WOB. All three the housing associations willingly provided information about the addresses of the dwellings under their supervision in Assendorp. A database on the Internet provided information about the rental of dwellings since January 1<sup>st</sup> 2009. Using this database a further narrowing down of potential residents who fit the research-label was possible. This narrowing down was done because it is thought that residents who reside in Assendorp only recently, don't have a accurate impression of the changes that already have occurred here. Although it could be quite interesting to involve this group of residents in the second part of this research, which focuses on perspectives and expectations concerning possible changes in the future. For maintaining a good overview regarding the data collection, only the residents who fit the research-profile perfect have been involved in the study.

Residents who fit the research-profile have only been approached ones: during the day-time (from 10-16 hours) or during the evening (19-21 hours). The reasons for conducting the research were explained, followed by the offer to participate. To involve as much residents as possible it was mentioned that after participating a small attention would be received (a small candle in a glass for enjoying the summer even more!). A lot of residents asked about the guarantee of their privacy. They all agreed to the standards set by the author: only age, gender, household composition and sub-neighbourhood are used in the data-analysis. The interview took place in Dutch.

The indicators (housing, facilities and services, and social networks/cohesion and place attachment) guided the interviews. There was enough space left open in the interview for the resident self to come up with interesting (personal) remarks on the gentrification process in their neighbourhood.

Some questions belonging to the indicator 'housing':

- *"Since when do you live here and do you live here pleasantly?"*
- *"What do you think is the reputation of Assendorp in other districts of Zwolle?"*
- *"Do you know the streets around the Assendorperplein? There are many dwelling here sold in the last years. What do you think of that and what kind of people do you think live here?"*
- *"How do you feel about students living in 'normal' dwellings in your neighbourhood?"*

Some questions belonging to the indicator ‘facilities and services’:

- *“How do you feel about the supply of shops in Assendorp? Do you use these shops?”*
- *“Has the supply of shops changed/is the supply changing? How do you notice?”*
- *“Do you think the supply of businesses attached to homes will increase when more ‘rich’ residents come to the neighbourhood?”*

Some questions belonging to the indicator ‘social networks/control & place attachment’:

- *“How would you describe the composition of the neighbourhood in terms of residents?”*
- *“How would you describe the social control in your neighbourhood?”*
- *“Housing associations are increasingly making decisions for changing the supply of housing in urban neighbourhoods. Possible ways of doing so are: demolish dwellings from the social rent sector and built bigger and more expensive dwelling instead for renting out; extensively renovate social rent dwelling and as a result increased rent prices; selling social rent dwelling on the housing-market. This leads to a larger influx of relatively ‘rich’ residents (in owner occupied or rental dwellings). What kind of people do you think live in these (newly build) dwellings? Do you expect some effects on the neighbourhood because of this, in terms of social contact/control or place attachment? Are you afraid that this kind of changes will happen more often in the future?”*

Thirteen residents (who fitted the criteria of ‘in between’ resident) were willing to participate in the research, when only eight ‘in between’ residents who were approached, refused participation. Mostly middle-aged men in Oud- and Nieuw-Assendorp refused to participate, although some younger (around 30 years) women with children weren’t willing also. The author has the impression that most men were unemployed and surely not interested in the research, while the women clearly were occupied with their children at the time the author came by to ask for participating.

Table 4.1 Characteristics of the ‘in between’ respondents.

	<b>Average length of residence</b>	<b>Average age</b>	<b>Number of respondents</b>
<b>Women</b>	16 years	51 years	9
<b>Men</b>	19 years	49 years	4
<b>Total</b>	18 years	50 years	13

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

The interviews were recorded and later in Word transcribed. Using MAXQDA (facilitated on UU) the interviews were analyzed. A selection of the given answers was made to narrow the bulk of information down. Later, when the data analysis-chapters 5, 6 and 7 were written, a further narrowing down of the answers was done. When the final set of answers was made, the quotations were translated into English, because the interviews were held in Dutch.

## Chapter 5. Data analysis - Housing

As can be seen in chapter 1, section 1.2, the research is sub-divided into three parts namely: housing, facilities and services and social networks/cohesion & place attachment. In this chapter the main findings regarding the experiences of gentrification on housing by the residents who are 'in between' is central.

In the semi-structured interviews -used for the gathering of 'in between' residents' personal views on the changes that have occurred, are occurring or will occur due to gentrification- a set of guiding questions was used. These guide questions could ordinarily be answered by the 'in between' residents, but served also to stimulate the residents' own contribution to the subject.

In the following section an overview of the responses is presented by using the guide questions. A number of quotations are used for each question, for highlighting the most notable answers. Note that the interviews were conducted in Dutch: the quotations in this thesis are therefore translated into English.

### 5.1 Length of residence and pleasant living

The average length of residence, which was asked in the question "*Since when do you live here?*" is 18 years. On average the women live for 16 years in the neighbourhood, while the men on average 19 years. To the question "*Do you live here pleasantly?*" all responses are positive and even some residents indicate that they purposely chose this neighbourhood to live in, while others came here 'by coincidence'.

#### Quotation-box 5.1 Pleasant living

*"Well, we wanted a 'real' house with a garden in a quiet neighbourhood where our children can play safely outside. And fortunately that is what we have now. We love to live here."* (nr. 9: female, 42, De Pierik)

*"It is a nice neighbourhood! No, not many play-areas for children, but beautiful green and a little more space than we had, yes. I'm glad we ended up here. We first lived in Dieze, but they (the housing association) brought everything down and then we came here with urgency. We are fine here now: the children go to school here and have their friends here. And the neighbours are friendly and the houses are good."* (nr. 6: female, 34, Nieuw-Assendorp)

*"Yes, it's very relaxed to live here you know! Everything you need is nearby: the central station, the city and we still have some shops etc in the neighbourhood. And I have a pretty nice house here, so that's also very nice. At first I came here with two friends, so the three of us could rent a house. It was also easy and the costs were not that high. And there are more students living here, also friends of ours, so that was also why we came here to live. But now we are all graduated. And the two others are both living together with their partners, so I stayed here wonderfully on my own. Why would you leave, when you have a good home and everything you want?"* (nr. 11: female, 26, Oud-Assendorp)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

To the question "*What do you think is the reputation of Assendorp in other districts of Zwolle?*" only one response was rather negative (see first quotation). All the other 'in between' residents share the feeling that Assendorp is well appreciated in the rest of the city. They base this largely on the diversity of the residents and the availability of shops in the neighbourhood (see also chapter 6 and 7).

### Quotation-box 5.2 Reputation of Assendorp

*“It is said that the Pierik is a real Dutch working-class neighbourhood. Well, I'm not quite agreeing with that. When I think of a ‘real Dutch working-class neighbourhood’, I think of daily fights, nuisance and a lot of degeneration. Nothing of that is present here! There are many Dutch people living here, but also Turks and others. I think they just come here to live because it's so nice here. If it is really a working-class neighbourhood, a lot of ‘Sjonnies and Anita's would live here...”* (nr. 9: female, 42, De Pierik)

*“When we still lived in Dieze, we didn't know much about this neighbourhood. That it was a quiet neighbourhood with many Dutch people, yes we knew but that was all. But that's also what I really like about here: not so many foreigners live here which gives a greater sense of security. In Dieze I felt like a foreigner in my own city. That's not funny. No, I am delighted that we have come to live here!”* (nr. 6: female, 34, Nieuw-Assendorp)

*“Yes, I think Assendorp is pretty well known. Today we still have quite a few different people here and not just immigrants. I think that's characteristic of a vibrant neighbourhood like this. And if there is a festival or something else organized here, a lot of people come to visit it, of who I think don't come from Assendorp. I've never heard anything negative about Assendorp so...”* (nr. 10: female, 41, Oud-Assendorp)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

The liveability (measured as clean, safe and well maintained) in Assendorp is overall well appreciated. Some minor problems are present in the neighbourhood, as pointed out by half of the respondents. These problems range from car-parking, shady areas in the autumn caused by large trees, noisy train-traffic, junkies wondering the streets at night, trash in private gardens and vandalism by youth.

### Quotation-box 5.3 The liveability

*“Well, I think the municipality does its work okay. But I do think that the people who live in the houses here, well their gardens are not that well maintained and that gives a bit, yes, a less secure feeling. Secure isn't the right word of course, but, yes it gets a little deteriorated. ... Well, I am the one who keeps the path behind the houses free. That gives me eventually also a bad feeling; when you are the only one that's working. But then I think: I'm the only one who makes profit. If you don't pay attention to it, it becomes messy. Well, then you know that has a suction-effect: other will throw their trash here also.”* (nr. 2: female, 65, De Pierik)

*“Haha, when that neighbour's wife still lived it looked better than now: everyone was afraid of her, and thus cleared everyone his mess! Oh, I don't want to overdo it, but now it looks also fine, yes. There are neighbours who are looser with how their home and garden looks like, but I think that the street looks ok. ... I have no reason to complain: my house is never been burgled and there is sometimes only minor vandalism in the neighbourhood.”* (nr. 12: male, 53, Nieuw-Assendorp)

*“Some houses are very dirty here: there is a real mess in the garden. Of course in the backyard: they won't do it in the front yard. ... Sometimes those junkies are nuisance when they come from the coffee shop here further down the neighbourhood. They are swearing and stuff, but I do not feel unsafe or anything. ... Well, in the evening it is very difficult to park your car here. Almost all streets are lined with cars and then you can't fit in anymore. The streets are very narrow and that isn't relaxed because sometimes they are parked on both sides. Oh, it happens quite often that I have to park a little further down the street and then I walk home... well, what can you do about it? All sites are free, anyone can drop his car where ever he likes.”* (nr. 3: male, 35, Oud-Assendorp)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

## 5.2 Dwellings in the neighbourhood

How do 'in between' residents in Assendorp perceive the dwellings in their neighbourhood? The overall image is rather good, and residents are content. Three of the respondents indicate that their dwelling has been renovated in the last years. This caused sometimes discomfort, as becomes clear in the quotations. The increase of the rent price is also a point of discomfort.

### Quotation-box 5.4 Renovation of dwellings

*"You don't have a bed downstairs; it's all on the second floor. And the bathroom is upstairs too. ... They have renovated everything here, a few years ago. That was terrible. We have lived here during the work. We did it, but it was hard to do! Well, how long did it last? Four weeks, maybe six. And you had to pay also quite a lot yourself. If you wanted a toilet bowl, toilet bowl that was higher, you had to pay extra for it. If you wanted a faucet, a water saving shower faucet, you had to pay for this too. And so uh, when they were finished the rent also went up a bit I think, yes. Few, very few (compensation). There was even a meeting about it, because the people were angry... because later we heard from other projects that the people all came out well: That many of them received thousands of euros as compensation. We haven't received that. Only a small amount."* (nr. 1: female, 72, De Pierik)

*"Most houses here in the street have also been renovated and it was necessary also. The rent goes up a bit, but that's manageable."* (nr. 8: male, 68, Oud-Assendorp)

*"Well, the houses here are renovated a few years ago. There's nothing wrong with them though. Maybe a bit boring on the outside, but the condition of the houses is good. The houses all have the same facade. Only the houses that aren't for rent look different, those people can do whatever they want with it. I think it would be nice also to have a nice colour on my window frames, but I have no influence on that. (About the refurbishing) I would have found it very annoying if I suddenly had to pay much more rent: I didn't ask them to renovate my house."* (nr. 13: female, 63, De Pierik)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

Residents in De Pierik are overall very pleased with their dwelling, although they indicate that the houses are quite small. The garden however is a major plus. One other point that comes forward is the overall exterior look of the (social rented) dwellings in Assendorp: residents perceive them as boring. They understand that this is due to the conditions set by the housing association, but the respondents would like to see more colours on the dwelling in the neighbourhood. One respondent indicates to be very happy with the authentic exterior look of the dwelling in her neighbourhood and her own; she lives in Oud-Assendorp near the Assendorperplein.

### Quotation-box 5.5 Exterior look of dwellings

*"Quite the same is it (the exterior of the dwellings)... But that's just because it's all rental properties here. They all look the same. Well, I don't think that they would change it, when I'm not satisfied with it, haha. I take it as it is."* (nr. 12: male, 53, Nieuw-Assendorp)

*"Some houses are indeed very small though. You won't fit in with five people! A big advantage although is that we have a beautiful garden. And then ... Well, the houses are in good condition; the housing association takes care of that. If you have a problem, then come and solve it quickly. They do have good service, yes. It is okay, yes (the exterior of the dwelling). Some people take better care of their home than others, but that's the way it is. There isn't a house in the street here I feel ashamed of."* (nr. 9: female, 42, De Pierik)

*"The houses are quite older here and that gives a character. And I can appreciate that."* (nr. 10: female, 41, Oud-Assendorp)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

A few years ago a new housing project was launched by the housing association in Nieuw-Assendorp. The project comprised of the transforming and re-using of the old Jozef Church (see picture 5, chapter 4) This is also pointed out by two 'in between' residents in the same sub-neighbourhood. The respondents say that they don't have contact with, or know the people who live there, but they assume that those residents are wealthier than the average people in the neighbourhood. The rents for these apartments in the converted church are assumed to be rather high, due to the exclusive location. The fact that the people living in this project are probably wealthier than themselves doesn't bother them at all.

#### Quotation-box 5.6 State-led gentrification - conversion of Jozef Church

*"I know they (housing association) have converted a church here nearby into apartments. That was a few years so. I think you have to pay a high rent for it: it is rather exclusive to live there. But really rich people, I don't know."* (nr. 6: female, 34, Nieuw-Assendorp)

*"And near here the housing association has done also a project: they have transformed the church into homes. I think the rent is quite high, you surely live in a rare house, so you have to pay for it, I guess. But those people I don't know, so actually I don't care if wealthy people live there: I have nothing to do with them."* (nr. 12: male, 53, Nieuw-Assendorp)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

In the interview a question is included about the first gentrified area in Assendorp: *"Do you know the streets around the Assendorperplein? There are many dwelling here sold in the last years. What do you think of that and what kind of people do you think live here?"*

#### Quotation-box 5.7 Knowledge of gentrification area

*"I never really pay attention to it. Well, sometimes I see a house for sale, but the people I don't know. I work all day and they are probably also."* (nr. 3: male, 35, Oud-Assendorp)

*"Oh yes, I know. If I would have the money I'd quite like to live there too! These houses have surely character! And they are quite big also. If a house becomes for sale, it is usually sold within a few weeks."* (nr. 10: female, 41, Oud-Assendorp)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

Most respondents know the Assendorperplein with the owner-occupied dwellings, but don't have any contacts or so with the people who reside here. The respondents do have an image in mind of the residents, and most images overlap. The area with owner-occupied dwellings isn't used much by the 'in between' residents, and therefore a lot of respondents haven't an outspoken opinion about it.

#### Quotation-box 5.8 Knowledge of gentrifiers

*"It is a bit of a yuppie neighbourhood: large houses with big cars in front of it. Well, if you want to live close to the centre in an old and big house, then you move here."* (nr. 11: female, 26, Oud-Assendorp)

*"That is near here, yes. Well, we don't know anyone there, but sometimes we see people who might live there. They are indeed wealthier people than other people in the neighbourhood, but it is quite logical because they own their home. It also looks well taken care of there: the houses are well maintained and the streets are generally clean also. About those people I don't know much, probably young people who both have jobs."* (nr. 8: male, 68, Oud-Assendorp)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

### 5.3 Gentrification and its effects

Questions about the (potential) effects on the liveability in the neighbourhood of gentrification are in the interview included. The first question is about gentrification and its effect on the liveability: *“Housing associations are increasingly making decisions for changing the supply of housing in urban neighbourhoods. Possible ways of doing so are: demolish dwellings from the social rent sector and built bigger and more expensive dwelling instead for renting out; extensively renovate social rent dwelling and as a result increased rent prices; selling social rent dwelling on the housing-market. This will lead to a greater influx of relatively ‘rich’ residents. Do you expect some effects on the neighbourhood because of this, in terms of liveability (clean, safe and well maintained)?”*

It is noteworthy that only three ‘in between’ residents (nr. 2, nr. 4 and nr. 10) actually indicate to live among ‘those kind of people’ (wealthier people in an owner-occupied dwelling). It is therefore assumed that they have indeed ‘real-life’ experiences with gentrification and its effects, while the ‘experiences’ and opinions of other ‘in between’ residents thus is based on prejudices and biases. Most respondents point out that the dwellings and gardens of wealthier people are better maintained, due to interest and available budget. This can have a contagious effect on the other residents in the neighbourhood: when the major part of the neighbourhood looks nice and is well maintained, hopefully other residents will follow this example. The whole neighbourhood then profits from the influx of wealthier residents.

#### Quotation-box 5.9 Positive influence exterior look due to gentrification

*“Rich people take better care of their home and garden, because they have more money. The neighbourhood becomes only better then!”* (nr. 4: female, 81, Oud-Assendorp)

*“I think that it has a good influence (wealthier residents in the neighbourhood). You might find it to be annoying if you're the only one in the street that has a filthy house. Then you have to do something about it, I would at least.”* (nr. 3: male, 35, Oud-Assendorp)

*“Happy with these new things? Well, if the neighbourhood becomes even more beautiful, sure. We all benefit of that.”* (nr. 9: female, 42, De Pierik)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

Some respondents indicate that -with the influx of wealthier residents- the municipality is probably more willing to attack problems in the neighbourhood. An important reason for this is the high probability that wealthier people have better contact with the municipality. The parking related problems increase when wealthier residents come to the neighbourhood: it is more likely for them to have two cars -due to double careers-, while the neighbourhood isn't built originally for cars at all. This is an important problem according to the respondents.

#### Quotation-box 5.10 Gentrification and connections with the municipality

*“And ‘rich’ people can easier get things done at the local municipality. Hopefully we get some extra playgrounds for the kids and other stuff and maybe more maintenance on the pavements and public parks. I would appreciate that, yes.”* (nr. 6: female, 34, Nieuw-Assendorp)

*“There are not so much of them (rich people) living here now, but you can see that the neighbourhood already is changing. Well, the houses look good: those people have money to maintain the whole thing. That's just positive! And what I mentioned before, those people often have two cars and that creates problems. This neighbourhood isn't built for so many cars or for cars at all. That is a major drawback in my opinion.”* (nr. 10: female, 41, Oud-Assendorp)

*“With homeowners who have more money to spend and often have a connection to the municipality and so on, the neighbourhood will look more attractive. And yes, there is a price to pay...”* (nr. 11: female, 26, Oud-Assendorp)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

Two respondents indicate that the influx of wealthier residents has a positive effect on the exterior look of the neighbourhood, but, because of that the original residents (the ‘in between’ residents) don’t feel at home anymore. The neighbourhood is no longer ‘theirs’.

