Analysis of Community Involvement in Urban Tourism

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Student: Indy Schumacher

#970129-752-020

Supervisor: Robert Fletcher

Wageningen University & Research Center



Abstract

In the past, many research studies have been conducted concerning community involvement in rural tourism. More research about community involvement in urban tourism settings is needed in order to be able to understand the processes that are taking place in many big cities as well as see opportunities for optimizing community involvement in urban areas. This research aimed to analyse how urban communities are involved with short-term rentals (STRs) as well as with overtourism and contributes to answering the complex question of how to battle the consequences of overcrowding partly stimulated by tourism activities and how communities can be involved in optimizing the benefits and diminishing the negative impacts of tourism and STRs.

Semi-structured interviews with STR hosts in two different neighbourhoods in Amsterdam contributed to understanding how the community is involved in urban tourism as well as with the municipality. The analysis of policy documents of the municipality of Amsterdam concerning short-term rentals generated data about the current community involvement with STRs and shine light on the current legislation and plans of the municipality of Amsterdam concerning STRs and community involvement with policy development and implementation. The findings of this research are useful to policy makers who aim to change the current tourism legislation in Amsterdam.

Key words: community involvement, short-term rentals, overtourism, overcrowding, urban tourism, sustainability

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1. Introduction

Whether in academic spheres or amongst neighbours who are drinking coffee and chatting, the topic of having "too many tourists" around in the city is popular nowadays. This is not surprising, considering the fact that more and more short-term rentals (STRs) are popping up in big cities such as Amsterdam, Venice and Barcelona, and the numbers of tourists in urban areas are quickly increasing. Studies show that the accommodation types that are offered in big cities increasingly consist of STRs that are promoted through online platforms. When these developments are not effectively regulated, and even when they are regulated, tensions and infrastructural issues can arise amongst the different users of the city. In every urban environment there are many different people with varying goals and activities planned in specific areas of that city. The many different uses of a city, together with an increase in tourism numbers, leads to complications in the social and physical urban infrastructure. It has been shown that the STRs can have economic benefits for local urban communities and the hosts of the STRs. According to DiNatale et al. (2018), short-term rentals can positively affect municipalities through increased tax revenues. However, many other stakeholders and city users also are indirectly impacted by the growth in the number of STRs in social and environmental ways.

The situation described above is also taking place in Amsterdam on a daily basis. With a population of approximately eight hundred-thousand people, Amsterdam is experiencing many infrastructural and social complications. Yet, the city's population is still growing each year. Moreover, tourist numbers also continue to increase annually. According to Gerritsma (2018), "overcrowding is experienced chiefly in specific circumstances and influences the balance between living, working and undertaking leisure activities".

It is important to mention that since the outbreak of the COVID-19 many stakeholders in the tourism sector have been impacted both in terms of their health and economic safety. Tourist arrivals have dropped by approximately 60% due to the pandemic. Amsterdam is no longer experiencing overcrowding, but the streets have been emptier than ever before. It is unclear whether the issue of overcrowding will be a thing of the past after the reopening of the tourism industry and the weakening of the hold of COVID-19 over our lives. Especially with the arrival of many new short-term rentals, it is questionable whether the overcrowding will continue again to intensify for local residents.

Despite some of tourism's negative impacts it also contributes to the global economy and has positive socio-environmental impacts as well, such as the enrichment of social relations and conservation of nature. Tourism related issues such as overcrowding are often approached as development issues. This thesis focuses on Amsterdam, a city in the Global North, and contributes to an answer to whether the involvement of local communities with short-term rentals can be an answer to problems of overcrowding.

It is clear that the presence of short-term rentals has several impacts on the lives of local residents and renters. Yet, it is unclear how and to what extent the community is involved and what the potentials are for community involvement in the urban environment to address the negative impacts of overcrowding. Moreover, considering the fact that community involvement can contribute in some

cases to the development of sustainable rural tourism (Fong & Lo, 2015), it is the question whether communities in urban areas can benefit from tourism in similar ways through community involvement. More research has to be done in order to understand the phenomenon of overcrowding and overtourism, and most importantly, to understand how to alleviate the negative effects of tourism. This study aims to find out to what extent community involvement is currently considered by various stakeholders in Amsterdam as well as to analyse the potential opportunities for community involvement. The outcomes of this research will shine light on the current involvement of local communities concerning short-term rentals and overtourism in Amsterdam as well as reveal possible opportunities and pitfalls of community involvement related to short-term rentals in the urban environment. This knowledge, in turn, may contribute to alleviating the city of some of tourism's negative effects as well as contribute to the optimization of the many positive effects of tourism.

This thesis will continue with the conceptual framework, which lays out the most important concepts of this thesis as well as the research objectives and research questions. Then follows chapter 3, which explains the methods of this research. Chapter 4 covers the results of the data collection. These findings are discussed and connected to the conceptual framework in chapter 5. The research questions will also be answered. Finally, the paper summarizes the main findings of this thesis research.

2. Conceptual framework

Overtourism and overcrowding

Tourism development has several potential benefits, such as the generation of employment, strengthening of communities and the preservation of cultural heritage. Moreover, tourism can contribute to the conservation of nature, boost local economies and bring in foreign currency. However, the development of tourism has also be critiqued as problematic in various ways. A proposed response to these issues has been the development of sustainable tourism. Sustainable tourism is based on a balance between people, planet and profit. Many projects have aimed to create.

Since the economic crisis of 2008, the development of tourism has been seen as a way to boost economic development in the global north, especially in Europe (Fletcher et al., 2019). Despite the aforementioned benefits this development has been offering to many countries so far, this rapid growth came together with some socio-environmental concerns and does not take place everywhere at the same rate. One of the issues associated with this rapid tourism development, is the surpassing of the ecological and social carrying capacities of tourist destinations, which is called "overtourism". One of the biggest topics in relation to urban tourism in public debate right now is the concept of overtourism (Koens, 2019). The rapid growth of the tourism sector leads to the surpassing of the ecological and social carrying capacities of cities and metropoles. This phenomenon is what scholars call overtourism. The Responsible Tourism Partnership (2019) defined overtourism as "destinations where hosts or guests, locals and visitors, feel that there are too many visitors and that the quality of life in the area or the quality of the experience has deteriorated unacceptably". Although studies have shown that the rapid growth of tourism and increase in tourist numbers can lead to discontent of local residents and degradation of natural and cultural heritage in some cases, it is often not solely the growing number of tourists that causes problems (Gerritsma, 2018). Urban areas are complex, as they are densely populated landscapes that are being shared and visited by a multitude of users on a daily basis. The fact that there are many different users, each with different needs and intentions for using areas of the city, can lead to confrontation and clashes (Gerritsma, 2018).

Gerritsma (2018) points out the fact that besides the rapid growth of the tourism industry in Amsterdam, there is also an increase in the number of people who work and live in the city and in the number of inbound day trippers. Therefore, Gerritsma (2018) argues that the term "overtourism" might not be the most relevant one for the case of Amsterdam. Instead, she proposes to use the term "overcrowding", as this refers to the city's struggle of the many different ways in which it is being used, rather than simply the increase in tourist numbers, which may or may not in different areas contribute to overcrowding. According to Dodds and Butler (2019), tourists are competing with local residents for space, amenities and services. Especially now tourists are using private accommodation during their stay and they are residing amongst the local residents. This blurs the lines between the tourism sector and the community and in some cases leads to confrontations between local residents and tourists. Sharing platforms such as Airbnb or Booking.com are linked to the overtourism phenomenon, as they influence the investments of residents and private investors in accommodation for tourists (Plichta, 2018). Dodds and Butler (2019) argue that this problem is a mismatch between facilities and services for visitors resulting in residents being crowded out.

The municipality of Amsterdam responded to the overcrowding by designing the "Stad in Balans" or in English "City in Balance" programme, which was implemented in 2017 (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2018). This programme has four main objectives. The first objective is that there should be more quality and diversity in the range of shops and facilities. Secondly, the plans aim to reduce problems and set boundaries. Thirdly, the aim is to make better use of the city and to raise the profile of the region. Lastly, the programme is supposed to create more room on the street in the busiest areas (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2018). Some of the measures that have been taken by the municipality considering STRs are a notification requirement of when a short-term space is rented out as well as an agreement with Airbnb about the maximum amount of nights that a host is allowed to rent out their home. These measures are further discussed in chapter 4 of this paper.