#### Quotation-box 5.11 Fear for gentrification

*“We are very good with all the neighbours here and if there are suddenly a lot of people leaving and others (rich people) to return, there will be some changes to, yes.”* (nr. 9: female, 42, De Pierik)

*“Well, I have fear for that: that the neighbourhood is changing so much that we do not longer feel at home.”* (nr. 12: male, 53, Nieuw-Assendorp)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

The second question about gentrification and its effects is about the state-led type of gentrification; namely by demolishing social rented dwelling and the placing instead of higher segment dwellings. The question is connected to the activities taking place in De Pierik: *“Did you hear anything about the demolishing of social housing in De Pierik by the housing associations, so that larger and more expensive dwelling can be built in place? It is very unlikely that the current tenants can stay in here, because of the rent increases. What do you think of this?”*

Some respondents were quite positive about the residents that (probably) will be displaced. Especially about the availability of houses that fit a small wallet they do have a positive view. The opinions about the urgency that housing associations give to residents who have to leave their dwelling are also positive.

#### Quotation-box 5.12 Re-housing of residents

*“I’ve heard of it, yes. Fortunately, there are quite a lot of social rent properties in Zwolle where they (former residents) can go to.”* (nr. 4: female, 81, Oud-Assendorp)

*“The housing associations give urgency to people who have to leave their homes. This way you can find a new house quickly. It is well organized I think.”* (nr. 6: female, 34, Nieuw-Assendorp)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

Other ‘in between’ residents do have a more nuanced vision about the project, and about restructuring in general. They have concerns about the new prices of the dwelling and the indirect displacement of the former residents. One respondent states that another project recently has been completed in De Pierik: here live new people and are new offices.

#### Quotation-box 5.13 New-built project in De Pierik

*“Here on De Pierik they have done it also: they’ve completely refurbished the old technical school that was cracked. Now there are people living and there are small offices and workshops etcetera on the ground floor. And they are also going to break down 56 social rental properties. Yes, that’s only just announced. I don’t know what they are going to build there, but the chances are high that it is something expensive. I don’t know where the original residents have to go to...”* (nr. 13: female, 63, De Pierik)

*“That what returns (the new dwellings) eh is expensive anyway, I think. And what I think about this? Um, well, it's pretty much out of my sight, so I don't think that I will have to suffer from it. It will be however a different story if it is adjacent to my garden or over there...”* (nr. 2: female, 65, De Pierik)

*“This is not so neat of the housing association... Some people, and I don't even mean myself, just don't have enough money to live somewhere else than here. Where should they go? To Dieze? That is where you'd rather not live! But I do understand it also a bit of course. The housing association wants to make money and obviously that will succeed in this way if you build more expensive houses... But it is not it neat, no.”* (nr. 3: male, 35, Oud-Assendorp)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

The largest group of respondents have a straight forward opinion about the approach of the housing associations regarding gentrification. Although most of them can speak civilized about it, some 'in between' residents are very emotional, as is illustrated in the quotations below.

#### Quotation-box 5.14 Opinions about projects of housing associations

*“Richer people can choose where they want to live and then they have it usually their way. If they really want to live here, it will happen: almost as a natural process. Yes, there's nothing you can do about it I think. Yes, I'm quite afraid of it. I like to live here also and I think that housing associations should not forget me.”* (nr. 10: female, 42, De Pierik)

*“What do I think of this? I think it is crazy! What are they (housing associations) thinking? ‘If we can make money over the backs of poor people than we do that. These people are too stupid to do something about it.’ And it happens! They are also busy here, in the back. And luckily I don't live there, but I feel sorry for those people. They are simply evicted from their houses. Watch it: they will tear the whole place down. And where should we go then? We can't pay for the expensive houses. So we are kicked out onto the street, without mercy. We are always victims of budget cuts and stuff. And that's all invented by the rich because they want to make money. Well, I'm tired of it, certainly.”* (nr. 7: female, 35, Nieuw-Assendorp)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

#### 5.4 Hypothetical question about extensive renovations

To get a good impression of the way 'in between' residents feel about certain approaches of the municipality and the housing associations, a hypothetical question was asked in the interview: *“What if it is your dwelling that is on the list to be extensively renovated, and you have to live somewhere else for the coming 1.5 years? You have the opportunity to return, but the rent is increased by a hundred euros a month. What would you do? What is decisive for your choice?”*

Some respondents have a solid decision: they will return, although they have lived somewhere else for 1.5 years and the rent of their former dwelling is increased by a hundred euros a month. The main reasons for returning are: the satisfaction with the garden and view and the neighbourhood. Especially the latter is given as an important reason, in combination with the unwillingness to live in other neighbourhoods of Zwolle. This willingness to stay has also to do with social contacts in and place attachment to the neighbourhood (see chapter 7).

#### Quotation-box 5.15 Return after extensive renovation

*“If you go somewhere else to live 1.5 years and you decorate your house. Then it is debatable whether you will return. But yes, I would return: I'm used to the neighbourhood and my house. Here in the back of course, the garden is very nice. And the view that I have is also nice. I will pay for this: it is worth a lot to me!”* (nr. 2: female, 65, De Pierik)

*“We get evicted and we have nothing to choose. But if that house (temporarily arranged by the housing association) is in a poor neighbourhood where I don’t want to live, the choice is not difficult: we go back, even if it costs a lot of money. That is a choice you have to make... and then I choose especially for my children, for sure. I’ll have to work harder, but I gladly do that.”* (nr. 7: female, 35, Nieuw-Assendorp)

*“It would be worth a hundred euros to come back: it’s still a lot of money. If I’m very pleased about the way they have renovated the house, then the chances are high for me to return, because I feel really at home here.”* (nr. 9: female, 42, De Pierik)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

There are also quite a few respondents who won’t return. It is not that they don’t want it, but more because of the high costs involved. Another reason for not returning is because the respondents have the impression that the neighbourhood is changed because of the extensive renovations: they don’t longer feel at home.

#### Quotation-box 5.16 No return after extensive renovation

*“Although I live here very happy, I don’t think I would come back. But with pain in my heart... Well, I think about the future course, maybe my health ends quickly and then I can’t continue living alone... It will be better if I go elsewhere, where I will be more at home. I mean, where I can live for the coming years.”* (nr. 4: female, 81, Oud-Assendorp)

*“But the neighbourhood is changed then; I wouldn’t feel at home anymore, because it is different than before. And if you have to pay a high rent also you think about it twice.”* (nr. 6: female, 34, Nieuw-Assendorp)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

There are two respondents who have a deviant opinion about the extensive renovation on their dwelling. One in particular isn’t afraid or so, but sees it as an option to acquire a better dwelling, or even a ‘nice relocation bonus’. So, the opinions about the hypothetical renovation in Assendorp vary a lot between the different residents. It is a matter of taste, habit, personality and budget if you are returning or not.

#### Quotation-box 5.17 Deviant opinion extensive renovation

*“I think it is a good idea to renovate social rental properties. I think it is the best solution, because people can stay in their own home to live, but a better version of it.”* (nr. 8: male, 68, Oud-Assendorp)

*“And what would I do? Well, if they give me a nice little house somewhere else for a while, then I’ll take it. I hope by then to live together anyway, so returning isn’t in the picture really. And if they give me a nice relocation bonus, well, then I’m the first to move out.”* (nr. 11: female, 26, Oud-Assendorp)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

### 5.5 Students in the neighbourhood

The next set of questions is related to housing, namely via studentification. Experiences with studentification however, can also have impact on the residents’ social networks/cohesion & place attachment (see chapter 7).

The respondents who live in De Pierik indicate that there aren’t many students here, although it happens more often that the housing associations assigns ‘normal’ residences to students. This development is not welcomed with open arms, but also not abhorred.

#### Quotation-box 5.18 Students in De Pierik

*“Mmm, there are not so much. Occasionally you pass by a house where students live. In the beginning of the street is a house for students and in the other streets here are also, I think one or two houses where students live. Well, sometimes you see them and I’m not sure of course, but they look like students. Just about twenty years old, and sometimes you don’t see them for days and then suddenly -when the weather is nice, you see five of them in the garden. Yes, then I think, that are students.”* (nr. 9: female, 42, De Pierik)

*“Yeah, uh I would be afraid if more students come live here, Now I’m also afraid: my neighbour is going to move and I think ‘what kind of people shall come? Because they (housing associations) are continuing (converting ‘normal’ residences into student housing). Well, looking at the two people here who are already so not much involved in doing thing around their house. And if people like that (students) come also in the dwelling next to me, well then yes... Then I start to live on a island... It feels so, because they make no contact. They are nice people (students), but they just make a chat or say hello, and I don’t have problems with music or something, that’s all ok. But I have no contact with them.”* (nr. 2: female, 65, De Pierik)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

Primarily in Oud-Assendorp many students live, as is indicated by the respondents. The houses which are inhabited by students seem to be slightly ‘different’ in comparison to the other dwelling in the neighbourhood. Some respondents experience also some nuisance in the streets because of the students’ habits, while others don’t really care or experience nothing obvious.

#### Quotation-box 5.19 Characteristics of student housing

*“Ha, students. Yes, there are a lot. Not in our street, but a little further is a whole street full of them! Once lived here almost no students, only families and older people. That’s changed somewhat.”* (nr. 4: female, 81, Oud-Assendorp)

*“It is just far enough from my house to experience nuisance, if they cause anything at all.”*(nr. 2: female, 65, De Pierik)

*“Know? Well, I don’t of course, but I have the suspicion. At those houses it is a mess and the outside and the inside looks awful. The windows are sealed with posters and the garbage bags are simply put in the garden and the pavement and the gardens are full of bicycles. It seems pretty clear to me that students live there and not normal people!”* (nr. 5: male, 41, Nieuw-Assendorp)

*“Well, it isn’t so bad. The garden isn’t that neat and if you look inside it doesn’t look that clean, but it doesn’t bother me: I don’t have to live there.”* (nr. 13: female, 63, De Pierik)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

A lot of the ‘in between’ residents in Assendorp have an opinion about students in ‘normal’ dwellings. It is however quite remarkable that almost no students live in the vicinity of almost half the respondents. Some respondents notice that the number of students is increasing and they aren’t always happy with that, as evidenced by the quotations.

#### Quotation-box 5.20 Students in ‘normal’ dwellings

*“As long as they give no trouble, it doesn’t bother so much, no. However, they have to adjust themselves to the neighbourhood, because I would be annoyed if they would behave antisocial. This is a neat street so I would find that annoying. Well, they have to clean up the garbage and tidy the garden and don’t put the bikes on the pavement. That sort of things. But I wouldn’t want to have other antisocial people living next to me though. I have nothing against students. The street should simply continue to be neat.”* (nr. 4: male, 35, Oud-Assendorp)

*“Yes, I would be very annoyed when students come and live here. We live here for some time now and we like it very much. If we can, we prevent the neighbourhood for such things to happen.” (nr. 5: male, 41, Nieuw-Assendorp)*

*“And what I just said, they (students) do not really participate in the neighbourhood: you almost never see them and they say never goodbye. Well, I think that is quite a downside. I'd rather see some young people with screaming children living here, so to speak, who bring some life into the neighbourhood.” (nr. 12: male, 53, Nieuw-Assendorp)*

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

## Chapter 6. Data analysis - Facilities and services

In this chapter the main findings regarding the experiences of gentrification on facilities and services by the residents who are 'in between' is central.

In the semi-structured interviews -used for the gathering of 'in between' residents' personal views on the changes that have occurred, are occurring or will occur due to gentrification- a set of guiding questions was used. These guide questions could ordinarily be answered by the 'in between' residents, but served also to stimulate the residents' own contribution to the subject.

In the following section an overview of the responses is presented by using the guide questions. A number of quotations are used for each question, for highlighting the most notable answers. Note that the interviews were conducted in Dutch: the quotations in this thesis are therefore translated into English.

### 6.1 Shops and basic facilities/services

How do 'in between' residents feel about the supply of shops and basic facilities/services in Assendorp? This question was included in the interviews, because the presence of gentrifiers (relatively 'rich' residents) in the neighbourhood can have influence on the supply of these.

Overall the respondents are very satisfied about the available shops in Assendorp. One major setback according to the respondents in De Pierik is the complete absence of shops in this sub-neighbourhood. Almost all 'in between' residents use the Assendorperstraat for their daily shopping, although the city centre is used also very often for the 'specialized' shopping, because in Assendorp not enough shops are available which sell products like this.

#### Quotation-box 6.1 Supply of shops

*"On De Pierik is nothing, absolutely nothing."* (nr. 2: female, 65, De Pierik)

*"Well, we've got everything: a supermarket, the Action, the Op=Op Shop, Zeeman, a florist, jeweller, sex shop, haha, and so on. We just don't have much clothing and shoe shops and everything. For stuff like that I go to the city centre anyway."* (nr. 11: female, 26, Oud-Assendorp)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

Basic facilities and services like doctors, the pharmacies, schools, and day-care etcetera are regarded as sufficient. Everything is available within the neighbourhood, even in De Pierik. Respondents also indicate that nearby a hospital is located.

#### Quotation-box 6.2 Supply of basic facilities/services

*"Well, that's all fine. Everything is nearby and the hospital is also nearby. Not that I need that already, but it's all there. That's fine. And the bus is not that far away either."* (nr. 4: female, 81, Oud-Assendorp)

*"Everything is in or near our neighbourhood: the central station, the city centre and we have still some shops etcetera nearby. Well, it's all here. I don't know about schools and day-care, because I don't have children, but I think that is also good here."* (nr. 11: female, 26, Oud-Assendorp)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

As is mentioned in the previous page, the presence of gentrifiers in the neighbourhood can have influence on the supply of shops. To know whether this is already happening, the ‘in between’ residents were asked if they have noticed some changes in the supply of shops in the neighbourhood.

#### Quotation-box 6.3 Changes in the supply of shops

*“In former times? There were more independent shops like a bakery and a greengrocer. And there was a time we also had some foreign stores, but they are almost all gone. Other stores are added in the street. A few shops sell clothes for women and underwear. Also some jewellers have come and flower shops. And something that bothers me very much: a sex-shop is now here in the street. It bothers me that you can see right inside: it’s so obvious. There are also mothers with small children on the street and I think that’s really not good. No, this store can go.”*(nr. 8: male, 68, Oud-Assendorp)

*“...But you see it, they change (supply of shops). An empty shop here and a shop is gone there and there is again a new one...”* (nr.7: female, 35, Nieuw-Assendorp)

*“Well, maybe. There are some expensive shops here, but also some discount stores. I do not know how it was before, because I don’t live here that long. Some shops, like Qinn (women’s clothing boutique and underwear) are really mended for the wealthy people among us. I don’t buy clothes there. But other stores, such as the Action and Op=Op Shop: they are more for people who aren’t wealthy. I go there sometimes, although I don’t consider myself as being ‘poor’.”* (nr. 10: female, 42, De Pierik)

*“On the corner here is a lamp supplier and he is really priceless for normal people. But in this neighbourhood are not really luxury stores further, some more expensive ones, but not really super luxury.”* (nr. 12: male, 53, Nieuw-Assendorp)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

A major part of the respondents indicate that the supply of shops has changed in the past: independent stores like bakeries and greengroceries are almost all taken over by national chains of shops. There is also a lot of rotation in the shops: it is quite usual that stores leave, premises are unoccupied and then something new comes in.

A few respondents make it evident that there is a division in the kind of shops in the Assendorperstraat. Some shops clearly are mended for the wealthier residents of the neighbourhood, while others are obvious for the residents with a small wallet. This division seems to continue and even increase. This is probably due to the fact that a growing number of wealthier people (gentrifiers) live in the neighbourhood, which have a different demand regarding products.

To the question *“Do you want to have other shops in Assendorp too/do you want some shops to return?”* the general opinion is that the current supply of shops is sufficient. All respondents make use of the city centre for goods and product that aren’t available on the Assendorperstraat. Some of them see it as pointless to ‘demand’ shops to return because the city centre is so near. Only one ‘in between’ respondent indicates that he would like to see a different kind of shop in Assendorp: a night store that sells drinks and exclusive snacks (see quotation-box 6.4). In the light of more gentrifiers coming to the neighbourhood, he thinks that stores like this are appreciated.

#### Quotation-box 6.4 Need for new shop

*“You can be nostalgic about it, but whether you can claim it back is something else ... That’s just not possible I think. So, yes I do miss some shops Assendorp, but whether it is feasible then, that I wonder.”*(nr. 2: female, 65, De Pierik)

*“No, I don’t need other shops or something here; I’ll go to the centre if here isn’t what I want. In the centre, there’s almost anything I want. Well, maybe, a store with things for a drink or so, small snacks or tapas, that sort of thing. And when more rich people live here, then maybe they can appreciate it too. The store however has to be open till late, so you can get some stuff after work for later. Yes, that would be nice.”* (nr. 3: male, 35, Oud-Assendorp)

*“And, uh, I think we really do have everything here. It is not all to my taste and wallet, but I don’t miss anything. And if that were so, well then I can go to the city.”* (nr. 4: female, 81, Oud-Assendorp)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

The respondents were asked the following question too: *“Do you think the supply of shops will change more when a larger group of ‘rich’ residents (gentrifiers) comes to the neighbourhood?”* It is interesting to know how the respondents see the future regarding this, because it is very likely that when wealthier people come living here, their wishes and demands will be fulfilled. Residents than can have the feeling ‘that it isn’t for them anymore’ (Doucet, 2009). It is noteworthy that only two ‘in between’ residents (nr. 2, nr. 4 and nr. 10) actual indicate to live among ‘those kind of people’ (wealthier people in an owner-occupied dwelling). It is therefore assumed that they have indeed ‘real-life’ experiences with gentrification and its effects, while the ‘experiences’ and opinions of other ‘in between’ residents thus is based on prejudices and biases.

#### Quotation-box 6.5 Hypothetical changes in shop supply due to gentrifiers

*“That could be, haha. But then they have to come with a lot at the same time, because for twenty wealthy people, they surely won’t build new stores!”* (nr. 9: female, 42, De Pierik)

*“Probably more stores will come to fit the needs of those people. I don’t think that is much of a problem, but they should keep some shops that are available for everyone.”* (nr. 8: male, 68, Oud-Assendorp)

*“Yes it can be an advantage, but I think the changes will be minor: the city centre is still so nearby. Maybe Super de Boer becomes the AH or something. And yes, the Zeeman will also be taken over by something else. But I don’t think Gucci is coming!”* (nr. 3: male, 35, Oud-Assendorp)

*“But if that sort of shops will come (expensive shops), than the street will perhaps look more luxurious. It’s nicer and better maintained. Then it’s an advantage then. I wouldn’t go to these stores, because I don’t do it now either, but it would be a luxurious look. That is a nice bonus.”* (nr. 5: male, 41, Nieuw-Assendorp)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

Results regarding hypothetical changes in the supply of shops due to incoming wealthier people are quite varying. Most of the respondents don’t see it as a problem, as long as there are shops available for the less wealthy residents in the neighbourhood. A few ‘in between’ residents indicate that the shopping street will look more luxurious and better maintained when there are more stores for a higher segment, although they don’t expect shops like Gucci to come but more a long the lines of Albert Heijn etc. The city centre is still nearby, so it is likely that there will be some changes too in the supply.