One response in academia to the current tourism developments such as overtourism is degrowth thinking. The general response of both academia and the tourism sector is to aim for sustainable tourism development. This shift focuses on establishing a balance between people, planet and profit. In 2019, Fletcher et al. created an agenda for exploring the relationship between tourism and degrowth as a response to the rapid and unevenly expanding tourism sector. According to them, sharing platforms such as Airbnb, which are called "lean platforms" by Srnicek (2017, p. 49–50), are an area of contention in the tourism industry. These platforms, which increased in numbers in response to the 2008 crisis, focus on a systemically creating tourism growth. Therefore, the situation with overtourism is that it is a product of "structural dynamics within the global capitalist system as a whole", and this growth can only be contained by social protection or degrowth according to the authors (Fletcher et al., 2019, pg. 6). In other words, there is a need for more social protection of short-term rentals platforms or a decrease in the number of short-term rentals in order to fight overtourism.

Short-term rentals

As previously discussed, there is an increase in the number of private accommodations that are being rented out to tourists during their stay. There is an enormous growth in the number of furnished houses, apartments and rooms that are offered on the internet to tourists for a short stay. These accommodations are referred to as short-term rentals (STR). Besides Airbnb, which by now has STRs almost all over the globe, there are many new sharing accommodation platforms popping up on the internet, for example, "Flipkey", "Homestay", "Booking.com" and "Vrbo" (Norah, 2019). Some of these accommodation platforms offer alternative ways to the usual short-term rental ways, such as for example, "Fairbnb", which is a short-term rental sharing platform which strives to be a sustainable community driven-platform (Fairbnb.coop, 2019).

Despite some attempts to implement degrowth in the tourism sector, many cities struggle with the legislation concerning STRs. In some cases, the situation has intensified to such an extent that local communities started feeling anti-tourist sentiments and governments decided to enforce strict regulations concerning STRs. Dasilva (2019) argues that "if not duly delimited in terms of policies and fiscal regulations, Lisbon and Porto inner-city areas are at risk of having a similar destiny to that of Berlin, Amsterdam or Barcelona" (pg. 184). It seems that STRs play a role in pressuring a city's different facilities and services.

In 2018, Milano researched the relationship between the rise in number of STRs and overtourism. This study was conducted in two cities in Portugal and showed that "short-term local accommodation can be beneficial in terms of a more uniform distribution of revenue among small and medium businesses, and families in need of extra income, if properly framed within the tourism strategies" (Milano, 2018). Therefore, it could present opportunities. However, Nieuwland and Van Melink (2018) argue that STRs can also trigger gentrification processes. These gentrification processes can have positive impacts in terms of the neighbourhood receiving new shops and restaurants. Yet, often this leads to rising rent-prices and local residents having no choice but to leave the area as the house pricing becomes too high for many to afford. According to some, this is also occurring in several neighbourhoods in Amsterdam (Meischke, 2020).

The municipality of Amsterdam set up regulations concerning owning a short-term rental in order to manage the impacts of the increase in the number of tourists properly. One of these regulations includes that it is not allowed to rent out your home more than thirty nights each year (City of Amsterdam, 2019). Moreover, the maximum number of tourists that is allowed to be accommodated in any STR at a time is four. Despite these regulations, local residents still often experience nuisance because of, for example, loud tourists or overcrowded streets. Even when there are strict rules and regulations in place, short-term rental owners continue to rent out their homes, sometimes even whilst ignoring these rules and regulations. According to an article by Herman Stil in the online newspaper Het Parool (2019), 60% of Airbnb owners in Amsterdam ignore the regulation saying that home rentals cannot be rented out more than thirty days every year. Furthermore, 40% of the short-term rental owners even rents out their home stays more than sixty days every year, simply ignoring the legislation of the municipality (Stil, 2019). The following subchapter looks at the conceptualization and literature concerning community involvement in tourism in order to better understand how communities are involved in tourism and what the advantages and disadvantages are.

Community involvement in tourism

In order to understand the concept of community involvement, it is first important to clarify what a community actually is. This form of social organization is described by Wiesenfeld as "a homogeneous group in which no internal discrepancies and no intra- and inter-individual differences are recognized" (1996, pg. 338). This ideal definition of community does not correspond with reality very much. In fact, in reality communities have shown to be heterogeneous of nature according to Blackstock (2005).

An important aspect that most conceptualizations of community have in common is the fact that community makes a division between the "us' and "them" (Wiesenfeld, 1996). Community involvement can involve participation in local governance and it can involve participation in voluntary and community organisations which can serve as mobilizing for other types of participation. Moreover, it can mean participation in informal social mechanisms based on 'family, friendship and neighbourliness" (Goodlad, Burton, Croft, 2004; Chanan, 2003; Goodlad, 2002).

Recently, the promotion of community involvement in tourism has become a quite common phenomenon. This could be based on the fact that community involvement can have several positive effects on the stakeholders that are involved. Blackstock (2015) argues that, besides the obvious benefits of community involvement, such as the creation of employment or financial rewards, it contributes to democratic values as the communities become more in power. Promoting community participation adds value in itself, as it contributes to democratic institutions (Blackstock, 2015). There are several successful cases, in which the community benefits from tourism activities and being involved in them. One form of tourism, which thrives through community involvement is rural tourism. Rural tourism can be defined as tourism in a "non-urban territory where human (land related economic) activity is going on, primarily agriculture; a permanent human presence seems a qualifying requirement" (Opperman, 1996 pg. 88). An empirical study by Fong and Lo (2015) on sustainable rural tourism development in Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia, shows that the involvement of local residents in decision-making, empowerment, and community knowledge about tourism are of great importance in achieving sustainability in rural tourism development.

A case study by Ertuna and Kirbas (2012) on Kastamonu, Turkey, which aimed to identify the necessary factors for community involvement in rural tourism shows that the presence of local stakeholders "with a genuine interest in local development, a significant personal investment in the area and diverse networking channels" are an important stimulator for the participation of rural communities in rural tourism activities. Moreover, Ertuna and Kirbas (2012) argue that these stakeholders are important for the facilitation of community involvement in the implementation stage.

There might be some differences between rural and urban areas considering how the impacts of tourism development are realized (Rasoolimanesh, Ringle, Jaafar, & Ramayah, 2017; Ashworth & Page, 2011; Gilbert & Clark 1997;). Compared to rural tourism, which thrives through farming and crafts in rural areas, urban tourism takes place in a complex urban environment with different resources (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2017). The urban environment itself consists of many social, environmental and economic factors that are to some extent symbiotic. Tourism practices affect the city, as well as the other way around. As many aspects of urban tourism are based on the general public facilities and cultural resources in the city, it can be difficult to separate the impacts of tourists on the city with the impacts of other users.

Despite the benefits of community involvement, forms of participation and involvement can also have unintended negative consequences, and for example, lead to so-called participatory exclusions according to Agarwal (2001). The argument is that even with participatory approaches, significant groups, such as women, can be overlooked and excluded systematically. In these situations, the establishment of participatory initiatives can lead to worsened power-relations and the disempowerment of women rather than equal involvement of community members.

The study by Rasoolimanesh et al. (2018) also displays several barriers in community involvement. For the local residents of the Kinabula National Park in Malaysia, these barriers include a lack of knowledge and skills related to tourism, as well as the fact that the employment which is created by tourism often concerns part time jobs with relatively low wages. Several studies have shown a difference between the involvement of the community in rural tourism compared to for example urban tourism destinations (Rasoolimanesh & Jaafar 2016; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2017). Therefore, it is relevant to research whether community involvement could be beneficial in varying tourism contexts.

In academia, there are debates regarding the contested nature of community engagement in tourism development. Blackstock (2005) investigated three failings of the current conceptualization of community-based tourism. One of these failings is that communities are most often described as homogeneous blocks, while in reality communities are heterogeneous. Mason and Cheyne (2000), also claim that opinions and attitudes concerning tourism development are not homogenous in communities. The individual opinions and differences tend to be overlooked. According to Blackstock (2015) the community-based tourism paradigm assumes that every community has "shared interests and a consensus on the preferred tourism outcomes" (2005, pg. 42). This means that it assumes that all members have a unified objective. The third failure mentioned by Blackstock (2015), is the fact that the tourism industry resists participation of the community with the decision-making as they argue it will increase costs and decrease profits (Blackstock, 2005; Chenowneth, 1994; Hawkins, 1993).

According to Telfer and Sharpley (2008), whether residents actually support tourism development or not depends on their perceptions of the positive and negative impacts of tourism (Rasoolimanesh et al. 2017). Studies have shown that residents in urban environments are more aware of the negative and positive impacts of tourism development than residents of rural or developing destinations (Rasoolimanesh et al, 2017; Jaafar et al., 2015a; Latkova & Vogt, 2012; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2010). In general, local residents who are concerned about the economic and environmental impacts of tourism are most passionate about involvement in tourism planning (Zhang, 2013; Hibbard and Lurie, 2000).

The type of involvement of the community also differs in various situations. In 1999, Tosun created a typology of community involvement in the tourism sector. This typology shows to what extent the local community actually has the power to be involved in matters such as tourism planning and decision-making and to what extent they are being consulted (Tosun, 2006). The typology differentiates between the following involvement approaches; spontaneous participation, induced participation and coercive community participation (Zhang et al., 2013; Tosun, 2006). Spontaneous participation is often characterized by active participation and bottom-up initiatives in which there is some form of participation in both the development process as well as during the implementation. Induced community participation is defined by Tosun (2006) as a top-down type of participation. With this type of participation, stakeholders are taking part in implementation and benefits are being

shared, but the involvement is passive and mostly indirect. Lastly, coercive community participation can be characterized by the fact that there is participation in implementation, but the benefits are not necessarily being shared between stakeholders. This form of community participation is paternalistic and also top-down and has a high degree of tokenism and manipulation (Tosun, 2006). The different involvement approaches are explained in table 1. This typology is used in this research paper to indicate the community participation with short-term rental legislation of STR hosts in Amsterdam.

Type of community participation	Defining characteristics	
Spontaneous	Bottom-up; active participation; direct participation; participation in whole process of development including decision making, implementation, sharing benefit and evaluating; authentic participation; coproduction; self-planning; wide participation; social participation.	
Induced	Top-down; passive; formal; mostly indirect; represents degree of tokenism, manipulation and pseudo-participation; participation in implementation and sharing benefits; choice between proposed alternatives and feedback	
Coercive	Top-down, passive; mostly indirect, formal; participation in implementation, but not necessarily sharing benefits; choice between proposed limited alternatives or no choice; represent paternalism, non-participation, high degree of tokenism and manipulation.	

Table 1. Typology of community participation (Tosun, 1999)

Research questions and objectives

The aforementioned literature shows that extensive research has already been done on the concept of community involvement and on the impacts of STRs in urban areas. However, research on the implementation and potential of community involvement concerning short-term rentals in overcrowded urban areas seems to be lacking.

The main aim of this research is to explore what the opportunities for community involvement are in Amsterdam concerning short-term rentals. This research emerged out of the prior research for the ongoing the project by the Science Shop at Wageningen University in cooperation with Fairbnb.coop, which focusses on creating community involvement in a community-based rental platform (Wageningen University, 2019).

The two areas in which the data will be collected, Amsterdam Oud-West and Amsterdam Noord, are quite different in terms of their socio-spatial development, which makes them interesting to compare and is why there were selected for the case study of this research. Community involvement is likely to be different for both areas and there might be different opportunities for involvement based on the development of the area. Therefore, the main research question of this research is: "What are opportunities for the involvement of local communities with short-term rentals in Amsterdam Noord and Amsterdam Oud-West?"

In order to find the answer to the main research question, the following secondary research questions are created:

- "To what extent does the municipality of Amsterdam consider community involvement concerning short-term rentals in their current plans in Amsterdam?"
- "How are local communities involved with local short-term rentals at the moment?"
- "How should local communities be involved with local short-term rentals according to local residents and hosts?

3. Methods

3.1. Research design

The research design of this research project is a descriptive, qualitative design. The advantages of this design are that it makes it possible to research phenomenon in a completely natural and unchanged environment. Moreover, it is effective for analysing non-quantified topics. This design makes it possible to understand what the current plans of the municipality are considering short-term rentals and overcrowding, how stakeholders perceive community involvement as well as to discover what the possible potential of community involvement with short-term rentals in Amsterdam is. Two neighbourhoods were selected for data sampling in order to understand how neighbourhoods with different socio-spatial development are developing in terms of community involvement with STRs and tourism legislation. These neighbourhoods are Amsterdam Oud-West and Amsterdam Noord. These neighbourhoods differ in their urban development. Amsterdam Noord is an area where gentrification has been taken place relatively recently, whereas Amsterdam Oud-West has been going through gentrification processes already (Meischke, 2020). Moreover, Amsterdam Oud-West is located relatively closely to the Centre of Amsterdam, which accommodates a lot of tourists, whereas Amsterdam Noord is less crowded by tourists. Comparing these two neighbourhoods gives an insight into the level of community involvement considering STRs in neighbourhoods which develop differently and which have varying urban contexts.

3.2. Data collection

The data collection took place in Amsterdam in the months of November 2019 until March 2020. Semistructured interviews were conducted in order to collect the required date about the perspectives of the community and the municipality concerning tourism legislation and STRs in Amsterdam, and to make sure that space is allowed for input from hosts. Semi-structured interviews allow for a general direction based on the conceptual framework, but also provides an opportunity for the ideas and input of the interviewees.

The target group for the interviews was short-term rental owners in Amsterdam Noord and Amsterdam Oud-West. The non-probability sampling technique, snowball sampling, was used to generate a relevant sample for data collection. This technique is suitable and relevant for this type of research as it enables the researcher to identify potential subjects in situations where it is difficult to locate subjects due to for example anonymity or lack of a social network that could be used. Short-term rental hosts that are active in Amsterdam Noord and Amsterdam Oud-West were approached via the short-term rental platform Airbnb for interviews. This platform was chosen, as it is the platform which is used most often in Amsterdam. The sub-areas in Amsterdam Noord, in which hosts were interviewed, were the Van der Pekbuurt and the Vogelbuurt. Figure 1 gives an overview of Amsterdam. Amsterdam Noord is located within the red lines.

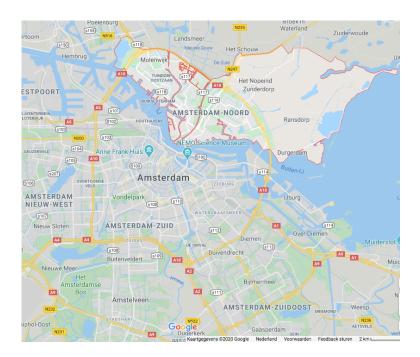


Figure 1. Overview of Amsterdam Noord

The sub-neighbourhoods in Amsterdam Oud-West where interviewees were approached were the Kinkerbuurt, the Helmersbuurt and the Dacosta Buurt. These sub-neighbourhoods were chosen based on their central location within the neighbourhood Amsterdam Oud-West and because only a limited number of hosts were willing to contribute by being interviewed. Figure 2 gives an overview of the location of Amsterdam Oud-West.

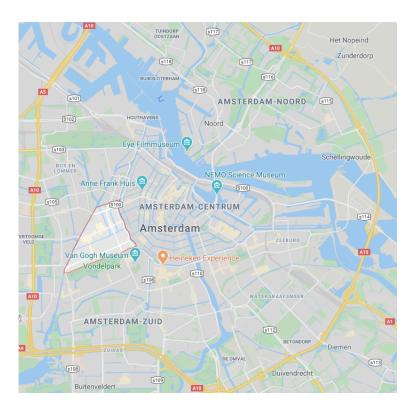


Figure 2. Amsterdam Oud-West

In total, ten in-depth semi-structured interviews with short-term rental hosts were done. Out of 69 contacted hosts, 9 agreed to take part in a face-to-face interview and 1 was conducted by telephone. It needs to be mentioned that this sample is relatively small to base an analysis on. However, the nature of the population that needed to be reached for this study was rather difficult to access, due to the fact that there were only few that were willing to participate in interviews and some hosts that were contacted did not show up to interviews they agreed to. This limitation was, however, compensated for by the important insights that were gathered by interviewing the ten short-term rental hosts.