## 6.2 Small businesses attached to homes

What do the ‘in between’ residents know about small businesses attached to homes in their neighbourhood and do they make use of them? It is assumed that people with higher education (in this case: gentrifiers) more often start their own private business than people without higher education. In the light of the larger influx of wealthier people due

to gentrification in Assendorp, it is important to know what kind of small businesses there are present now, how residents use them and how the respondents see the future regarding this.

#### Quotation-box 6.6 Supply of small businesses attached to homes

*“Well, here are a lot of hairdressers in Assendorp, which is remarkable really. But I think that is it...”* (nr. 3: male, 35, Oud-Assendorp)

*“I know a few stylists who have their business at home. And there is also an artist with a studio at home. But I never go there; I don’t like it so much.”* (nr. 6: female, 34, Nieuw-Assendorp)

*“We have a pedicure and a psychologist here who have their business at home. There is also a broker who has his office in his home. I wouldn’t know any more.”* (nr. 4: female, 81, Oud-Assendorp)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

Looking at the answers the respondents gave; it is remarkable how much hairdressing-salons there are in Assendorp. According to the Golden Pages there are over 15 salons. A few respondents indicate that there are several artists with a studio attached to their home, and also some people who have their own practice at home, like a pedicure and a psychologist. The majority of the respondents didn’t know any other businesses attached to homes except the hairdressing-salons. The general use of the services offered by the businesses is very low among the respondents.

A question about hypothetical changes in the supply of small businesses attached to homes due to the larger influx of wealthier people (gentrifiers) was also included in the interview.

#### Quotation-box 6.7 Hypothetical changes in the supply of small businesses attached to homes due to gentrifiers

*“Maybe more of those luxury things women haha. And then I become a victim of that! Perhaps a lawyer or something, which has an office at home. But I have to mention that these houses are not so spacious though. He has to do some renovation first before he can put a desk in there!”* (nr. 5: male, 41, Nieuw-Assendorp)

*“Mmm, well ... Maybe those people have their own office for taxes and stuff, or psychiatrists who have a clinic at home. That could be...”* (nr. 6: female, 34, Nieuw-Assendorp)

*“Yes I would be glad if some luxury hair salon or beautician would come, or make up artist or a consultant or something. That’s what I want to use.”* (nr. 11: female, 26, Oud-Assendorp)

*“People who have studied find it fun to own their own businesses or so. For hobby or more for the luxury. Mmm, those luxury salons or so, or for massage. ‘Richer’ people have to money for it, but unfortunately I don’t: I wouldn’t go.”* (nr. 13: female, 63, De Pierik)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

All the respondents assume that the number of self-employed residents with a small business attached to their home will increase due to the larger influx of wealthier residents or gentrifiers. An important reason, according to the respondents, is that people who have studied like it to run their own business. This could be because of their career for example as doctor or as pedicure, or more as a hobby, like beauty salons etcetera. If the ‘in between’ residents will make use of these new businesses isn’t sure: about half of the respondents say it does depend on what types of services are offered for what price.

## Chapter 7. Data analysis- Social networks/cohesion & place attachment

In this chapter the main findings regarding the experiences of gentrification on social networks/cohesion & place attachment by the residents who are 'in between' is central.

In the semi-structured interviews -used for the gathering of 'in between' residents' personal views on the changes that have occurred, are occurring or will occur due to gentrification- a set of guiding questions was used. These guide questions could ordinarily be answered by the 'in between' residents, but served also to stimulate the residents' own contribution to the subject.

In the following section an overview of the responses is presented by using the guide questions. A number of quotations are used for each question, for highlighting the most notable answers. Note that the interviews were conducted in Dutch: the quotations in this thesis are therefore translated into English.

### 7.1 Composition of the neighbourhood

The respondents were asked to describe their neighbourhood in terms of residents. They also had to indicate their contentment with it. The majority of the 'in between' residents indicate to be very pleased with the kind of neighbours they have: some respondents are very glad that there aren't much families with teenagers while others are pleased to see a lot of children. Only three respondents make clear that they don't really appreciate the other residents in the neighbourhood. This involves most of the time students. In the previous chapter (chapter 5, section 5.5) attention is given to the experiences of 'in between' residents with students.

#### Quotation-box 7.1 Composition of the neighbourhood

*"Oh, I'm very happy with my neighbours, you know: there isn't a family with children or boys with big motorcycles making noise in the evening and give a big mouth, haha."* (nr. 1: female, 72, De Pierik)

*"Well, you can find everything here: people with small children, people with older children, older people and some young people too. There is a lot of diversity here, and that's why we feel at home."* (nr. 7: female, 35, Nieuw-Assendorp)

*"There are many more different people living in this neighbourhood than it used to be. In that respect the neighbourhood has become less vivid. You have more groups of people that interact with each other: young family together, the seniors together, etcetera."* (nr. 8: male, 68, Oud-Assendorp)

*"Yes, there are a lot of students here. Families? I don't know. And frankly I don't care: I'm working during the day and when I'm going to settle down myself, I wouldn't continue to live here."* (nr. 11: female, 26, Oud-Assendorp)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

### 7.2 Contacts and social control

This section is rather important because it involves contacts and social control in the neighbourhood. Contacts and social control are strong indicators of the social cohesion of a neighbourhood. The following question was included in the interview: *"How would you describe the contact you have with your neighbours?"* It is important to know how the 'in between' residents think about their contacts in the neighbourhood and how they experience social control, because gentrification has (very often) influence on these aspects (see chapter 2, section 2.3.3).

#### Quotation-box 7.2 Minor contact with the neighbours

*“We say hello and good day to each other, but that’s it. And I’m ok with that. They are young people with young children: they have their own group of contacts. ... And because those people are living opposite of each other for 30 years now, they have experienced so much with each other. Everything: children, infants and grandchildren.”* (nr. 1: female, 72, De Pierik)

*“We used to be better with the neighbours than today. We don’t do as much activities with each other as we did before. That has changed a lot. I understand: today people work more because they want to spend more money on fun things to do. That’s at the expense of the contact you have with them: they don’t have time for you. But that is the way it goes these day...”* (nr. 8: male, 68, Oud-Assendorp)

*“Occasionally I still try to make some contact with the neighbours, but that never goes smoothly: it stays limited to ‘hello’ and ‘good evening’. Yes, I think it’s a pity.”* (nr. 13: female, 63, De Pierik)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

As is evident from quotations-box 7.2, not all respondents are pleased with their social contacts in the neighbourhood. A few respondents express their discomfort about the lack of contact they have or can make with younger residents with families and students, although they seem to understand the rationale of those people: younger families have their own circle of friends or are just very busy with work related activities.

#### Quotation-box 7.3 Major contact with the neighbours

*“I like to talk to everyone, but I don’t visit everyone for a coffee or something, no. These neighbours have the key of my home and I’ve got theirs. It is more a kind of safety: they can enter my house if they think something is wrong with me. They have also some important numbers of people who they can call in an emergency.”* (nr. 4: female, 81, Oud-Assendorp)

*“Some neighbours have become very good friends of mine.”* (nr. 12: male, 53, Nieuw-Assendorp)

*“Oh yes, we know almost everyone here. And that goes very easy because almost all children go to the same school and have the same age. Well, you want to know the parents of your children’s friends too of course.”* (nr. 9: female, 42, De Pierik)

*“In the morning we walk to school in a group. We bring the children to school. During lunchtime one of us takes the children home to eat a sandwich, because I have to work sometimes at that time. That is very nice: other mothers who have occasionally some time to keep an eye on the children. I take care of theirs on other days: we just exchange the children!”* (nr. 6: female, 34, Nieuw-Assendorp)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

The majority of the ‘in between’ residents indicates to be very pleased with the social contacts they have in the neighbourhood, as can be read in quotation-box 7.3. Almost 90% of the respondents have the key of one or more neighbours. This indicates good trust.

#### Quotation-box 7.4 No contact with the neighbours

*“Students only hang out with each other, not with others in the neighbourhood. I wouldn’t say that they don’t care about us, but I think it is...”* (nr. 11: female, 26, Oud-Assendorp)

*“Most people here are already retired and they are at home all day. I think they go visit each other often for coffee and chatting and stuff. ... I haven’t given them a key of my house, no. I don’t feel comfortable if they enter my home while I’m not there.”* (nr. 3: male, 35, Oud-Assendorp)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

There is however a minor part of the respondents who has almost no contact with other neighbours at all, and it seems as if they don't care either. One respondent lives among students and she indicates that the students aren't involved in the neighbourhood at all. Another respondent points out that the majority of his neighbours already are retired. His neighbours have a lot of interaction with each other, but not so much with him: he has to work all day and isn't interested in visiting his older neighbours frequently. He is also not so keen on giving his key to the neighbours; he rather asks some friend to watch his property while he is on vacation. The 'in between' residents were also asked to tell something about neighbourhood activities and whether or not they are pleased with it.

#### Quotation-box 7.5 Neighbourhood activities

*"Yes, in the playground across the street (former kindergarten): there you can play cards and shuffle-board, and uh, and folk dances. But I don't do that, that's just because I'm still very much involved in the family of Margaret (daughter) and I still have a lot of activities. That's fine with me; I don't miss playing Bingo all day. Maybe later, if you lose your husband or something."* (nr. 1: female, 72, De Pierik)

*"Well, we have a community centre (the Enk), sometimes I go there, because they organize once in a while a nice day with activities. The men go more often however, so they can talk and play card games or something."* (nr. 4: female, 81, Oud-Assendorp)

*"We organize quite regularly things around here together: in summer we have barbecues in the playground and when there is an important soccer match or something then we come together too. We also organize Carnival with the neighbourhood."* (nr. 5: male, 41, Nieuw-Assendorp)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

Most respondents are very satisfied with the supply of activities in the neighbourhood, although they don't always participate in them. The majority of the respondents say to organize activities with their direct neighbours, like birthdays, barbecues and Carnival. It is very much appreciated when neighbours are paying visits to each other or walk by and make a chat.

In quotation-box 7.6 it is made evident that the respondents attach importance to social control in the neighbourhood. Control is a strong indicator for the social cohesion of the neighbourhood: how much do the people care about their fellow neighbours and the public space? It is important to know how this is perceived, because it is proved that some forms of gentrification have (very often) a negative impact on the social cohesion (see chapter 2, section 2.3.3).

#### Quotation-box 7.6 Good social control

*"Once a week I help some older people with the housekeeping or I do the shopping for them. They are not as mobile as they used to be. Me and two other neighbours are always willing to lend a hand for a moment. And that is also appreciated around here: we are all just one big family. ... We never have many problems with each other. Yes, in summer it is more often: sometimes we are disturbed by the loud talking or music coming from the neighbours' garden late in the evening. Well, we just ask them nicely if they could keep it more quit. And they will."* (nr. 9: female, 42, De Pierik)

*"If it starts raining and their laundry is hanging outside then I'll just knock on the window and I say this: 'The laundry is getting wet! Do you know that?' And I'm sure that if we ring their bell in the middle of the night, they would help us: they have a car and we don't. ... A couple weeks ago we needed an ambulance because my husband was ill again. Two neighbours came and took good care of me; a helping hand you know. Yes, I like social control, definitely!"* (nr. 1: female, 72, De Pierik)

*“We keep an eye on them (children/adolescents), but they can do whatever they want until a certain limit. When there are troubles, we know immediately. You keep an eye on other people’s children too. Yes, that’s very good! Even when we are on vacation, the neighbours watch our house to see if there no bad things happen when we’re away. We have quite a good relation with everyone here. It’s just easier when you know who your neighbours are: it just makes you feel comfortable.”* (nr. 5: male, 41, Nieuw-Assendorp)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

The quotations in box 7.7 are in sharp contrast with those in box 7.6. Only a few respondents make clear that social control is desirable, but very much lacking in their neighbourhood.

#### Quotation-box 7.7 Social control

*“If my neighbour would lie dead in her house right now, I wouldn’t even notice. That’s actually quite sad...”* (nr. 13: female, 63, De Pierik)

*“If everyone just cleans up his mess it remains clean here. You have to appeal them, but then it happens. Sure. That’s important.”* (nr. 7: female, 35, Nieuw-Assendorp)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

### 7.3 Changes due to gentrification

This section is very important because it addresses changes in the social contacts, control and place attachment due to gentrification, or in other words: changes due to the larger influx of wealthier residents or ‘gentrifiers’ in the neighbourhood. The following question was included in the interview: *“Housing associations are increasingly making decisions for changing the supply of housing in urban neighbourhoods. Possible ways of doing so are: demolish dwellings from the social rent sector and built bigger and more expensive dwelling instead for renting out; extensively renovate social rent dwelling and as a result increased rent prices; selling social rent dwelling on the housing-market. This leads to a larger influx of relatively ‘rich’ residents (in owner occupied or rental dwellings). What kind of people do you think live in these (newly build) dwellings? Do you see (expect) some changes in the neighbourhood because of this, in terms of social contact/control or place attachment?”*

A major part of the ‘in between’ residents indicate that the social contacts will get worse when a larger number of wealthier people come to the neighbourhood. It is noteworthy that only two ‘in between’ residents (nr. 2, nr. 4 and nr. 10) actual indicate to live among ‘those kind of people’ (wealthier people in an owner-occupied dwelling). It is therefore assumed that they have indeed ‘real-life’ experiences with gentrification and its effects, while the ‘experiences’ and opinions of other ‘in between’ residents thus is based on prejudices and biases.

#### Quotation-box 7.8 Major changes in social contact

*“Mmm, maybe it’ll be less fun to live here when that happens (more wealthy people ‘gentrifiers’, come to the neighbourhood). Well, when more rich people come then it will become less cosy here I think. Rich people have a different way of life, different from what we have. Maybe they do see us as ‘farmers’ and want nothing to do with us. That is possible. You never see an expensive neighbourhood with owner-occupied dwellings on TV where the people sit together on garden chairs on the pavement. So, I think the neighbourhood is less pleasant. On the other hand: I don’t care really, I’m almost never at home. No, I think that the older people here are more bothered by them than I would be.”* (nr. 3: male, 35, Oud-Assendorp)

*“Oh, that will probably happen too! Those people like only the people who look like them. We are just a bunch of dumb farmers. Well, they will split up the neighbourhood: ‘this is ours and that’s yours’. ... I’m not even mad at them, but more at the housing associations: they displace us. They (the rich people) can’t do anything about that... But actually they can indirectly, because they have money and they want to live here and that’s why we are forced out of our homes...”* (nr. 7: female, 35, Nieuw-Assendorp)

*“Yes. Those people are certainly different (people in owner-occupied dwellings), at least when I look at the people who are new in my neighbourhood. Yes, maybe due to a different lifestyle, but I don’t have much contact with the neighbours at all, so I don’t know for sure. They are young people; well there is just a major difference in age. ... I don’t believe there is contact between the owner-occupied dwellings and the social rent dwellings. But I can see that the families in the owner-occupied dwellings do have contact with other families near them who also live in an owner-occupied dwelling.”* (nr. 2: female, 65, De Pierik)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

In box 7.8 the worst changes in social contact are shown. The respondents are rather negative about the larger influx of wealthier people into the neighbourhood: they assume that the neighbourhood will become less pleasant to live in or even will be divided in two; one area for the rich and one for the poor. The last quotation in this box is assumed to be an actual experience with the effects of gentrification on the neighbourhood. This respondent indicates that the new residents, people in owner-occupied dwellings, indeed don’t make contact with other -social rent- residents, but solely with people who are like them. She points out that the reason for this can be found in the deviant lifestyle of the new residents.

#### Quotation-box 7.9 Minor changes in social contact

*“I think it’s more like people don’t interact because they have different ages and have to work than because they are living in a rented house or an owner-occupied dwelling. ... Liveability? I don’t know. They (rich people, gentrifiers) only hang out with each other and not with other people in the neighbourhood. I think that it’ll stay the same. But I don’t mind to live among rich people, no it doesn’t matter.”* (nr. 4: female, 81, Oud-Assendorp)

*“There won’t come millionaires here!. I think it will go fine when they come and live among us: we’ll all just get along. But if they come here and live in those new houses: they’ll be like a bunch. I’m sure if we will see them often in that case.”* (nr. 9: female, 42, De Pierik)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

There are also some respondents who assume that the influx of wealthier people into the neighbourhood only results in minor changes regarding social contacts. They indicate that it isn’t the money or the type of house that makes the difference, but the lifestyle people have. A few respondents however point out that location does matter too: if people live well mixed with each other it would be beneficial for the social contacts, but when people separate themselves with others who are just like them, the contacts will go worse.

#### Quotation-box 7.10 Divergent opinions changes in social contact

*“Initially the neighbourhood will be worse I guess. Those people will interact more with each other than with us. And when people are evicted here, because the housing association is going to built something else, than I expect some resistance. Maybe there is tension between us and them. Indeed. It is because we have to leave as they come. ... I think rich people spend more money on their house and its surroundings, so the neighbourhood will look even better. But I don’t know if the contact between us and them will get better, but I think so. We are all human after all and maybe they prefer to have good contact with the neighbours after all. The contacts will mainly be through sports clubs and the schools children go. That is usual right?”* (nr. 13: female, 63, De Pierik)

*“I think the neighbourhood will improve. Rich people, with or without an owner-occupied dwelling pay more attention to the area and find it more important than others that the area is well maintained etcetera. And I think a stronger social control follows automatically. (nr. 10: female, 41, Oud-Assendorp)*

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

Only a minor part of the respondents has a different or mixed opinion about the influences of gentrification on the social contacts in the neighbourhood. One ‘in between’ resident believes that the larger influx of wealthier people in the neighbourhood has a positive effect on the neighbourhood. She is convinced that wealthier people whether or not in an owner-occupied dwelling pay more attention to their houses and the area in the vicinity and because of this they will sustain social contacts and control to keep the neighbourhood the way they want or like it. Another respondent thinks that the social cohesion will be worse at first because of the changes and evictions in the neighbourhood regarding (former) residents. Eventually the contacts will be restored because ‘we are all human after all’.