These hosts were approached via the Airbnb website, which has a map showing the semi-accurate location of the rentals. Using the "contact the host" button, messages with a request for an interview were sent. This method of approach was used rather than approaching hosts via Facebook, as the Airbnb map shows you in what neighbourhood the rentals are located and a couple of quarters were selected for the sample. The interviews took place in Amsterdam and were conducted face-to-face. Snowball-sampling was another technique which was used to approach hosts. Eight of the hosts use Airbnb as their main rental platform and one hosts, who was approached through snowball-sampling used a different short-term rental platform other than Airbnb that focusses on Bed and Breakfasts.

The interview questions that were used during the interviews are based on the literature review and the conceptual framework of this paper. These questions are based on the topics community involvement with the STR, overcrowding, the level of involvement by the municipality and sustainability. As the interviews were semi-structured, follow-up questions have been asked which are not included in the question list. An overview of the main structure of the interview questions can be found in the appendix.

Moreover, in order to gain more insight on the municipality of Amsterdam's current STR legislation, policy papers of the municipality were collected, which can be found on the official website of the municipality of Amsterdam. These policy papers published by the municipality between 2018 and 2020 were used to analyse the municipality's plans to regulate short-term rentals and overcrowding and to see how the community is involved with the decision-making regarding short-term rentals in the city of Amsterdam.

3.3. Data Analysis

Since 90% of the interviewees are Dutch, and preferred to conduct the interviews in their mother tongue, most of the interviews were carried out in Dutch. The second language which was used for one interview was English. After the interviews were conducted, they were transcribed in their original language. Afterwards, the data was analysed in the original language using both inductive and deductive analyses, which were based on the conceptual framework. The new concepts that were found in the data were then translated to English and synthesized. Relevant quotes of interviewees were translated to English before being included in the discussion chapter.

The following chapter will provide an overview of the results of the data collection phase. In chapter 5, the possible differences in community involvement and the perspectives of the different short-term rental hosts in Amsterdam will be highlighted. This will provide more insight on the different actors and their personal interests in the tourism sector in Amsterdam. Moreover, the policy papers of the municipality of Amsterdam will be analysed with content analysis. The conceptual framework was used in order to understand the current level of community participation with STR legislation in Amsterdam Noord and Oud-West. Lastly, the paper closes with an overarching conclusion and some recommendations for future research.

4. Results

This chapter will outlay the most important findings of this research. First of all, in subchapter 4.1 the general findings from the policy documents will be mentioned. This sub-chapter includes an overview on the current STR regulations as well as the City in Balance plans. In sub-chapter 4.2 the data from the interviews with STR hosts will be discussed, starting with some background information on the sample, followed by the perspective of the STR hosts on the involvement of the municipality. Thereafter, the organization of hosts is discussed, as well as the involvement of the local community with STRs. Lastly, this chapter closes with some new insights concerning the sustainability of the STRs. An overview of the questions used during the semi-structured interviews can be found in the appendix.

4.1. Municipality's response to crowding and STRs

4.1.1. Regulation of short-term rentals

The website of the municipality of Amsterdam dedicates multiple pages to the subject of short-term rentals and Bed & Breakfasts (B&B). An overview of the requirements of these rentals is given here as well. It is important to mention that the municipality of Amsterdam differentiates between different types of short-term rentals in the city. Rentals, which are owned by hosts who are at home themselves

during the rent, are defined according to the municipality of Amsterdam as Bed and Breakfasts. The guests of a B&B are also not allowed to have their own kitchen and bathroom, but are supposed to share them with the host. B&B hosts do not have a maximum number of nights which they are allowed to rent out their rental. The rentals, in which the host is not present during the time in which it is being rented out, are according to the municipality of Amsterdam called "vakantieverhuur" in Dutch, which roughly translates to "holiday rental". For these rentals, the municipality implemented a regulation stipulating a maximum of thirty nights rental a year. Moreover, there is a maximum of 4 guests allowed per night. Besides the pages with general information for short-term rental hosts, the website of the municipality has a special page dedicated to the notification of illegal rental practices which can be used by people to report illegal rental activities in their neighbourhood.

The name Laurens Ivens was often mentioned during the interviews with the STR hosts. This City council member deals with the topics Public area and Green, Building and Living, Developing Neighbourhoods, Animal Welfare, Cleaning and the Amsterdam Noord district. This council member frequently expresses his opinion on the current state of the municipality's regulation of STRs and especially on the presence of Airbnb in Amsterdam. Because of his critical perspective on the impacts of short-term rentals in Amsterdam and his relatively powerful position as council member dealing with building and living matters, the documents and press releases in which he expresses his opinion concerning short-term rentals and overcrowding in Amsterdam are considered to be a relevant contribution to this analysis.

On the municipality page dedicated to Laurens Ivens, press releases are attached as well as several documents regarding the municipality's legislation. On the 8th of May, 2019, an article was published concerning the new regulations of the municipality regarding the duty of owners to inform the municipality about their renters (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2019).

On the 29th of January, 2020, The Raad van State (Council of State), stated that the rental of holiday homes without a permit is forbidden. However, it was also said that the municipality does not have permission to fine those who do not report their rental dates. This means that the legislation around the reporting obligation will be temporarily stopped and prior fines for those who did not report before will be mostly terminated.

On the 4th of March 2020, a press release by Laurens Ivens was posted on his page on the website of the municipality. This release claims that "cities are struggling to manage the continuous growth of short-term holiday rentals offered by online platforms". The text concludes that cities acknowledge the importance of tourism for income and the generation of jobs and that they do not oppose new forms of holiday rentals. However, the argument is presented that this form of rental can only take place if it is done responsibly and with necessary regulation in place.

4.1.2. City in Balance plans

As a response to overcrowding in the city, in 2014, the administrative order "Stad in Balans" or in English "City in Balance" came in order. The four main objectives of the implementation programme adopted by the college are: (1) more quality and diversity in the range of shops and facilities, (2) reducing problems and setting boundaries, (3) making better use of the city and raising the profile of the region and (4) more room on the streets in the busiest areas. An updated and more extensive

version of the City in Balance programme written in Dutch has some specific new objectives and measures added to it that will be discussed in this sub-chapter (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2018). In this programme, the ambition of City in Balance is to find a balance between liveability and hospitality.

Several measures are supposed to reach the abovementioned objectives and goals according to the City in Balance programme written by the municipality of Amsterdam in 2018. These measures are divided in two subchapters, "measures for the whole city" and "measures for the 1012 postal code area". This area is "bounded by the Prins Hendrikkade, Geldersekade and Kloveniersburgwal, Muntplein and Singel". The document claims that the drawbacks of Amsterdam's growth in population numbers are very clear in this particular part of the city.

One of the measures that applies to the whole city, which impacts tourist flows, is the "Overnight accommodation policy". According to this policy the City of Amsterdam will "not agree to new hotels across a large area of the city. The basic principle is "no" or "no, unless", depending on the location. Another measure, which is relevant for the tourism sector in Amsterdam is "Agreements with Airbnb and the notification requirement for holiday rentals". This measure entails the use of an enforcement team for dealing with the issue of illegal holiday rentals. Moreover, it entails the agreement on a maximum number of days that the homeowners are allowed to rent out their homes (60 days per year). In the beginning of January, 2019, this number changed to a maximum of 30 days. Besides these measures, a tourist tax differentiation was also enforced. This measure was supposed to differentiate between districts in the percentages of tourist tax. In Noord, Zuid Oost and Nieuw-West tax is 4%, and in other districts it is 6%. Also, the short-term rental owners, in the document described as "holiday rentals, bed & breakfasts and short stay accommodation, need to pay 6% tourist tax. Several other measures are included in the City in Balance programme that focus on the cleanliness of the city, city marketing and taxes (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2018).

The programme also has a chapter dedicated to the 1012 postal code area measures, in the old centre of Amsterdam. Several experiments are mentioned. One of these is a pilot in the Red-Light District, which aims to provide visitors with information about the area, as well as walking routes, which is supposed to fight congestion. Moreover, a permit system for Red Light District Tours was also part of this chapter. Groups bigger than 4 persons need a permit, and tour groups bigger than 20 people are banned. Part of this chapter are also amongst others some measures focusing on crowd management in the Red-Light District, solutions to taxi issues, and multiple experiments focusing on liveability and pedestrian routes. Another policy that focusses on the regulation of accommodation for tourists, which was included in the latest City in Balance papers, is the strict selection of which hotels are allowed to be built in the city.

In the most recent City in Balance programme, matters of cooperation and communication are discussed (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2018). In chapter 4, it is explained how talks with residents or with residents' organizations are organized. This cooperation with residents is aiming at "gather ideas", "learning more about how communications from the city council about growth and crowded streets come across and how they should be addressed" and "keeping a finger on the pulse: how are crowded streets and nuisance behaviour perceived?" (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2018, pg. 25). Moreover, this chapter explains how business owners, knowledge institutions and authorities are involved to act together where possible.

Chapter 5 of the City in Balance papers (2018) is devoted to the explanation of the communication with residents as well as with visitors. In this chapter it is stated that "Residents are consequently involved in the development of the city and the way in which a new equilibrium is being pursued" (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2018, pg. 28). The main modes of communication between the municipality and city residents is through the municipality website, digital newsletters and social media. These channels of communication are supposed to inform local residents about new measures and the results they produce.

4.2. Perspectives of STR hosts

4.2.1. Background information

Nine semi-structured interviews with short-term rental hosts who are active on Airbnb, and one on Bed&Breakfast.com, have generated the following data. All of the hosts that have been interviewed, answered that they manage their rental themselves and that they do not own multiple rentals. In order to be able to get insights into community involvement with short term-rentals in neighbourhoods in Amsterdam, the two different neighbourhoods, Amsterdam Noord and Amsterdam Oud-west were selected. Figure 3 shows the most common age categories of the hosts that were interviewed for this research project.

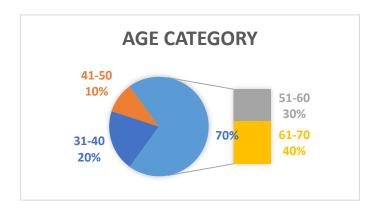


Figure 3. Age distribution sample

4.2.2. Community involvement by the municipality

The perspective of the hosts on the current tourism regulation of the municipality was mostly negative. A host from Amsterdam Noord mentioned the following about the municipality and their tourism policies:

"They are very much focused on the worst-case scenario. And I also understand that, when apartment buildings in the centre with common staircases have five homes which are rented out to Airbnb renters and people in their own stairwell no longer know whom they might walk into, well that seems very annoying to me. I would not want that myself" (Bed and Breakfast host, Amsterdam Noord)

During nearly all of the interviews with the hosts who are active on the Airbnb platform, a reoccurring theme was that the participants thought the municipality of Amsterdam generalizes Airbnb hosts. As Airbnb is functioning as a platform, the service does not differentiate between its different users. Whereas some hosts are depending on the rental of their homes through Airbnb as their main source of income, there are also users who (illegally) rent out multiple homes in one neighbourhood with the goal of generating as much yield as possible. As there is a problem with the provision of enough and affordable housing in Amsterdam in general, according to the hosts, the municipality wants to make sure that there is no shortage in housing taking place due to short-term rentals. Therefore, the legislation around short-term rentals has become more and more strict over the last years. According to some of the Airbnb hosts that were interviewed, this situation leads to the municipality treating all the Airbnb users the same, ignoring the fact that there are many different types of short-term rentals and hosts with different impacts.

Whilst this research was conducted, there were a lot of changes in the legislation around short-term rentals in Amsterdam. An interview with an Airbnb host in Amsterdam Noord showed that Bed and Breakfasts hosts have been subjected to a lottery. The municipality considered to enforce a similar type of lottery for "vakantieverhuur" rentals. Those who have a rental that belongs to this category already have a maximum number of thirty days in which they are allowed to rent out their property. With the new lottery regulation enforced by the municipality in January 2020, it was unsure for Airbnb host whether they were allowed to continue their rental or whether they can have one at all in the future. This new regulation provided equal opportunity for new Airbnbs to start renting out their property as well as to existing hosts who have been active for multiple years. If one was active as a host before, and would win a spot in the lottery, one was allowed to continue the rental for 8 years with a permit. However, if one lost the lottery, but was already active as a host, one was allowed to continue for five years. Those who were not active as hosts before, and who lost the lottery, were not allowed to get the permit. The number of short-term rentals that was allowed differs per area according to the interviewees. It seems to be unsure what this number is based on and whether any impact assessment took place before this regulation was enforced. Most of the interviewees claimed to understand the fact that the municipality of Amsterdam tries to ensure that there are no short-term rentals contributing to the housing shortage, but at the same time the hosts felt that the municipality was focusing on the wrong groups when aiming to reduce problems caused by tourism. Both hosts in Amsterdam Noord and Amsterdam Oud-West argued that the number of hotels and hotel rooms in Amsterdam is increasing exponentially, which allows more tourists to visit the already crowded city. At the same time, they argued, the municipality aimed to reduce the number of short-term rentals per neighbourhood, because they claim that these cause overtourism and nuisance for the local residents. Therefore, it was said by almost all of the hosts that the municipality should be focusing on hotels and business minded people who illegally own and manage multiple Airbnb's. After the hosts who were interested in a permit signed up, it turned out that there were more permits available in every area than the number of hosts that signed up. This resulted in the current situation, in which every host that has signed up, is able to continue their rental.

Besides the fact most of the hosts who were interviewed were not positive about the current tourism policies of the municipality of Amsterdam, a reoccurring topic was the process of consultation by the municipality of Amsterdam. Generally, short-term rental hosts claimed not be involved with decision-making behind changes in tourism legislation in Amsterdam. Although, most hosts mentioned during the interviews that the municipality informs them enough about the changes in legislation on their

website, according to them it is not often the case that members of the municipality listen to the opinion of local communities or STR hosts. Solutions from their perspective that were mentioned were not concrete, but the wish for a better and more clear communication between the municipality and the hosts was often expressed.

4.2.3. Organization of short-term rental hosts

Some hosts are members of Facebook pages for hosts in Amsterdam and most of the hosts are part of the Amsterdam Gastvrij organization. Amsterdam Gastvrij is an initiative that aims to defend the rights of short-term rental hosts in Amsterdam. Amsterdam Gastvrij regularly schedules meetings for its members, where members of the municipality are also invited. It became clear during the interviews that there were also hosts who did not want to be a part of this organization as they did not agree with their approach, claiming that the approach of the organization undertook too many juridical actions in their unity against the municipality.

Another finding was that there seems to be a feeling of shame amongst hosts and a bad connotation to being an Airbnb host in Amsterdam. During an interview in Amsterdam Noord, a short-term rental host compared being an Airbnb host to reading dirty magazines and claims to be seen as a semi-criminal by the municipality, stating:

"It's almost like reading dirty magazines or something. "Do you rent via Airbnb? Well that is really bad!" I think that is a very strange development, because it is a fantastic website. Financially it is really an outcome. Only because they do not open up the matter to the municipality and the municipality suspects anyone renting out homes through Airbnb as a semi-criminal. There is a very strange tension to it." (Bed and breakfast host, Amsterdam Noord)

The abovementioned quote shows that there might be some tensions between the different users of the city of Amsterdam, but it also shows that some hosts feel like non-hosts in the neighbourhoods are against their rental practices. The next chapter of this paper discusses the involvement of the local community in Amsterdam Noord and Amsterdam Oud-West with short-term rentals in these neighbourhoods.