## Chapter 8. Conclusions

This is the most important chapter in the thesis because it addresses the conclusions that can be drawn from the data that was obtained from the qualitative research in Assendorp, Zwolle. This research is about “Gentrification and the residents who are ‘in between’: how gentrification in the neighbourhood is experienced by residents of social housing.”

The main research objective of this thesis is: ***a better understanding of gentrification, with particular emphasis on the experiences and opinions of residents, regarding changes in urban residential areas due to gentrification.***

The attention in this thesis was given to the indicators thought to be perceived by the group of ‘in between’ residents as the most influenced and changed by the external forces of the gentrification taking place in the neighbourhood. These indicators are:

- Housing
- Facilities and services
- Social networks/cohesion & place attachment

### 8.1 Housing

What kind of influences and effects did we assume on the neighbourhood regarding the indicator ‘housing’? Well, in chapter 2, section 2.3.1 several assumptions can be found, and are put in a schedule here to give an overview.

Table 8.1 Overview of influences and effects of gentrification on ‘housing’

Positive	Negative
Increased property values	Displacement through rent/price increases
Reduced vacancy rates	Loss of affordable housing
Increased local fiscal revenues	Greater take of local spending through lobbying/articulacy (middle-class → closer to local political process and know how to ‘work’ it better than lower-classes)
Encouragement and increased viability of further development	Unsustainable speculative property price increases
Rehabilitation of property both with and without state sponsorship	Displacement and housing demand pressures on surrounding poor areas
Better image of neighbourhood	Worse image of neighbourhood
New housing is of a better class → better environment/improvement of overall physical and social fabric of the area	Some gentrifiers are tolerant: any social housing is acceptable as long as it fits in to the streetscape architecturally and is well maintained
Contagious effect of well maintenance of dwelling and accompanying garden → copying of ‘good behaviour’	Some gentrifiers are at unease with presence of marginalized group and/or existing public housing
Increase liveability	Some gentrifiers are indifferent to diversity around them
	The arrival of students → conversion of ‘normal’ dwellings into HMO’s

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

Knowing what to expect, the actual data will be brought in: How do the ‘in between’ residents of Assendorp see and experience gentrification in their neighbourhood? Do they actual experience changes regarding ‘housing’ and/or are they afraid that (more) changes will take place in the future? These answers can be found in chapter 5 extensively, so here there only is an overview, sometimes supported by quotations.

The average length of residence in Assendorp is 18 years and all responses are positive about living here. Even some residents indicate that they purposely chose this neighbourhood to live in, while others came here 'by coincident'. Thereby share all respondents except one the feeling that Assendorp is well appreciated in the rest of the city. They base this largely on the diversity of the residents and the availability of shops in the neighbourhood.

*"Yes, I think Assendorp is pretty well known. Today we still have quite a few different people here and not just immigrants. I think that's characteristic of a vibrant neighbourhood like this. And if there is a festival or something else organized here, a lot of people come to visit it, of who I think don't come from Assendorp. I've never heard anything negative about Assendorp so..."* (nr. 10: female, 41, Oud-Assendorp)

The liveability (measured as clean, safe and well maintained) in Assendorp is overall well appreciated. Some minor problems, like parking and trash in public and private space, are present in the neighbourhood, as pointed out by half of the respondents. The overall state of the dwellings is rather good, and residents are content with it. The dwellings of three respondents have been renovated in the last years, which caused discomfort and an increase of the rent price. One other point that comes forward is the overall exterior look of the (social rented) dwellings in Assendorp: residents perceive them as boring. They understand that this is due to the conditions set by the housing association, but the respondents would like to see more colours on the dwelling in the neighbourhood.

*"Most houses here in the street have also been renovated and it was necessary also. The rent goes up a bit, but that's manageable."* (nr. 8: male, 68, Oud-Assendorp)

A few years ago a new housing project was launched by the housing association in Nieuw-Assendorp. The project comprised of the transforming and re-using of the old Jozef Church. This is also pointed out by two 'in between' residents in the same sub-neighbourhood. The respondents say that they don't have contact with, or know the people who live there, but they assume that those residents are wealthier than the average people in the neighbourhood. In contrast to this project is the Assendorperplein: most respondents know the Assendorperplein with the owner-occupied dwellings, but don't have any contacts or so with the people who reside here. The respondents do have an image in mind of the residents, and most images overlap. The area with owner-occupied dwellings isn't used much by the 'in between' residents, and therefore a lot of respondents haven't an outspoken opinion about it.

*"It is a bit of a yuppie neighbourhood: large houses with big cars in front of it. Well, if you want to live close to the centre in an old and big house, then you move here."* (nr. 11: female, 26, Oud-Assendorp)

It is noteworthy that only three 'in between' residents (nr. 2, nr. 4 and nr. 10) actually indicate to live among 'those kind of people' (wealthier people in an owner-occupied dwelling). It is therefore assumed that they have indeed 'real-life' experiences with gentrification and its effects, while the 'experiences' and opinions of other 'in between' residents thus is based on prejudices and biases. Most respondents point out that the dwellings and gardens of wealthier people are better maintained, due to interest and available budget. This can have a contagious effect on the other residents in the neighbourhood: when the major part of the neighbourhood looks nice and is well maintained, hopefully other residents will follow this example. The whole neighbourhood then profits from the influx of wealthier residents.

*"Happy with these new things? Well, if the neighbourhood becomes even more beautiful, sure. We all benefit of that."* (nr. 9: female, 42, De Pierik)

Some respondents indicate that -with the influx of wealthier residents- the municipality is probably more willing to attack problems in the neighbourhood. An important reason for this is the high probability that wealthier people have better contact with the municipality. Two respondents indicate that the influx of wealthier residents has a positive effect on the exterior look of the neighbourhood, but, because of that the original residents (the 'in between' residents) don't feel at home anymore. The neighbourhood is no longer 'theirs'.

*"With homeowners who have more money to spend and often have a connection to the municipality and so on, the neighbourhood will look more attractive. And yes, there is a price to pay..."* (nr. 11: female, 26, Oud-Assendorp)

Some respondents were quite positive about the residents that (probably) will be displaced due to state-led gentrification in forms of renovations or demolitions. Especially about the availability of houses that fit a small wallet they do have a positive view. Other 'in between' residents do have a more nuanced vision about the project, and about restructuring in general. They have concerns about the new prices of the dwelling and the indirect displacement of the former residents. The largest group of respondents have a straight forward opinion about the approach of the housing associations regarding gentrification.

*"Richer people can choose where they want to live and then they have it usually their way. If they really want to live here, it will happen: almost as a natural process. Yes, there's nothing you can do about it I think. Yes, I'm quite afraid of it. I like to live here also and I think that housing associations should not forget me."* (nr. 10: female, 42, De Pierik)

Also a hypothetical question was asked in the interview: *"What if it is your dwelling that is on the list to be extensively renovated, and you have to live somewhere else for the coming 1.5 years? You have the opportunity to return, but the rent is increased by a hundred euros a month. What would you do and why?"* Some respondents have a solid decision: they will return, although they have lived somewhere else for 1.5 years and the rent of their former dwelling is increased by a hundred euros a month. The main reasons for returning are: the satisfaction with the garden and view and the neighbourhood. There are also quite a few respondents who won't return. It is not that they don't want it, but more because of the high costs involved. Another reason for not returning is because the respondents have the impression that the neighbourhood is changed because of the extensive renovations: they don't longer feel at home. There are two respondents who have a deviant opinion about this. One in particular isn't afraid or so, but sees it as an option to acquire a better dwelling, or even a 'nice relocation bonus'. So, the opinions about the hypothetical renovation in Assendorp vary a lot between the different residents. It is a matter of taste, habit, personality and budget if you are returning or not.

The respondents who live in De Pierik indicate that there aren't many students here, although it happens more often that the housing associations assigns 'normal' residences to students. This development is not welcomed with open arms, but also not abhorred. Primarily in Oud-Assendorp many students live. The houses which are inhabited by students seem to be slightly 'different' in comparison to the other dwelling in the neighbourhood. Some respondents experience also some nuisance in the streets because of the students' habits, and a lack of social behaviour.

*"And what I just said, they (students) do not really participate in the neighbourhood: you almost never see them and they say never goodbye. Well, I think that is quite a downside. I'd rather see some young people with screaming children living here, so to speak, who bring some life into the neighbourhood."* (nr. 12: male, 53, Nieuw-Assendorp)

The research conducted in Assendorp regarding the experiences of to changes in the neighbourhood due to gentrification has shown that changes of gentrification are experienced, but only minor: only two ‘in between’ residents actual indicate to live among ‘those kind of people’ (wealthier people in an owner-occupied dwelling). It is therefore assumed that they have indeed ‘real-life’ experiences with gentrification and its effects, while the ‘experiences’ and opinions of other ‘in between’ residents thus is based on prejudices and biases. Looking at the assumptions in table 8.1, where an overview of influences and effects of gentrification on ‘housing’ is given, ‘in between’ residents do experience some of them, although not all. This is probably due to the fact that gentrification (in all it forms) is new in Assendorp and Zwolle as a whole.

## 8.2 Facilities and services

What kind of influences and effects did we assume on the neighbourhood regarding the indicator ‘facilities and services’? Well, in chapter 2, section 2.3.2 several assumptions can be found, and are put in a schedule here to give an overview.

Table 8.2 Overview of influences and effects of gentrification on ‘facilities and services’

Positive	Negative
Arrival of new shops and services → improvement of exterior look of area	Commercial and industrial displacement
Turns ‘food deserts’ into places with the availability of fresh fruits and vegetables	Increased cost and changes to local services
Arrival of new shops and services → job opportunities for (local) residents	Polarized retail space (‘not for them’)
Arrival of new shops and services → improvement image of city/neighbourhood	
Increase numbers of self-employed people → business at home	

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

Knowing what to expect, the actual data will be brought in: How do the ‘in between’ residents of Assendorp see and experience gentrification in their neighbourhood? Do they actual experience changes regarding ‘facilities and services’ and/or are they afraid that (more) changes will take place in the future?

Overall the respondents are very satisfied about the available shops in Assendorp. One major setback according to the respondents in De Pierik is the complete absence of shops in this sub-neighbourhood. Almost all ‘in between’ residents use the Assendorperstraat for their daily shopping, although the city centre is used also very often for the ‘specialized’ shopping, because in Assendorp not enough shops are available which sell products like this. Also basic facilities and services like doctors, the pharmacies, schools, and day-care etcetera are regarded as sufficient. Everything is available within the neighbourhood, even in De Pierik.

*“Everything is in or near our neighbourhood: the central station, the city centre and we have still some shops etcetera nearby. Well, it’s all here. I don’t know about schools and day-care, because I don’t have children, but I think that is also good here.” (nr. 11: female, 26, Oud-Assendorp)*

A major part of the respondents indicate that the supply of shops has changed in the past: independent stores like bakeries and greengroceries are almost all taken over by national chains of shops. There is also a lot of rotation in the shops: it is quite usual that stores leave, premises are unoccupied and then something new comes in. A few respondents make it evident that there is a division in the kind of shops in the Assendorperstraat. Some

shops clearly are meant for the wealthier residents of the neighbourhood, while others are obvious for the residents with a small wallet. This division seems to continue and even increase. This is probably due to the fact that a growing number of wealthier people (gentrifiers) live in the neighbourhood, which have a different demand regarding products.

*“On the corner here is a lamp supplier and he is really priceless for normal people. But in this neighbourhood are not really luxury stores further, some more expensive ones, but not really super luxury.”* (nr. 12: male, 53, Nieuw-Assendorp)

*“Probably more stores will come to fit the needs of those people. I don’t think that is much of a problem, but they should keep some shops that are available for everyone.”* (nr. 8: male, 68, Oud-Assendorp)

Results regarding hypothetical changes in the supply of shops due to incoming wealthier people are quite varying. Most of the respondents don’t see it as a problem, as long as there are shops available for the less wealthy residents in the neighbourhood. A few ‘in between’ residents indicate that the shopping street will look more luxurious and better maintained when there are more stores for a higher segment, although they don’t expect shops like Gucci to come but more a long the lines of Albert Heijn etc. The city centre is still nearby, so it is likely that there will be some changes too in the supply. It is remarkable how many hairdressing-salons there are in Assendorp. A few respondents also indicate that there are several artists with a studio attached to their home and some people who have their own practice at home, like a pedicure and a psychologist. The general use of the services offered by the businesses is very low among the respondents.

*“Maybe more of those luxury things women haha. And then I become a victim of that! Perhaps a lawyer or something, which has an office at home. But I have to mention that these houses are not so spacious though. He has to do some renovation first before he can put a desk in there!”* (nr. 5: male, 41, Nieuw-Assendorp)

All the respondents assume that the number of self-employed residents with a small business attached to their home will increase due to the larger influx of wealthier residents or gentrifiers. An important reason, according to the respondents, is that people who have studied like it to run their own business. If the ‘in between’ residents will make use of these new businesses isn’t sure: about half of the respondents say it does depend on what types of services are offered for what price.

The research conducted in Assendorp regarding the experiences of to changes in the neighbourhood due to gentrification has shown that changes of gentrification are experienced, but only minor: only two ‘in between’ residents actual indicate to live among ‘those kind of people’ (wealthier people in an owner-occupied dwelling). It is therefore assumed that they have indeed ‘real-life’ experiences with gentrification and its effects, while the ‘experiences’ and opinions of other ‘in between’ residents thus is based on prejudices and biases. Looking at the assumptions in table 8.2, where an overview of influences and effects of gentrification on ‘facilities and services’ is given, ‘in between’ residents do experience some of them, although not all. This is probably due to the fact that gentrification (in all its forms) is new in Assendorp and Zwolle as a whole.

### **8.3 Social networks/cohesion & place attachment**

What kind of influences and effects did we assume on the neighbourhood regarding the indicator ‘social networks/cohesion & place attachment’? Well, in chapter 2, section 2.3.3 several assumptions can be found, and are put in a schedule here to give an overview.

Table 8.2 Overview of influences and effects of gentrification on ‘social networks/cohesion & place attachment’

Positive	Negative
Stabilisation of declining areas	Community resentment, tension and conflict
Decreased crime	Increased crime (related to breakdown of community due to large turnover of residents)
Not unique for ‘their’ neighbourhood	Social cohesion and contacts are weakened
Semi-mutual appreciation between different groups of residents	Social involvement decreases
	Sense of community decreases
	Residents no longer feel at home
	Increase number of students → HMO’s
	Secondary psychological costs of displacement
	Under-occupancy and population loss to gentrified areas
Increased social mix → influx of new people	Loss of social diversity (from socially disparate to rich ghettos)

Source: Master thesis gentrification, 2011

Knowing what to expect now, the actual data will be brought in: How do the ‘in between’ residents of Assendorp see and experience gentrification in their neighbourhood? Do they actual experience changes regarding ‘social networks/cohesion & place attachment’ and/or are they afraid that (more) changes will take place in the future?

The majority of the ‘in between’ residents indicate to be very pleased with the kind of neighbours they have: some respondents are very glad that there aren’t much families with teenagers while others are pleased to see a lot of children. The appreciation of the neighbours -and the neighbourhood- makes it possible for respondents to feel attached to the neighbourhood. Only three respondents make clear that they don’t really appreciate the other residents in the neighbourhood. This involves most of the time students.

*“Well, we wanted a ‘real’ house with a garden in a quiet neighbourhood where our children can play safely outside. And fortunately that is what we have now. We love to live here.”* (nr. 9: female, 42, De Pierik)

*“There are many more different people living in this neighbourhood than it used to be. In that respect the neighbourhood has become less vivid. You have more groups of people that interact with each other: young family together, the seniors together, etcetera.”* (nr. 8: male, 68, Oud-Assendorp)

Not all respondents are pleased with their social contacts in the neighbourhood. A few respondents express their discomfort about the lack of contact they have or can make with younger residents with families and students, although they seem to understand the rationale of those people: younger families have their own circle of friends or are just very busy with work related activities.

*“I like to talk to everyone, but I don’t visit everyone for a coffee or something, no. These neighbours have the key of my home and I’ve got theirs. It is more a kind of safety: they can enter my house if they think something is wrong with me. And they have also some important numbers of people who they can call in an emergency.”* (nr. 4: female, 81, Oud-Assendorp)

*“Students only hang out with each other, not with other people in the neighbourhood. I wouldn’t say that they don’t care about us, but I think it is...”* (nr. 11: female, 26, Oud-Assendorp)

The majority of the 'in between' residents however indicates to be very pleased with the social contacts they have in the neighbourhood. Almost 90% of the respondents have the key of one or more neighbours. This indicates good trust. There is however a minor part of the respondents who has almost no contact with other neighbours at all, and it seems as if they don't care either. One respondent lives among students and she indicates that the students aren't involved in the neighbourhood at all. Another respondent points out that the majority of his neighbours already are retired. His neighbours have a lot of interaction with each other, but not so much with him.

The respondents attach importance to social control in the neighbourhood. Only a few respondents make clear that social control is desirable, but very much lacking in their neighbourhood.

*"We keep an eye on them (children/adolescents), but they can do whatever they want until a certain limit. When there are troubles, we know immediately. You keep an eye on other people's children too. Yes, that's very good! Even when we are on vacation, the neighbours watch our house to see if there no bad things happen when we're away. We have quite a good relation with everyone here. It's just easier when you know who your neighbours are: it just makes you feel comfortable."* (nr. 5: male, 41, Nieuw-Assendorp)

*"If my neighbour would lie dead in her house right now, I wouldn't even notice. That's actually quite sad..."* (nr. 13: female, 63, De Pierik)

The following question was included in the interview: *"Housing associations are increasingly making decisions for changing the supply of housing in urban neighbourhoods. Possible ways of doing so are: demolish dwellings from the social rent rector and built bigger and more expensive dwelling instead for renting out; extensively renovate social rent dwelling and as a result increased rent prices; selling social rent dwelling on the housing-market. This leads to a larger influx of relatively 'rich' residents (in owner occupied or rental dwellings). What kind of people do you think live in these (newly build) dwellings? Do you see (expect) some changes in the neighbourhood because of this, in terms of social contact/control or place attachment?"* A major part of the 'in between' residents indicate that the social contacts will get worse when a larger number of wealthier people come to the neighbourhood. There are also some respondents who assume that the influx of wealthier people into the neighbourhood only results in minor changes regarding social contacts. They indicate that it isn't the money or the type of house that makes the difference, but the lifestyle people have.

*"Initially the neighbourhood will be worse I guess. Those people will interact more with each other than with us. And when people are evicted here, because the housing association is going to built something else, than I expect some resistance. Maybe there is tension between us and them. Indeed. It is because we have to leave as they come. ... I think rich people spend more money on their house and its surroundings, so the neighbourhood will look even better. But I don't know if the contact between us and them will get better, but I think so. We are all human after all and maybe they prefer to have good contact with the neighbours after all. The contacts will mainly be through sports clubs and the schools children go. That is usual right?"* (nr. 13: female, 63, De Pierik)

*"Oh, that will probably happen too! Those people like only the people who look like then. We are just a bunch of dumb farmers. Well, they will split up the neighbourhood: 'this is ours and that's yours'. ... I'm not even mad at them, but more at the housing associations: they displace us. They (the rich people) can't do anything about that... But actually they can indirectly, because they have money and they want to live here and that's why we are forced out of our homes..."* (nr. 7: female, 35, Nieuw-Assendorp)

*“I think it's more like people don't interact because they have different ages and have to work than because they are living in a rented house or an owner-occupied dwelling. ... Liveability? I don't know. They (rich people, gentrifiers) only hang out with each other and not with other people in the neighbourhood. I think that it'll stay the same. But I don't mind to live among rich people, no it doesn't matter.”* (nr. 4: female, 81, Oud-Assendorp)

*“I think the neighbourhood will improve. Rich people, with or without an owner-occupied dwelling pay more attention to the area and find it more important than others that the area is well maintained etcetera. And I think a stronger social control follows automatically.”* (nr. 10: female, 41, Oud-Assendorp)

The research conducted in Assendorp regarding the experiences of to changes in the neighbourhood due to gentrification has shown that changes of gentrification are experienced, but only minor: only two ‘in between’ residents actual indicate to live among ‘those kind of people’ (wealthier people in an owner-occupied dwelling). It is therefore assumed that they have indeed ‘real-life’ experiences with gentrification and its effects, while the ‘experiences’ and opinions of other ‘in between’ residents thus is based on prejudices and biases. Looking at the assumptions in table 8.3, where an overview of influences and effects of gentrification on ‘social networks/cohesion & place attachment’ is given, ‘in between’ residents do experience some of them, although not all. This is probably due to the fact that gentrification (in all its forms) is new in Assendorp and Zwolle as a whole.

#### **8.4 General conclusion**

So, does this thesis give us: ***‘a better understanding of gentrification, with particular emphasis on the experiences and opinions of residents, regarding changes in urban residential areas due to gentrification’?***

Yes, it does:

- ‘In between’ residents are thought to be less involved and somewhat protected ‘against’ gentrification, but they aren’t: emotional responses and opinions about changes and especially about possible changes in the future due to gentrification are very much present.
- Changes due to gentrification on ‘housing’ are generally perceived as positive, although residents keep in mind the possibility of (forced) relocation.
- Changes due to gentrification on ‘facilities and services’ are generally perceived as positive, although residents do feel that it is *‘no longer for them’*.
- Changes due to gentrification on ‘social networks/cohesion & place attachment’ are generally perceived as negative, although residents do acknowledge that the changes *‘aren’t unique for ‘their’ neighbourhood’*.
- The opinions about the effects and impacts of gentrification on the neighbourhood are quite diverse, and therefore gentrification and the changes that come with it aren’t perceived as black and white as thought.
- Especially residents who are tied to the neighbourhood (elderly, young families, the sick etcetera) experience changes due to gentrification in negative manner.
- The group of residents who ‘simply don’t care about it’ is underestimated.
- The influences of students are underestimated.

Further research into the experiences of residents who are ‘in between’ or who are in other ways ‘less involved’ in gentrification is needed. Especially into the perceptions and experiences of residents who face for instance extensive renovation or demolition-projects, -not ‘in person’ that they are evicted or relocated with urgency, but ‘personally’ in their neighbourhood. They have to cope with the changes that come, due to state-led

gentrification and studentification. These changes can ultimately also lead to their displacement, and if they want it or not, the gentrification circle is 'completed'. There should certainly be more attention to the impacts and changes that come with gentrification of the supply of facilities and services, especially for self-employment and small businesses (attached to homes). After all: artists and other 'creative' people started the process of gentrification worldwide!

## Chapter 9. Reflections

The thesis has come to an end... and the result is impressive!

The last five months of my study career have almost solely been spinning around this thesis and I've very much enjoyed working on it. It didn't always go as flawless as I hoped, but he; that's life!

The use of qualitative data was new for me: as a 'normal' urban geographer I was used to do quantitative research and work with programs like SPSS. This thesis has brought me new knowledge and therefore I'm very happy.

Because of my lack of expertise regarding qualitative research, I've experienced some problems during the research. These problems were mainly related to time-issues: I've very much underestimated the time needed for interviewing and certainly for transcribing the interviews. Because of this, the time-pressure at the end of the thesis was quite high (I know, I made the planning and I did get some comments on it...). This is also something I know now and can apply in the future. Looking back at the interviews: I would change some things regarding the way questions are asked. Doing the interviews for this thesis, I sometimes lost track of the answers given. This has resulted in only partly covering the subject in some interviews.

I most enjoyed doing the interviews with the 'in between' residents of Assendorp, Zwolle. For me -as urban geographer- it is the most interesting and satisfying thing to do: bring my acquired knowledge into society, try to find out what the 'real life' experiences are, and make sense of it all (or at least try ;).

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## Appendices

The transcriptions are in a separate document attached to the thesis.

### Statistical information about the sub-neighbourhoods of Assendorp, Zwolle

#### Stationsbuurt

Aantal woningen	500		
Koopwoningen	60 %		
Huurwoningen	40 %		
Aantal inwoners	1.250	Aantal huishoudens	770
t/m 14 jaar	11 %	Éénpersoons	66 %
15 tm 24 jaar	29 %	Zonder kinderen	19 %
25 tm 44 jaar	31 %	Met kinderen	14 %
45 tm 64 jaar	19 %		
65 en ouder	19 %		
Inkomen ontvangers	900	Lage inkomens	47 %
Gemiddelde inkomen	€ 18.000	Hoge inkomens	23 %
Inkomen per inwoner	€ 13.000	Niet actieven	34 %
		Pensioen gerechtigden	10 %

#### Pierik

Aantal woningen	1.080		
Koopwoningen	32 %		
Huurwoningen	68 %		
Aantal inwoners	2.180	Aantal huishoudens	1.110
t/m 14 jaar	17 %	Éénpersoons	45 %
15 tm 24 jaar	11 %	Zonder kinderen	25 %
25 tm 44 jaar	35 %	Met kinderen	30 %
45 tm 64 jaar	25 %		
65 en ouder	25 %		
Inkomen ontvangers	1.500	Lage inkomens	40 %
Gemiddelde inkomen	€ 16.000	Hoge inkomens	9 %
Inkomen per inwoner	€ 12.000	Niet actieven	24 %
		Pensioen gerechtigden	15 %

#### Oud-Assendorp

Aantal woningen	1.780		
Koopwoningen	70 %		
Huurwoningen	30 %		
Aantal inwoners	4.160	Aantal huishoudens	2.480
t/m 14 jaar	11 %	Éénpersoons	61 %
15 tm 24 jaar	24 %	Zonder kinderen	24 %
25 tm 44 jaar	43 %	Met kinderen	15 %
45 tm 64 jaar	14 %		
65 en ouder	14 %		
Inkomen ontvangers	3.100	Lage inkomens	42 %
Gemiddelde inkomen	€ 17.000	Hoge inkomens	12 %
Inkomen per inwoner	€ 13.000	Niet actieven	24 %
		Pensioen gerechtigden	10 %

## Nieuw-Assendorp

Aantal woningen	1.350
Koopwoningen	52 %
Huurwoningen	48 %

Aantal inwoners	2.860	Aantal huishoudens	1.480
t/m 14 jaar	18 %	Éénpersoons	48 %
15 tm 24 jaar	16 %	Zonder kinderen	25 %
25 tm 44 jaar	36 %	Met kinderen	27 %
45 tm 64 jaar	20 %		
65 en ouder	20 %		

Inkomen ontvangers	1.900	Lage inkomens	43 %
Gemiddelde inkomen	€ 15.000	Hoge inkomens	12 %
Inkomen per inwoner	€ 11.000	Niet actieven	24 %
		Pensioen gerechtigden	13 %

## Wezenlanden

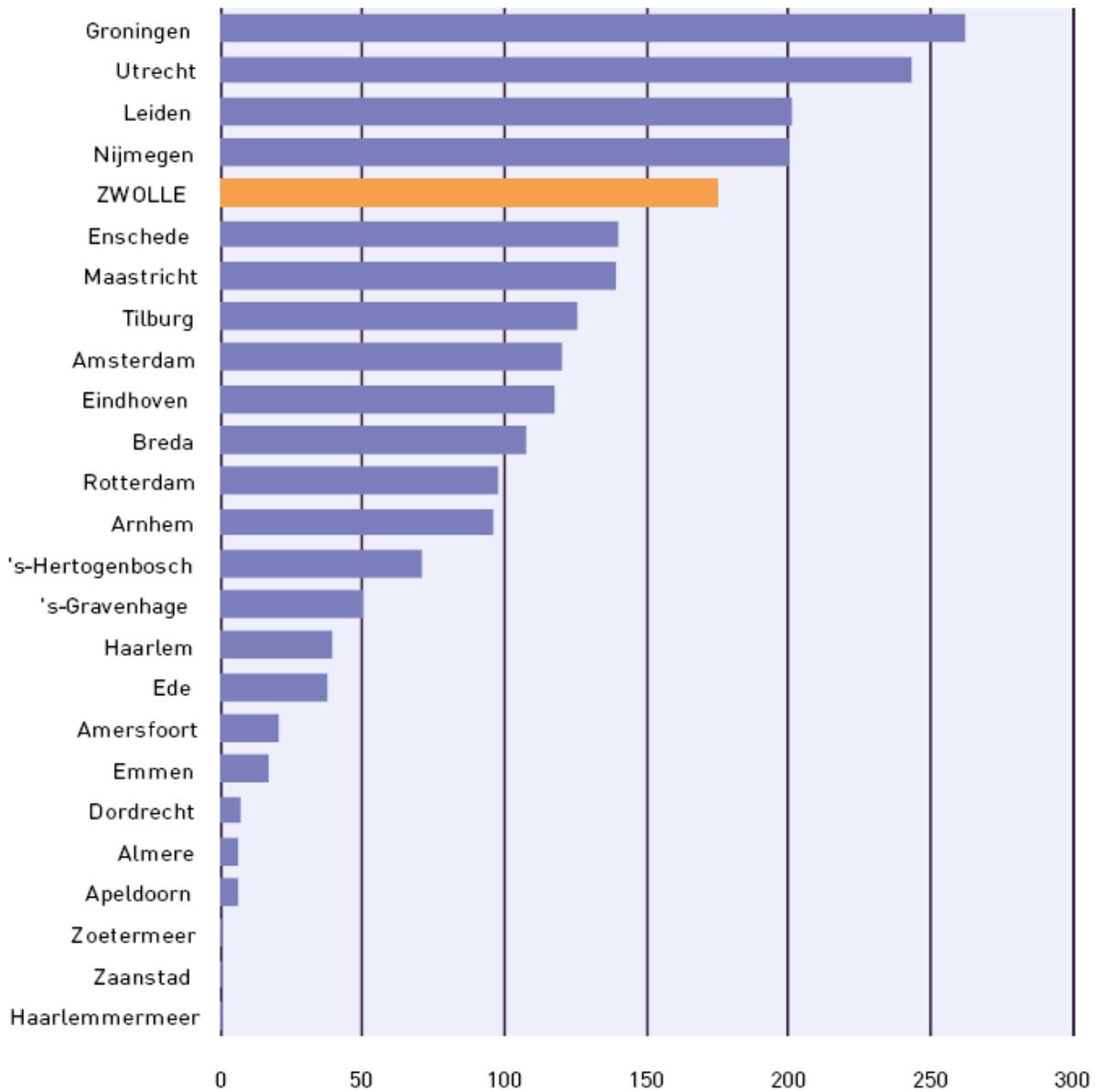
Aantal woningen	340
Koopwoningen	13 %
Huurwoningen	87 %

Aantal inwoners	660	Aantal huishoudens	370
t/m 14 jaar	7 %	Éénpersoons	60 %
15 tm 24 jaar	5 %	Zonder kinderen	27 %
25 tm 44 jaar	19 %	Met kinderen	12 %
45 tm 64 jaar	25 %		
65 en ouder	25 %		

Inkomen ontvangers	600	Lage inkomens	45 %
Gemiddelde inkomen	€ 17.000	Hoge inkomens	15 %
Inkomen per inwoner	€ 14.000	Niet actieven	37 %
		Pensioen gerechtigden	50 %

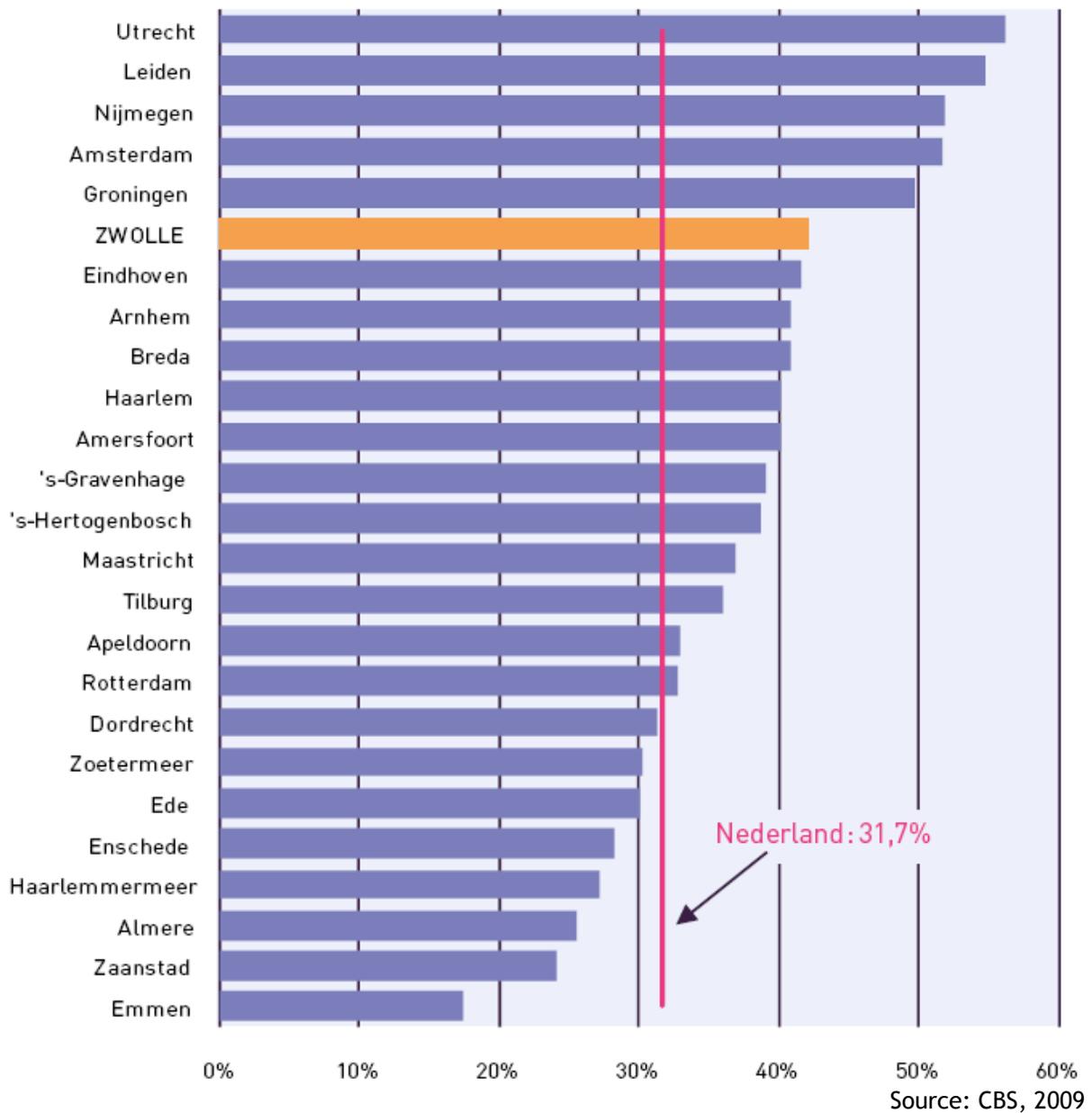
## Statistics of Zwolle (2009).