4.2.4. Involvement of the local community with short-term rentals

When it comes to the involvement of neighbours and the communities the hosts are living in, data shows that most hosts are rather individualistic. When asked whether they think neighbours would like to be involved more with their rental practices, one host in Amsterdam Oud-West responded "No, with what?" (Vakantiehuur rental host, Amsterdam Oud-West). There were many similar responses. However, not all of the interviewees shared the same perspectives. One Bed and Breakfast host in Amsterdam Noord mentioned that a student cleans her Airbnb as a side job and multiple other hosts mentioned that they sometimes ask their neighbours to hand over keys when they are not able to do so themselves. When it comes to the relationship between the hosts and their neighbours and neighbourhood, most hosts mentioned that they inform their direct neighbours about their rental practices, as well as ask them whether they experience any nuisance caused by their rental guests.

Whenever the hosts that were interviewed need support in any way with their short-term rental, they seem dependent on the existing social networks. These are often their direct neighbours or friends, who help out in some way or another. However, most hosts claimed not to be interested in more involvement of the local community in any other way. Most of the hosts who were interviewed did not see any added value to involving the local community with the management of their Airbnb. Moreover, hosts were asked whether they recommend certain activities or restaurants to their guests. The most common answer was that they do make recommendations to their guests, usually based on their own experiences rather than based on a cooperation with restaurants or other companies.

During multiple interviews, hosts mentioned the existence of "Airbnb experience". This function of the platform of Airbnb allows anyone who wants to do so, to offer a particular experience to guests, in the same way in which rentals are rented out. One of the Bed and Breakfast hosts argued that this was a way in which local residents and tourists do get more involved than by just meeting their STR hosts.

Another Bed and Breakfast host in Amsterdam Oud-West argued that if the neighbourhood, consisting of both short-term rental hosts and non-hosts, would be involved with the decision-making concerning short-term rentals and the tourism sector in Amsterdam, this would mean that many people who are not aware of the current legislation and who do not possess the required knowledge concerning STRs would also influence the future of the STRs. This particular Airbnb host gave the example of friends and acquaintances asking whether he was himself bothered by the maximum number of rental days regulation, even though this law only applies to "vakantieverhuur" rentals and not to Bed and Breakfasts like himself. B&B's are in fact not subjected to a maximum number of days which they are allowed to rent out rooms.

4.2.5. Sustainability of short-term rentals

The hosts that were interviewed for this research were also asked how they would describe their own rental in terms of environmental and social sustainability. Most of the hosts responded that they try to be sustainable with their short-term rental practices. One host mentioned that she offers her guests reusable water bottles, in order to reduce their plastic use. The general response was based on the ways in which their Airbnb was built or product they use in their Airbnb. A bed and breakfast host in Amsterdam Noord said the following about the sustainability of their rental:

"We have done everything as sustainably as possible. But with the costs in mind. For example, the furniture is second-hand. That is cheap, but also more sustainable than when you buy it new. It is very isolated. Led light. No gas, but an electric heater for the shower. The entire renovation was seeing whether we can create a guest house that is very sustainable in a low-cost way. We have even used wood from fallen trees in Amsterdam." (Bed and breakfast host, Amsterdam Noord)

When asked whether they would be interested in alternatives to Airbnb which focus specifically on environmental and social sustainability, some hosts answered that the alternative would be interesting to join as long as the alternative platform would allow them to generate the same amount of income. Other hosts claimed to be satisfied with the functioning of Airbnb and that they did not want to complicate the bookkeeping further by joining an alternative platform and that sustainability was something to achieve as an individual with individual actions rather than achieving it through joining an alternative platform.

5. Discussion

In this chapter, the aforementioned results will be discussed, connected to the literature from the conceptual framework and the research questions will be answered. Firstly, the involvement of the community by the municipality according to the STR hosts will be discussed and connected to the conceptual framework. Then, the involvement of local residents with STRs will be discussed. Thirdly, potential differences between Amsterdam Noord and Amsterdam Oud-West will be explained. This will be followed by a subchapter with a discussion on opportunities for involvement of the local communities. Following is a chapter on the limitations of this research. Lastly, ideas for further research will be discussed.

5.1. Involvement of community by the municipality

Online documents about short-term rental regulation and updates provided by the municipality were used in order to analyse the level of involvement of the local community by the municipality. The perspective of ten short-term rental hosts in two neighbourhoods in Amsterdam on the level of community involvement was analysed as well. It is important to keep in mind, as Blackstock (2005) pointed out, that a community is not a homogeneous entity, but it has different sub groups with different expectations and wishes. Since this research focused on the involvement of the community by the municipality with tourism regulation, this chapter discusses the level of involvement of the community with tourism related regulations of the municipality in the perspective of short-term rental hosts.

With the generated data in mind, the first sub-question can now be answered. This question was: "To what extent does the municipality of Amsterdam consider community involvement concerning short-term rentals in their current plans in Amsterdam?".

As the hosts are part of the community of either Amsterdam Noord or Amsterdam Oud-West, it was asked to what extent they felt the community was involved with the municipality. According to the hosts that were interviewed in both Amsterdam Noord and Amsterdam Oud-West, the municipality does not involve the community a lot with the current plans for tourism in Amsterdam. An interview in Amsterdam Noord with a bed and breakfast host showed that in general the level of involvement differs per area. One host mentioned they were involved so much with projects in Amsterdam Noord, that the people living there became bothered by the number of meetings they have to attend on a weekly basis for different projects.

Moreover, the majority of the hosts mentioned that they think that many new hotels are still being built all over Amsterdam, adding hundreds of hotel rooms in a short time, increasing pressure on the city, whereas STRs are being increasingly strictly managed in order to fight overcrowding. This is interesting, as many papers and media claim that short-term rentals are causing most of the problems with tourists in Amsterdam. In the City in Balance plans (2018), however, plans to select more strictly which hotels are allowed to be built in the city are included. This seems to go hand in hand with the response to the rapid growth of tourism, as discussed in the literature review. As the exponential growth of the tourism industry also brings negative consequences such as overtourism, measures are being taken to find a balance between people, planet and profit. It seems that this is also being done by the municipality of Amsterdam. Based on the interviews, it seems that the hosts, or most local

residents in general are not involved with these matters or are simply not aware of new changes in regulation due to unclear or absent communication.

The data that was derived from the policy papers show that there are several projects that focus on diminishing overcrowding and managing tourism. The "overnight accommodation policy" as part of the City in Balance plans, which shows that the municipality does consider the building of new accommodations as part of the overtourism and overcrowding issue. The findings show that the municipality considers the local residents, business owners, authorities and knowledge institutes with their policy development. There are chapters dedicated to the cooperation with different stakeholders and the channels of communication with local residents. The statement "Residents are consequently involved in the development of the city and the way in which a new equilibrium is being pursued" shows that the municipality claims to involve local residents in the urban development (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2018, pg. 28). This finding seems contradictory to the findings from the interviews with STR hosts, as they argued not to feel involved by the municipality with policy development.

Looking at Tosun's typology of community involvement in tourism (1999) in table 2, which was discussed in chapter 2, it seems that the type of community participation which was described by the hosts in Amsterdam Noord and Amsterdam Oud-West either fits "Induced community participation" or "Coercive community participation". These types of participation are top-down and are mainly passive forms of participation. The level of participation also depends on each individual host, as well as their neighbourhood, as some hosts claimed to prefer to be to some extent involved with legislation and some preferred a more passive role. Moreover, in Amsterdam Noord, there seemed to be more involvement with municipality meetings than in Oud-West. This indication is based on the perspectives of the interviewees. Looking at the data derived from the City in Balance papers, it could be argued that the level of participation is somewhere between "induced participation" and "spontaneous participation".

It is not possible to give a definite answer to what type of community participation as described by Tosun (1999) is actually relevant for this situation, as this research focused on the content of the city in balance plans and not the actual performance. Yet, there is an indication for induced or coercive participation from the perspective of the local residents and "induced" participation from the City in Balance papers. This shows that there is a disjuncture between what the municipality claims to aim for and how the STR hosts actually perceive the municipality's plans.