### Index 1. Students

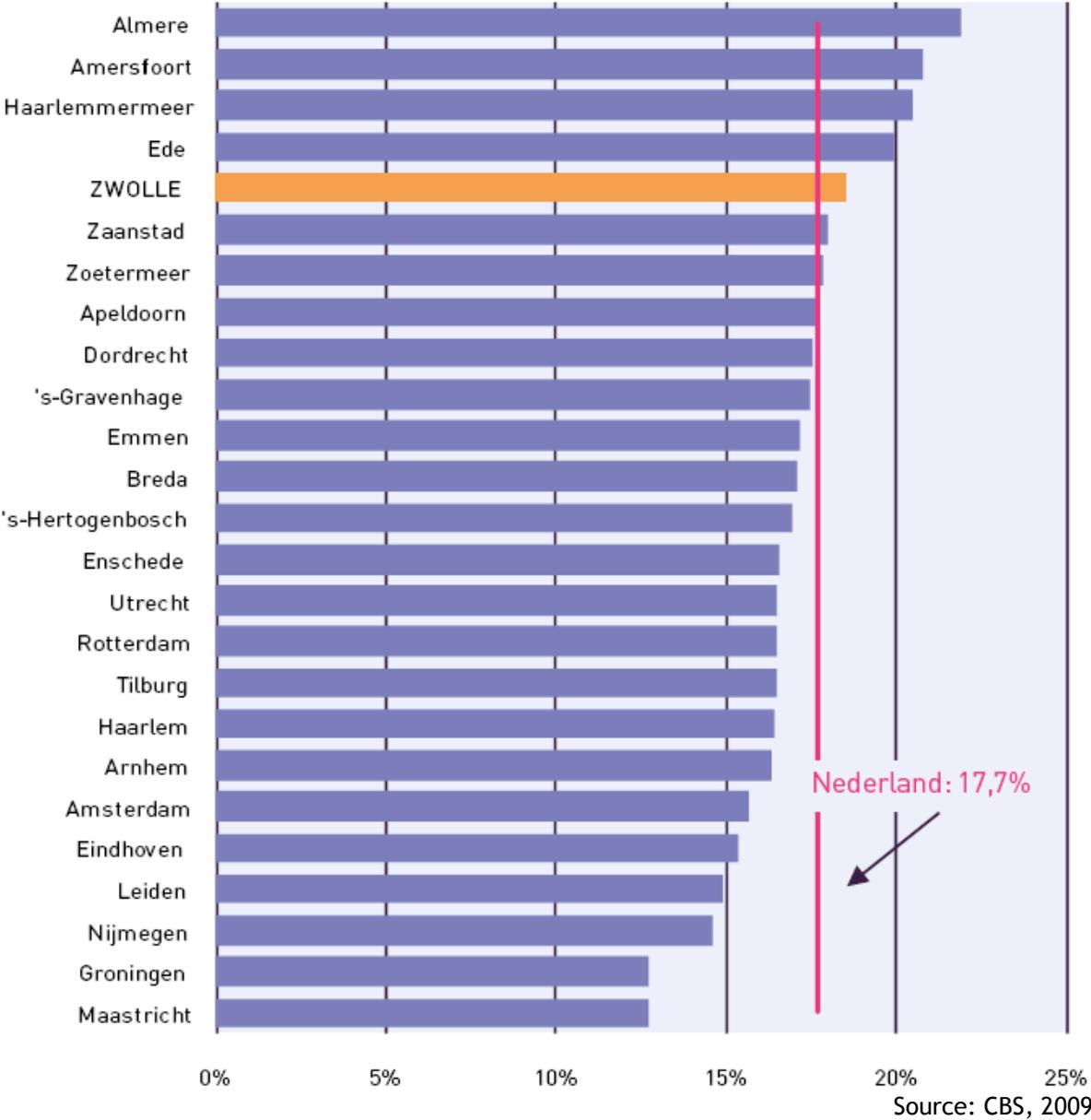


Source: Vereniging van Samenwerkende Universiteiten, HBO-raad en opleidingsinstellingen, 2007

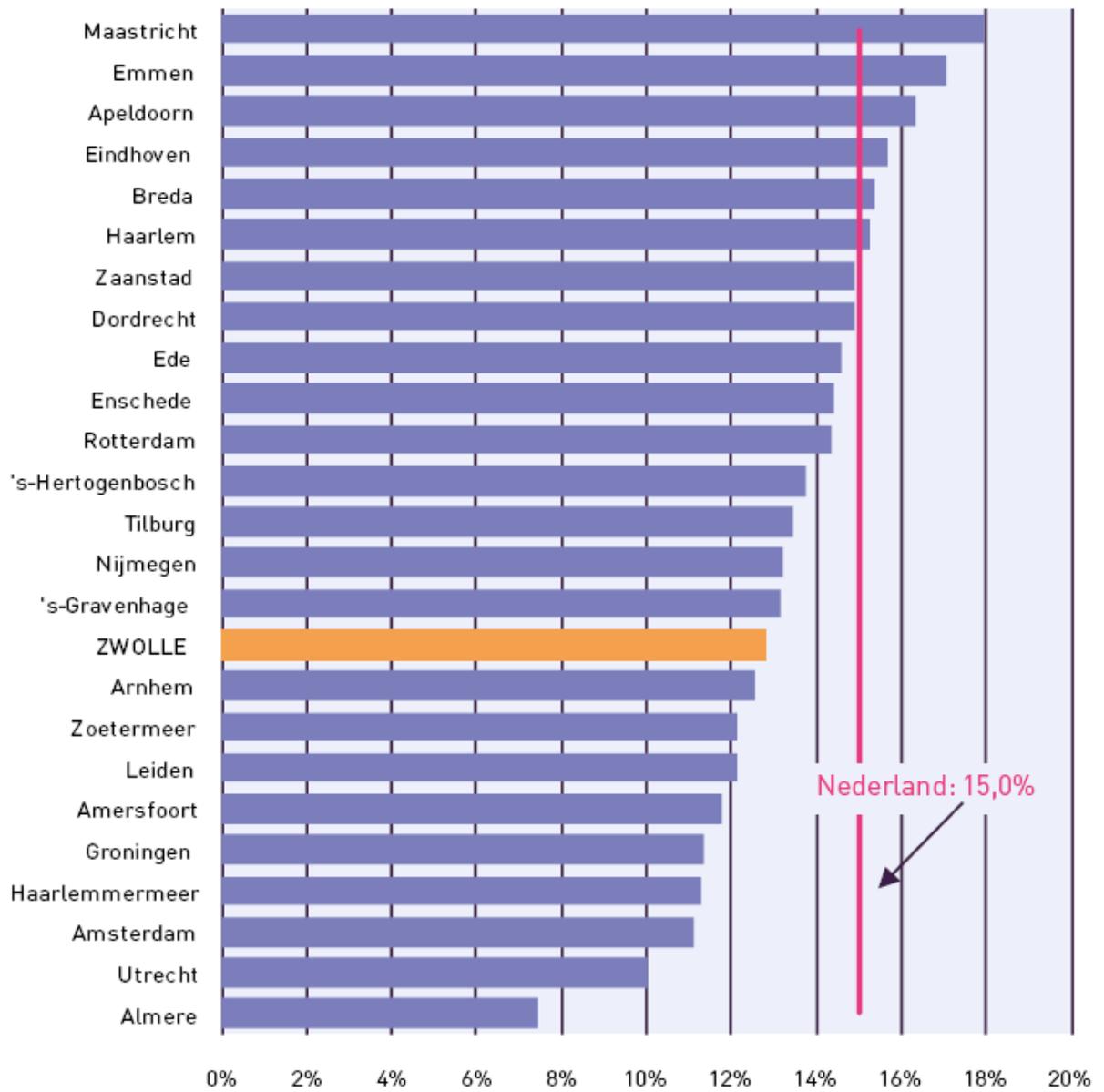
## Index 2. High educated residents



Index 3. 0-14 years population

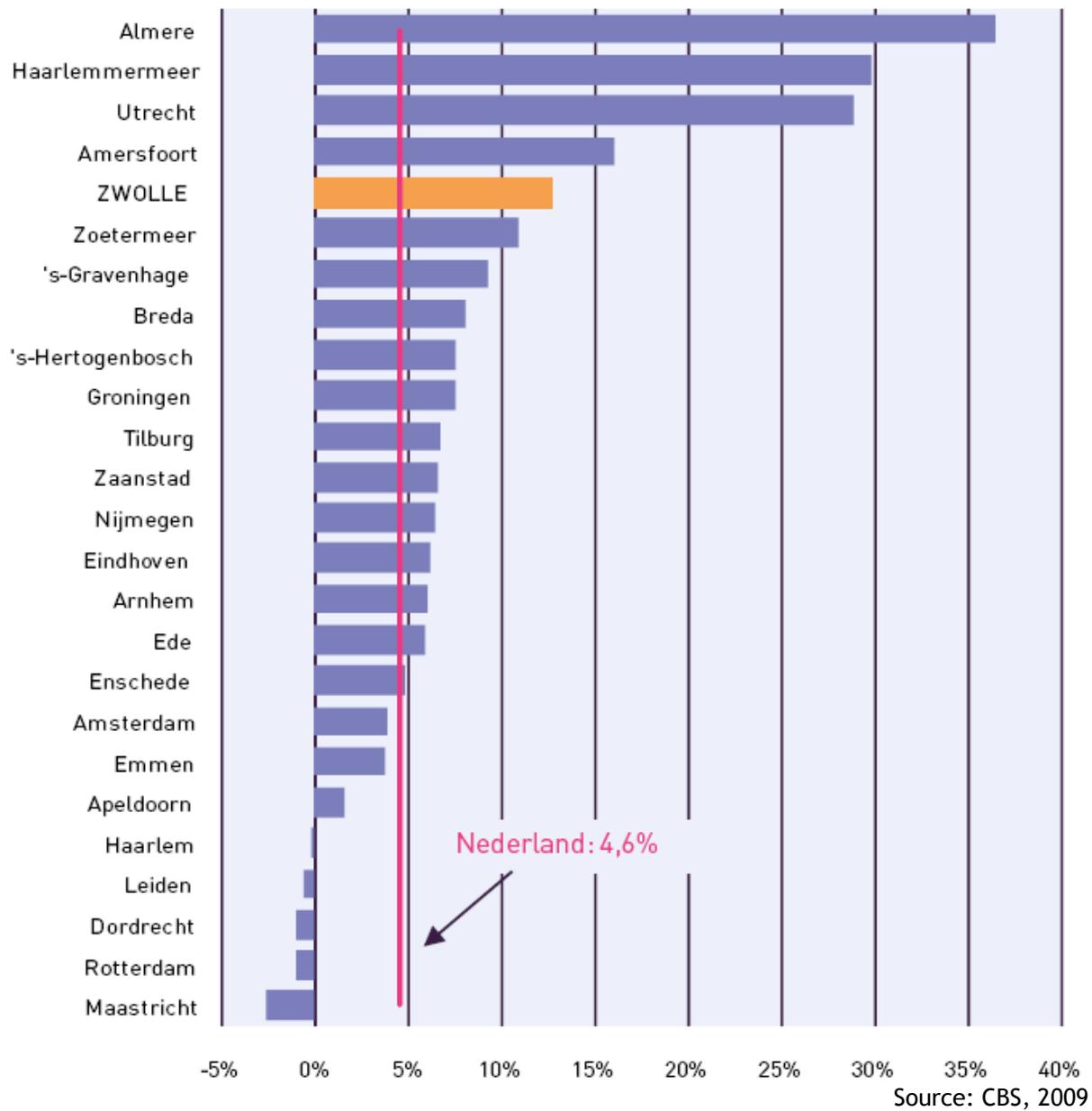


## Index 4. Elderly

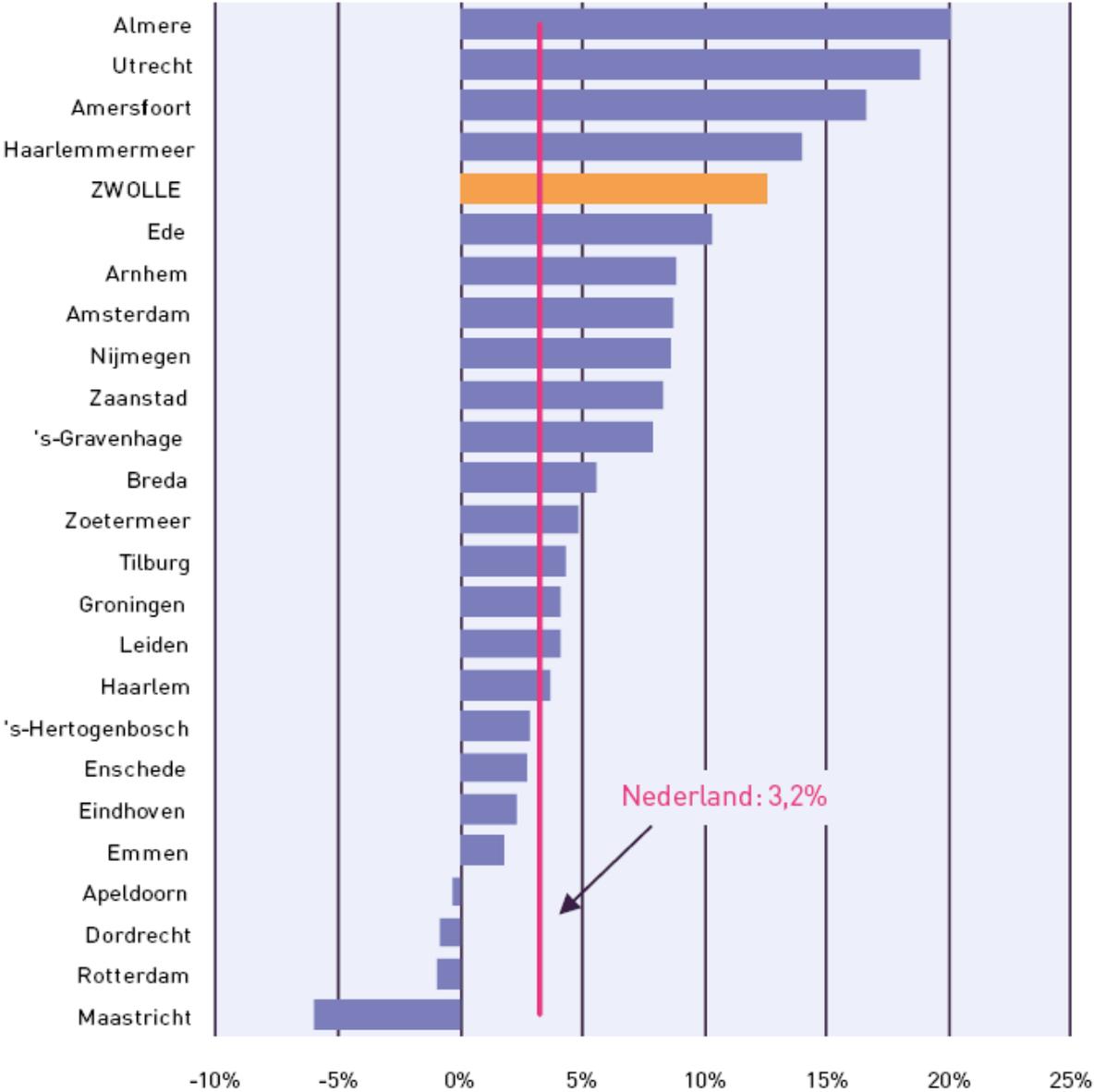


Source: CBS, 2009

## Index 5. Population growth

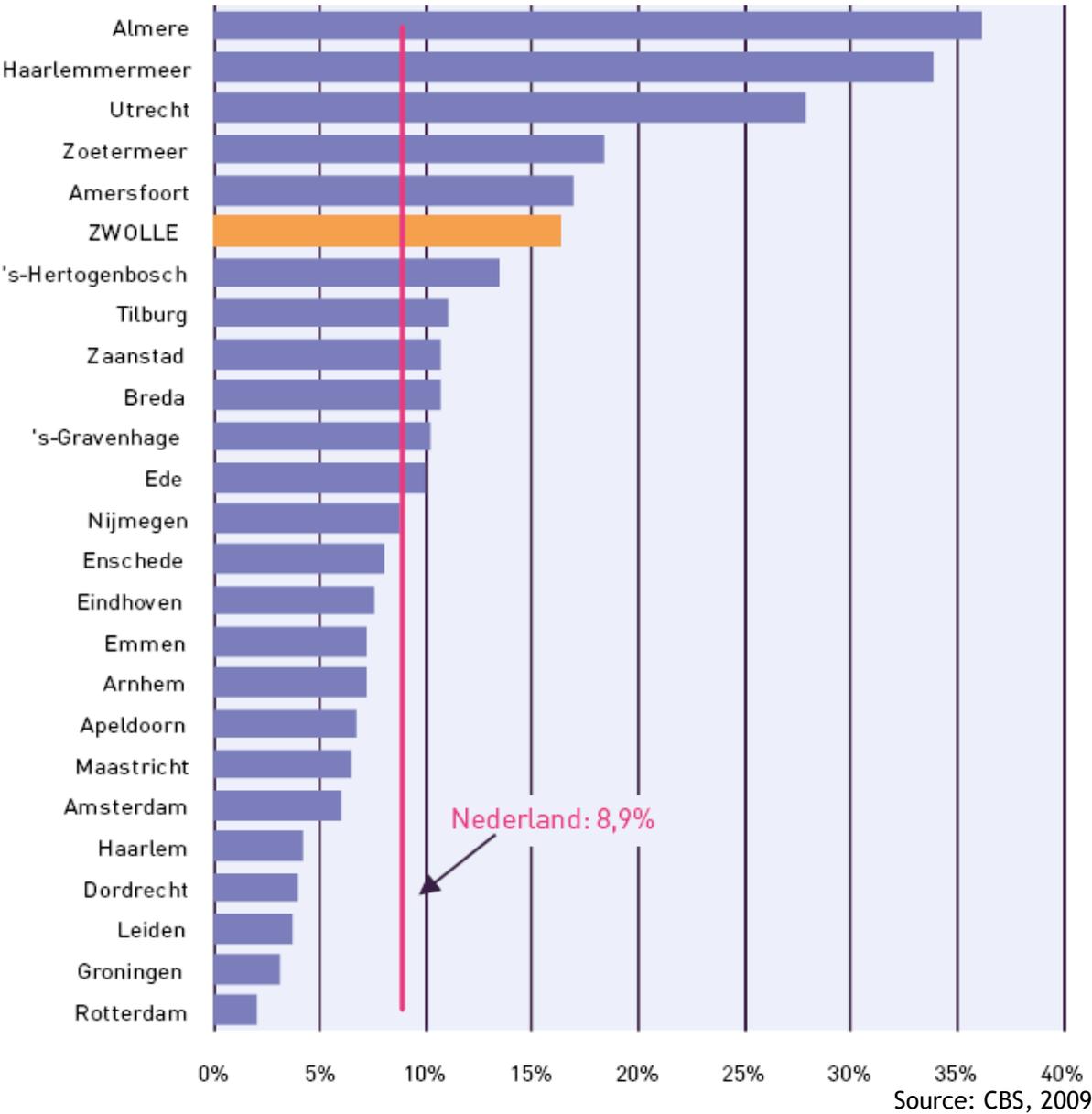


Index 6. Population prognosis

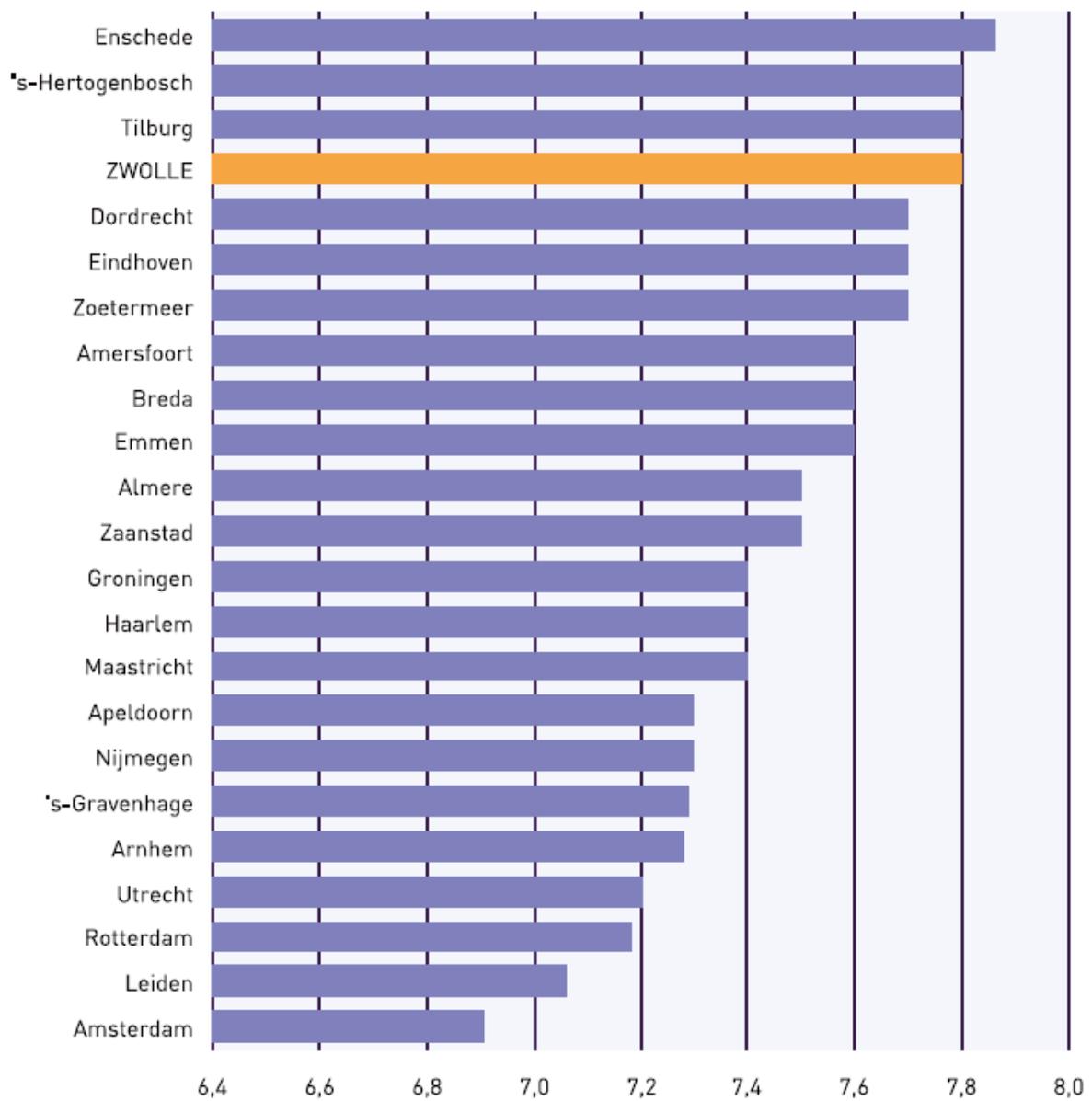


Source: ABF Research Primos Prognose, 2009

Index 7. Development of housing stock

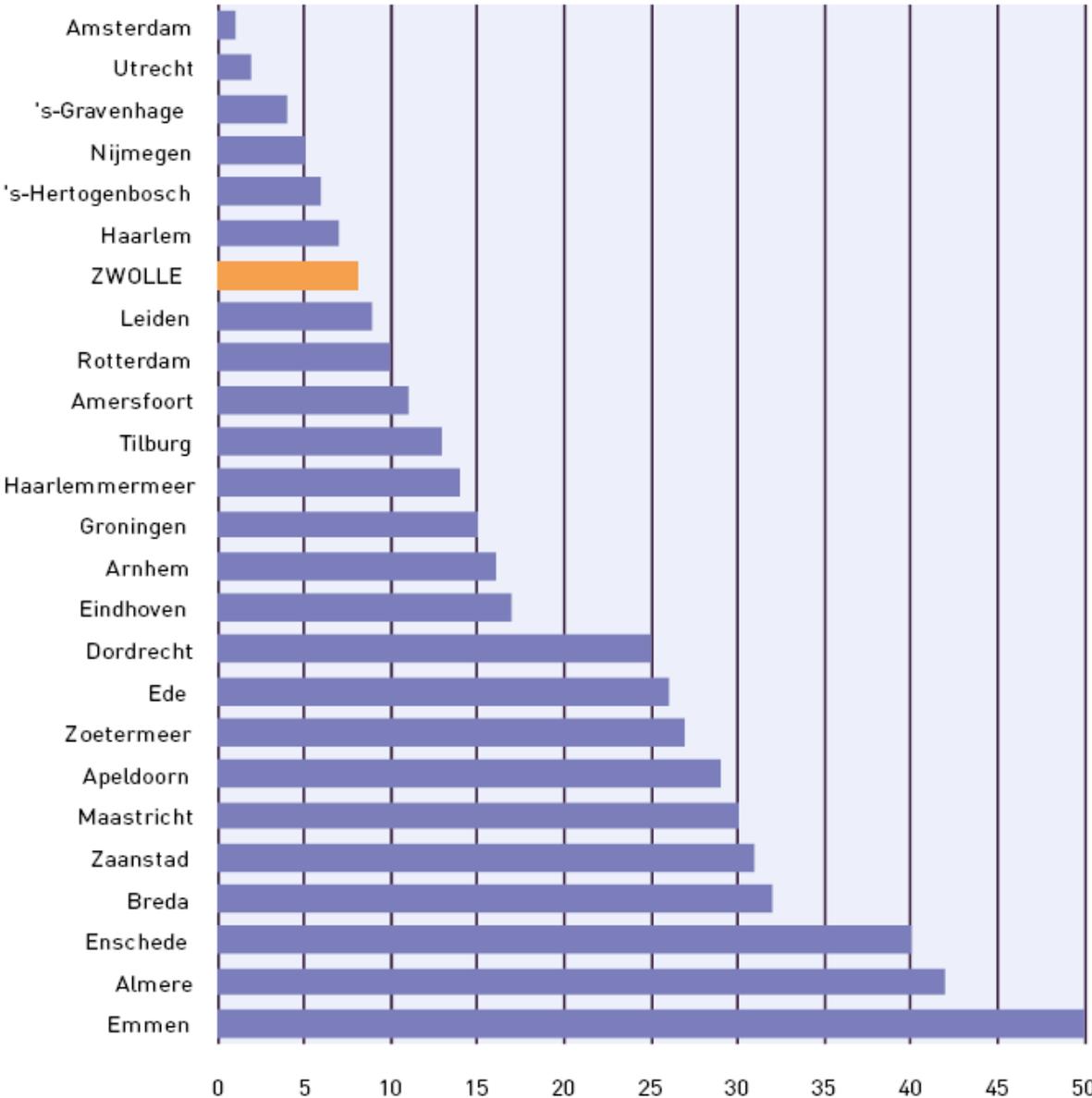


## Index 8. Appreciation of the own residence



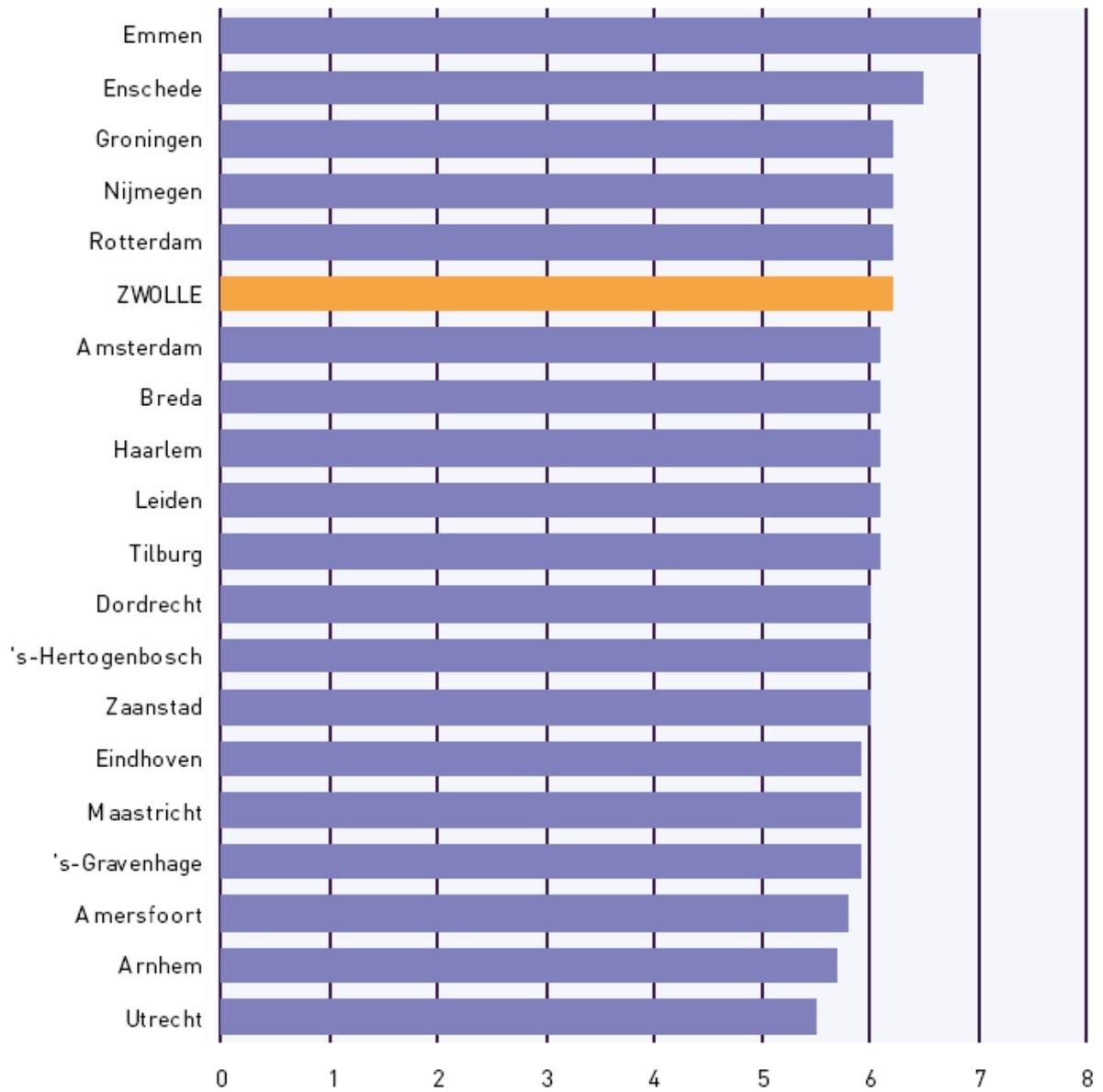
Source: Monitor leefbaarheid en veiligheid ABP Research, 2009

Index 9. Residential attractiveness



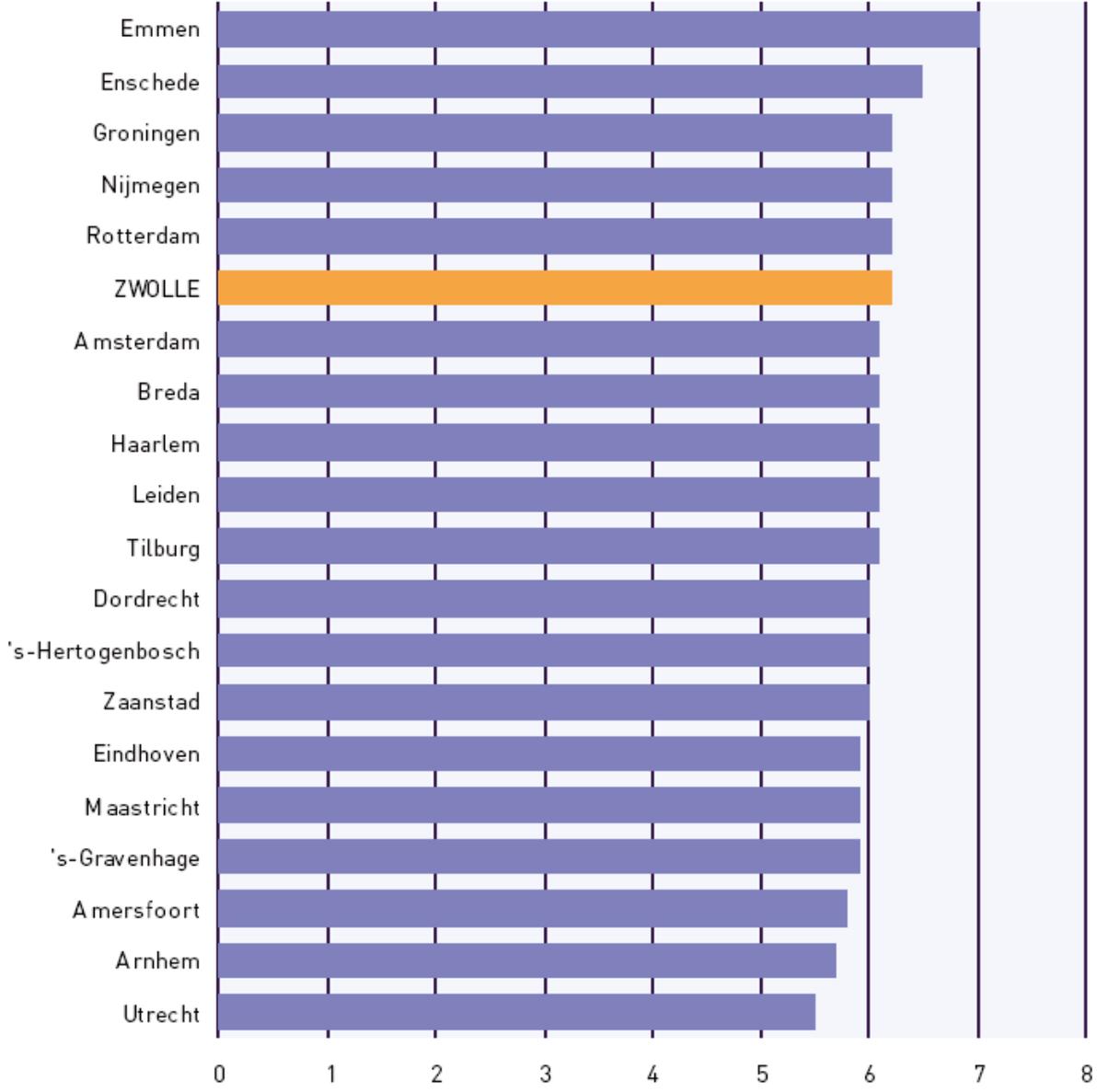
Source: Atlas voor gemeenten, 2009

### Index 10. Social quality of residential area



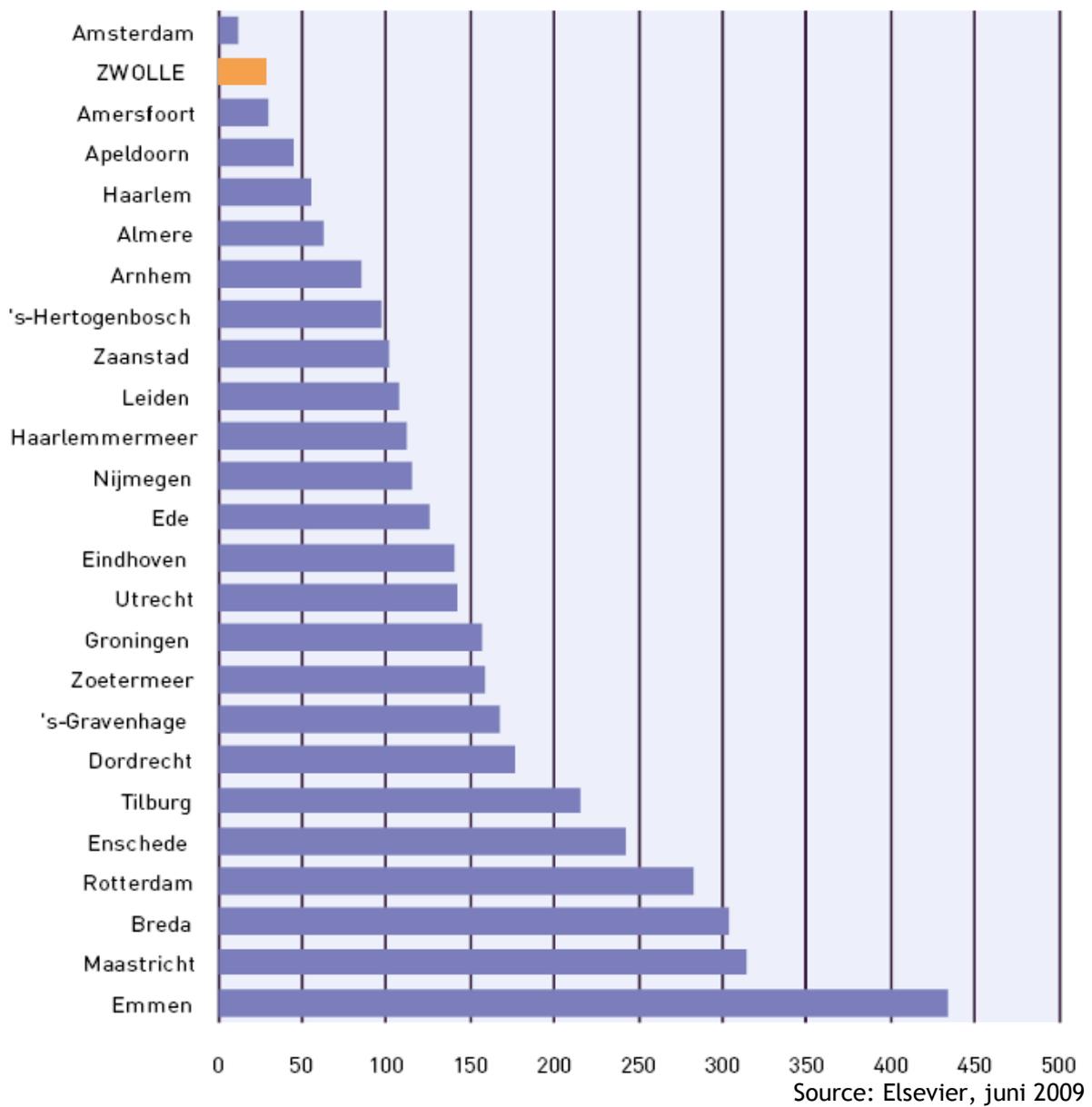
Source: Monitor leefbaarheid en veiligheid ABF monitor, 2006-2007