Type of community participation	Defining characteristics		
Spontaneous	Bottom-up; active participation; direct participation; participation in whole process of development including decision making, implementation, sharing benefit and evaluating; authentic participation; coproduction; self-planning; wide participation; social participation.		
Induced	Top-down; passive; formal; mostly indirect; represents degree of tokenism, manipulation and pseudo-participation; participation in		

	implementation and sharing benefits; choice between proposed alternatives and feedback
Coercive	Top-down, passive; mostly indirect, formal; participation in implementation, but not necessarily sharing benefits; choice between proposed limited alternatives or no choice; represent paternalism, non-participation, high degree of tokenism and manipulation.

Table 2. Typology of community participation (Tosun, 1999)

Important to mention is that when most hosts were asked whether they would change anything in the communication between the municipality and themselves as short-term rental hosts if they could, they often answered they would make sure there is more clarity and open communication between the hosts and the municipality. This was based on the fact that many hosts felt that the municipality did not listen to their opinion, or consider their point of view before changing short-term rental legislation.

5.2. Involvement of local community with short-term rentals

The increase of the number of Airbnb's in Amsterdam is a result of the development of so-called "Platform Capitalism". According to Langley and Leyshon (2016) platform capitalism can be described as a "distinct mode of socio-technical intermediary ad business arrangement that is incorporated into wider processes of capitalization" which is at the centre of the critical analysis of digital economic circulation. This neoliberal approach to economic development, which is a response to the 2008 economic crisis, depends highly on concepts such as "co-production", and "peer-to-peer", which are both important aspects of the "sharing economy" Airbnb and other short-term rental platforms contribute to and depend on (Srnicek, 2017).

STRs fit within this business model as a way to transform people's private space into new income generation opportunities. Because co-production is an important part of the "sharing economy", the involvement of the local communities with short-term rentals in Amsterdam was analysed. The second secondary research question was "How are local communities involved with local short-term rentals at the moment?".

It seems that in general local communities are not actively involved with the management of local short-term rentals in both Amsterdam Noord and Amsterdam Oud-West. Even though STR hosts mostly do not actively involve other local residents with the general functioning of the short-term rentals, such as the booking or accountancy, there were other ways in which friends or neighbours were involved with their rentals. Some hosts, who mentioned that they had good connections with their neighbours, did mention that sometimes their direct neighbours would help them out with welcoming the guests, or handing over keys, when they were not available themselves.

The Airbnb Experiences page was mentioned to create connections between the local communities and the tourists accommodated in short-term rentals in Amsterdam. This platform, offered by Airbnb, allows anyone who can offer an experience to sell this experience. These experiences can be for example, a boat tour through the canals of Amsterdam organized by a local resident. Moreover, regarding the connections to local entrepreneurs in the area, the hosts mentioned that they often recommend certain restaurants, shops or activities in the neighbourhood. This recommendation is based on their own experiences, and not on an agreement with companies or restaurants, as either the hosts were not interested in such a deal with companies or the companies did not want to make a deal with interested hosts.

Despite these examples of neighbours helping out short-term rental owners with small tasks, and the fact that short-term rentals benefit from the products and facilities provided by the community, many interviewees mentioned that they considered their short-term rentals as their own private business and that they do not need the involvement of local residents for their rentals to thrive. It is interesting that even though many research projects have shown that short-term rental accommodations impact life in the city and the concept of the Airbnb rental was initially based on living like and amongst local residents, yet many short-term rentals owners seemed to consider their rental to be an individual business rather than a community endeavour.

Moreover, this finding reveals a tension between short-term rental owners and other members of the city that are in a way part of the tourism experience the Airbnb guests consume during their stay. The collective and individual interests of different members of the neighbourhoods and other users of the city are clashing. Since the rentals are considered to be individual businesses, local residents without a rental do not benefit from the direct benefits of these rentals. Airbnb claims that a benefit of renting through their websites is that it enables tourists to live like a local with statements such as "Don't go there, live there" and "Belong anywhere" (Airbnb, 2016). This would mean that the tourists utilise the city's facilities and resources as if they were local residents. It can be questioned to what extent short-term rental owners are obliged to give back or contribute to the community which in a way enables their personal short-term rental endeavour. It is also debatable whether it is the responsibility of tourists who wish to rent with a platform such as Airbnb to be more involved with the local community than those who choose to stay at a hotel in the city.

Rental owners argued that due to the presence of their visitors, the neighbourhood developed and benefited from new shops and restaurants. Since the tourists are living like local residents when renting an Airbnb rental according to Airbnb, they are supposedly also using the facilities and resources which the hosts and other local residents of the city. These resources are referred to as "Common Property Resources" by Briassoulis (2002). The tourism industry also consists of several resources that are available in the urban landscape. According to Briassoulis (2002), all resources are used in common by tourists, locals and others. Since these are available to all, and it is not socially acceptable or possible in many cases to exclude groups from these tangible or non-tangible resources, there are often problems of "overuse, lack of investment incentive (Healy, 1994), and of mismanagement" according to Briassoulis (2002). This is what Briassoulis (2002) calls the Tragedy of the Tourism Commons. It can be argued that the clash between the local residents and the impacts of the short-term rentals in Amsterdam Noord and Amsterdam Oud-West is based on the fact that short-term rentals need the usage of these Common Property Resources. The shared usage of infrastructure, local facilities and natural resources can cause overuse and congestion when mismanaged. This also fits with

Gerritsma's (2018) argument, as discussed in the conceptual framework, which is the fact that the term "overcrowding" might be more relevant for Amsterdam than the buzzword "overtourism", as the issue is based on the fact that the city is dealing with many different users, who all want to use the available resources. This can be supported by Dodds and Butler's (2019) argument that local residents need to compete with tourists for space, amenities and services. In order for sustainable tourism development to take place, a balance between nature, economic benefit and the livelihood of human beings needs to be present. Therefore, if the global north continues to utilise tourism development merely as a tool for economic progress in the future, as Fletcher et al. (2019) argue, issues such as overtourism might not be able to overcome. Community involvement and coproduction could be the way forward to realise this necessary balance. Both the municipality and the STR hosts have mentioned in the papers and the interviews that increased cooperation would improve the current situation.

Another interesting finding of this research is that there seems to be a feeling of shame amongst STR hosts of being a STR host. This feeling might be created by the way in which STRs are portrayed in the media as the cause of overcrowding, but might also be caused by negative feedback from local residents. This feeling might contribute to the tension between the different stakeholder groups.

5.3. Differences between Amsterdam Noord & Amsterdam Oud-West

The two areas that were chosen for this research, Amsterdam Noord and Amsterdam Oud-West, are very different concerning their location and socio-economic development. This is important to keep in mind while discussing the findings of this research. It is possible to look at some of the differences based on their individual contexts.

Amsterdam Oud-West area is located near the very centre of Amsterdam, whereas Amsterdam Noord is located further away, across the IJ-canal. This area is more populated than Amsterdam Noord and has experienced gentrification some time ago. Moreover, it is relatively crowded with tourists since the building of the Foodhallen and because of its location near museums and tourist attractions. Amsterdam Noord is currently undergoing gentrification and with the building of the Noord-Zuid Metro line, the area has become more geographically accessible (Hochstenbach, 2017). These different contexts are likely to influence the social cohesion in neighbourhoods in Amsterdam, and could, therefore, also influence the level of community involvement.

Data shows that the hosts that were interviewed in both Amsterdam Noord and Amsterdam Oud-West shared similar opinions about the level of involvement of the community. In both of these neighbourhoods, participants answered that they were satisfied with the current level of involvement. However, the involvement of the hosts with the municipality seems to differ according to the answers of the STR hosts. A participant in Amsterdam Noord said that residents were often asked about their opinion and to join meetings to the extent that they did not want to be present at all meetings. In Amsterdam Oud-West, the participants mentioned not to be asked to share their opinion with the municipality. This could be explained by the fact that Amsterdam Noord is currently undergoing many (socio-)spatial developments, and Amsterdam Oud-West already went through gentrification processes in the past, and there could simply be more projects. However, this finding could also point out that there are different levels of community involvement in Amsterdam Noord and Amsterdam Oud-West.