Index 11. Physical quality of residential area

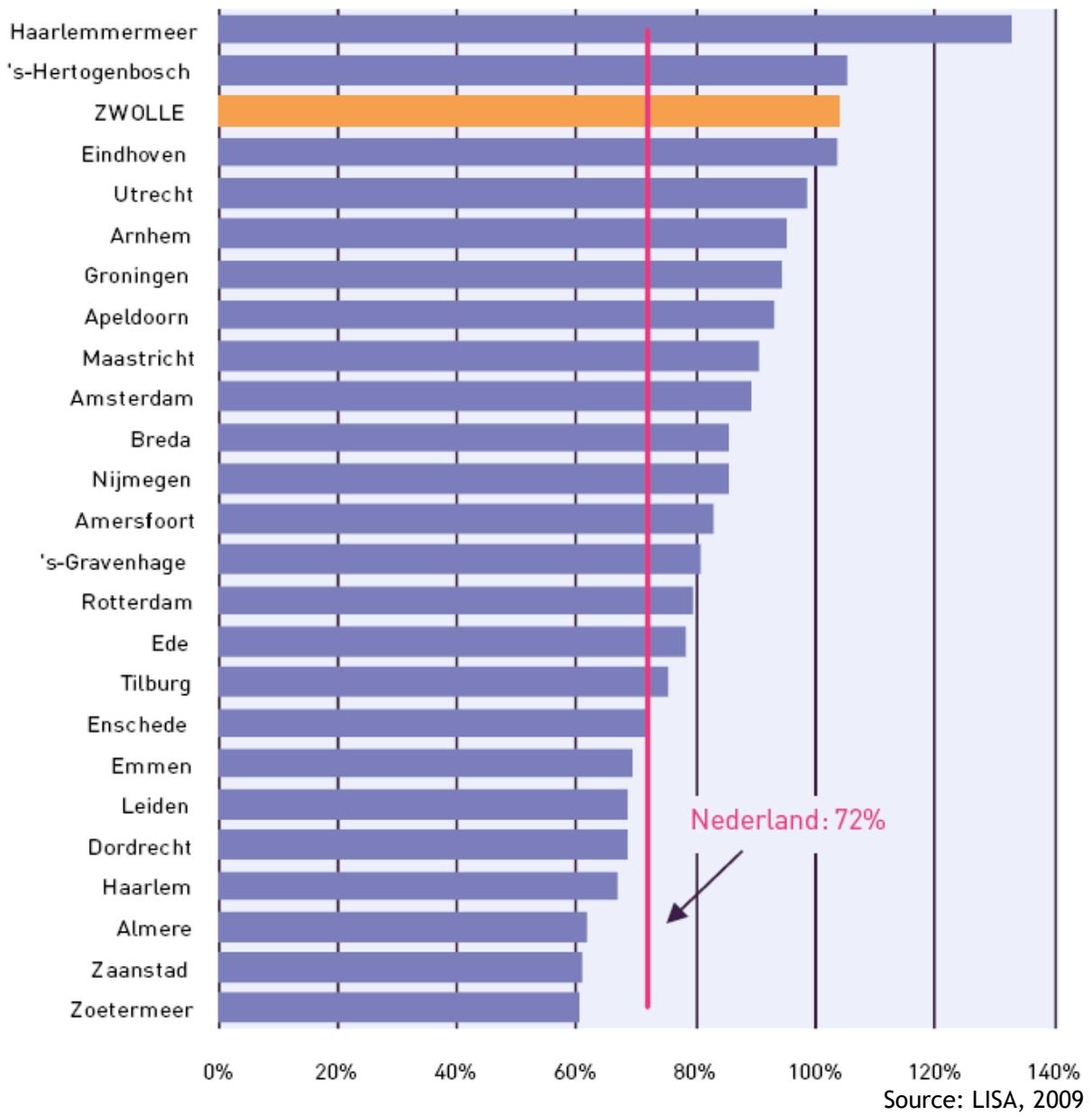


Source: Monitor leefbaarheid en veiligheid ABF Research, 2006-2007

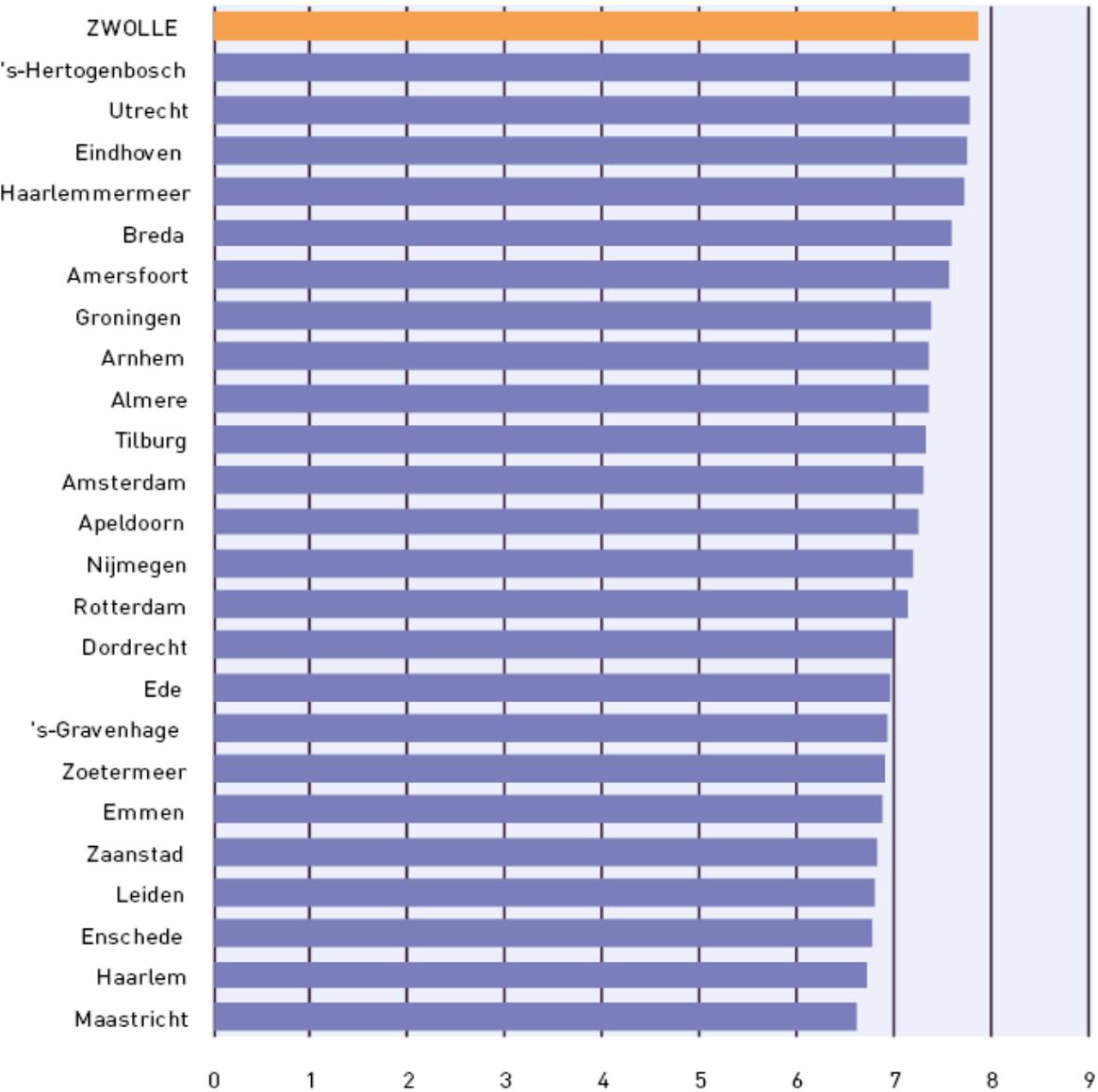
## Index 12. Best residential municipality



### Index 13. Jobs

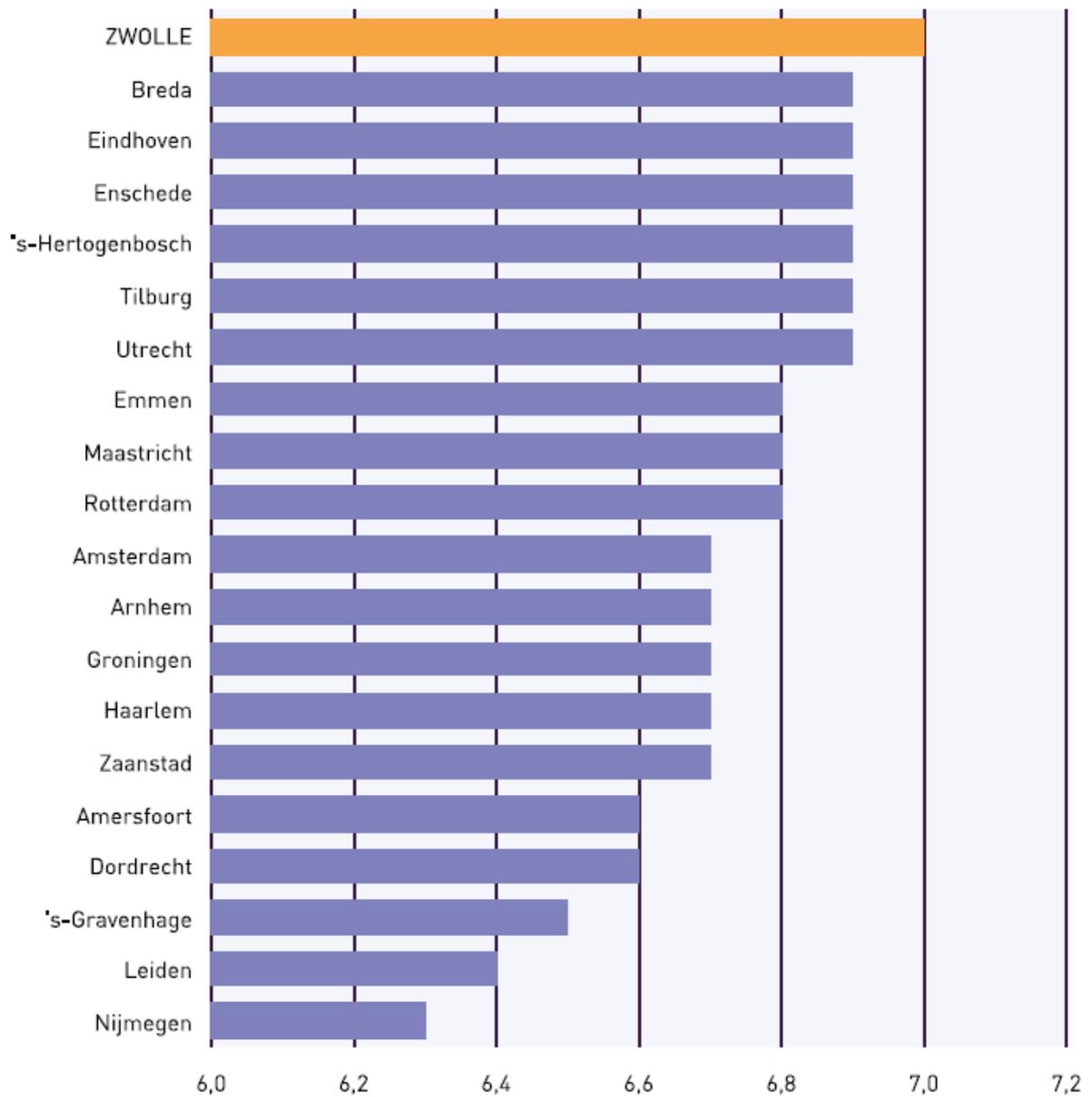


Index 14. Economic vitality



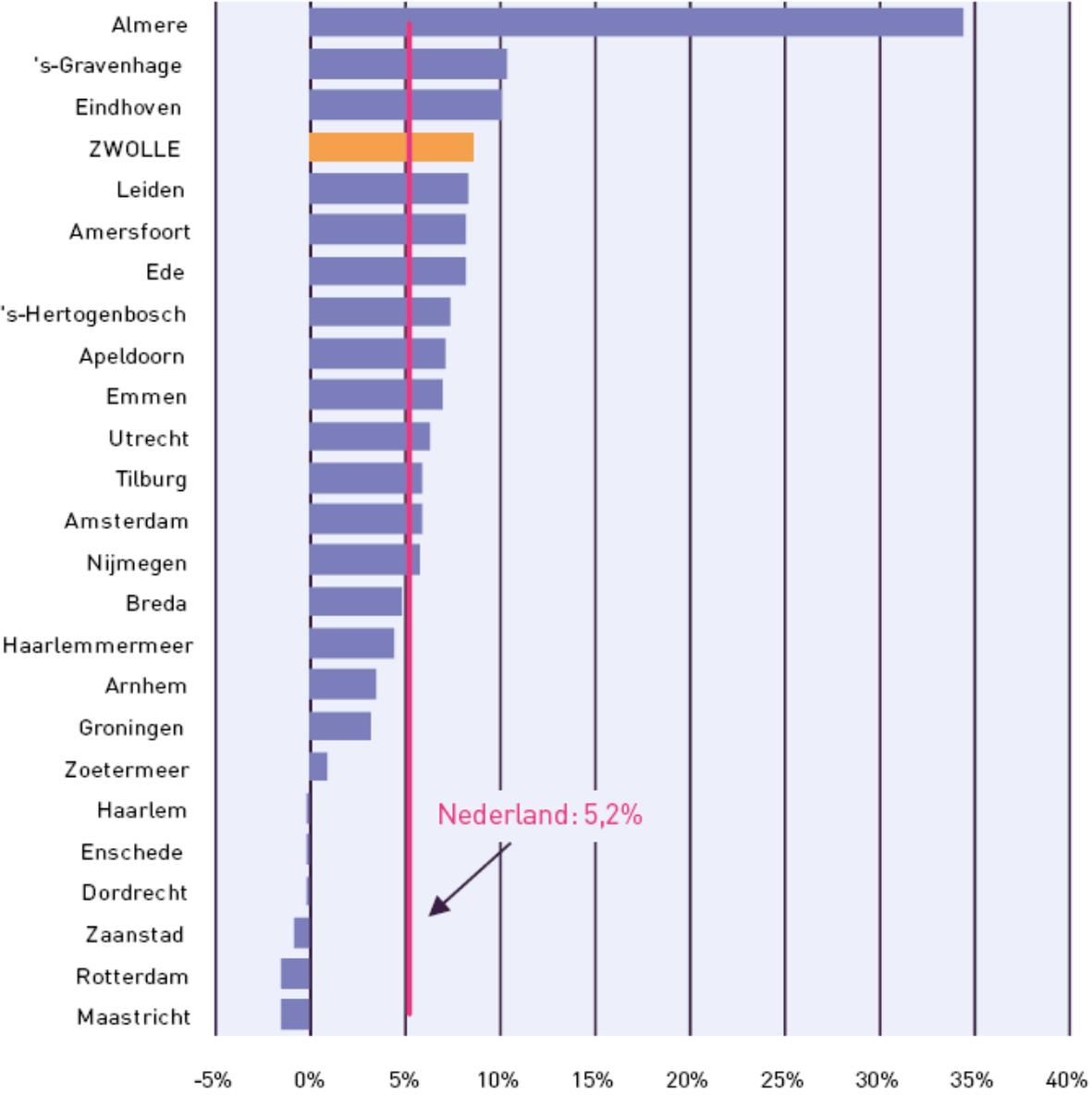
Source: Bureau Lauter, 2009

## Index 15. Business environment



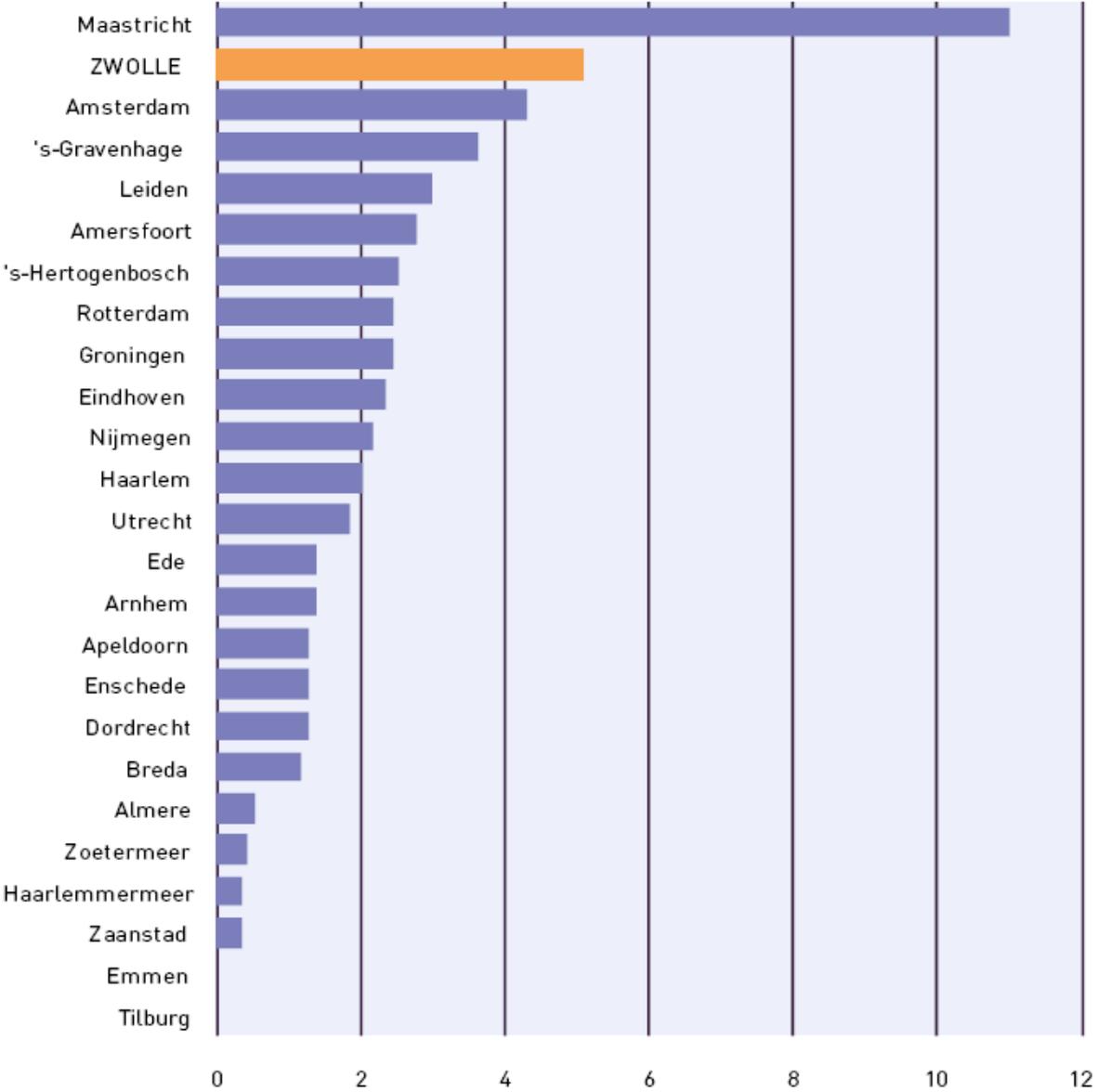
Source: Benchmark Gemeentelijk Ondernemingsklimaat (Ecorys), 2009

Index 16. Employment growth



Source: LISA, 2009

Index 17. Culinary index



Source: Atlas voor gemeenten, 2009