5.4. Opportunities for involvement of local communities

The community involvement in Amsterdam Noord and Oud-West concerning tourism and short-term rentals can be well described by the three meanings of community involvement outlined by Goodlad et al. (2002). The involvement of neighbours and local communities with the short-term rentals in their neighbourhood seem in both Amsterdam Noord and Amsterdam Oud-west based on family, friendship and neighbourliness. Another meaning is the fact that community participation can involve participation in voluntary and community organisations which can serve as mobilizing for other types of participation. A good example of this is Amsterdam Gastvrij, which mobilises other types of participation, as it helps hosts to discuss and defend their mutual interest.

Although some of the hosts claimed to see added value in the involvement of local communities with tourists, they did not express an interest in the involvement of the local community with their short-term rentals. This is based on the fact that many hosts think of their rental as an individual business. Moreover, communities might not even be aware of every single rental in their surroundings. Even if one would look at the Airbnb map, the exact location of STRs is kept anonymous. Some STR hosts mentioned that they were afraid that if the local community was more aware of their presence and more involved, they would sabotage the rentals, based on their anti-tourism sentiment. However, generally, this perspective was based on the fact that the hosts think their rentals function properly the way they are right now. The third secondary research question, concerning the involvement of the local community and neighbours, was: "How should local communities be involved with local short-term rentals according to hosts?".

The involvement of the community with short-term rentals turns out to be quite different from the successful cases of community involvement in rural tourism that were discussed in chapter 2 in the conceptual framework. It seems that the hosts that were interviewed for this research in Amsterdam Noord and Amsterdam Oud-West are generally satisfied with the low level of involvement of the local communities with their short-term rentals in their neighbourhoods at the moment. Whenever neighbours or members of the community were involved, this was to ask them whether they were bothered by the rental practices or to ask them for help with small tasks. The individualistic behaviour of the hosts seems to be one of the reasons that they are satisfied with managing their Airbnb or short-term rental as they are currently doing by themselves or with their partners. It is the relationship between the hosts and the municipality which, according to most of the hosts that were interviewed during this research project, needs improvement. Based on Tosun's (1999) typology of community participation and the data derived from interviews, it seems that STR hosts would rather move towards the spontaneous form of community participation, which has direct participation and cooperation when it comes to the municipality. It is unknown, however, to what extent this would be desired by the municipality.

The main research question of this paper was ""What are opportunities for the involvement of local communities with short-term rentals in Amsterdam Noord and Amsterdam Oud-West?".

All in all, it can be said that even though community involvement has proven to be successful in several cases of rural tourism, it proved to have different implications on the urban context. Most short-term rental hosts, that were interviewed during this research claimed not to be interested in involving their neighbourhoods more with their own short-term rental practices. The hosts that were interviewed were satisfied with the level of involvement of the neighbourhood and the community with the current

rental practices. An interesting finding of this research was the fact that there is a tension between the local community, which is a part of the short-term rental product, and therefore also of the overall tourism product, and the hosts. At the same time, the hosts consider their rentals to be individual businesses rather than a community endeavour. This clash between individual and collective interests and the usage of the tourist commons by multiple parties was also described by Briassoulis (2002) and can only be solved through proper management and more importantly, a proper understanding of what resources are used by whom is necessary to understand the tension between the collective and individual interests.

5.5. Limitations

This research has provided insight into the perspectives of short-term rental hosts in two areas in Amsterdam on community involvement with tourism regulations and short-term rental management as well as on policy papers of the municipality of Amsterdam concerning short-term rentals. This research project was subjected to some limitations.

First of all, the sample of this research was small. In general, the more interviews that can be done, the more knowledge can be obtained. Out of the approximately 70 Airbnb hosts that were contacted, ten hosts contributed to this research. This limitation was partly overcome by the fact that the interviews were in-depth and of long duration. More research is needed to understand the perspective of STR hosts in Amsterdam in other neighbourhoods, besides Amsterdam Noord and Amsterdam Oud-West.

Semi-structured interviews are very effective for gathering data without steering the interviewee too much into one direction, and also gives space for interviewees to share their thoughts and ideas. However, inherently, conducting interviews in order to gain qualitative data has some limitations such as a reliance on the respondents' accuracy. Moreover, many participants who agreed to an interview did not actually show up to the appointment, which made it difficult to gather the necessary data. Since most of the short-term rental hosts who were interviewed were Dutch and Dutch is their mother tongue, nine out of ten interviews were carried out in Dutch. The translation from Dutch to English may have caused some of the original meanings to have gotten lost.

This research project focussed on, amongst others, the perspectives of STR hosts and not the actual level of involvement. Therefore, the perspective of ten hosts on whether they are involved with the municipality in Amsterdam may differ from the actual level of involvement. It is possible that there is also a discrepancy between the perceived level of involvement of both the municipality, the STR hosts and other members of communities in these areas and the actual level of community involvement with tourism development. In order to understand the actual functioning and process, more research about the consultation processes of the municipality that exist could be done.

Since there was no possibility to conduct an interview with a representative of the municipality, content analyses of policy papers had to be done instead in order to get an understanding of current STR regulation and community involvement with policy development and implementation. Interviews with representatives of the municipality might give greater, more personal and in-depth insights into the strategy of the municipality in measures to combat overcrowding and the inclusivity of the current legislation.

Tosun (1999) describes three different types of community participation in his typology of community participation, and these are categorized based on whether they are top-down or bottom-up, whether there is an active or passive involvement and whether there is manipulation. The use of this typology alone in order to come up with an indication of the level of community involvement can be considered to be a limitation as it does not say anything about the division of power within the different stakeholder groups. It could be that in the context of the STR legislation and community involvement power is divided differently on a horizontal rather than vertical base. A different analysis that looks at power and interest, such as a stakeholder analysis, could be used in further research. The next subchapter will discuss more relevant ideas for further research that came up during this research.

5.6. Further research

Some new questions arose during this project, which would also be interesting starting points for future research projects. First of all, an important matter to research seems to be the ownership of Airbnb's and short-term rentals in Amsterdam. Currently, the municipality seems to differentiate between different types of short-term rentals: Bed and Breakfasts and "vakantieverhuur" rentals. This division is based on the presence of the STR host and on the size and architecture of the rental. There are different regulations in order for these different types of rentals. One of these regulations is a maximum number of days which the rental host is allowed to rent out their property. However, the current legislation which focuses on limiting the number of rentals does not differentiate between hosts who simply rent out a part of their homes and business minded people who may or may not, according to some hosts, own several homes and rent these entire homes out via Airbnb. It is not clear whether, with the current legislation, such renters have the possibility to illegally rent out multiple homes, yet it was often mentioned by the hosts during interviews. The impacts of those different types of Airbnb could differ. Therefore, it is important that regulations are tailored based on the impacts that are caused by the different types of short-term rentals.

It is also debatable to what extent local residents would be interested in direct involvement with short-term rentals. If more involvement was desired on the side of the local residents who are not STR owners themselves, it might be more likely that they would want to be involved with policy development and implementation, as there is not a lot of involvement currently with the management of STRs. The perspective of local residents could be researched in future research project in order to understand the perspective of other local residents who are not STR hosts themselves on the presence of STRs as well as their involvement with these STRs and with the municipality concerning STR policy development and implementation.

For this research the typology of Tosun (1999) was used to provide an indication of the community participation with tourism legislation of hosts in Amsterdam Noord and Amsterdam Oud-West, based on the perspective of the hosts. Further research, which also focusses on the perspective and performances of the municipality of Amsterdam, ideally with interviews, concerning tourism legislation would be an important next step into highlighting the different stakeholder perspectives and goals. The process of consultation of the local communities could be investigated further, in order to find out to what extent the municipality effectively involves the community with decision-making processes.

Considering the current changes within the short-term rental legislation in the city of Amsterdam, such as the lottery and the cancellation of the lottery, and the high pace in which these changes occur, it is important that more research will be done on the effectiveness of the municipality's legislation as well as the impacts of short-term rentals on the different neighbourhoods in Amsterdam in order to find out whether these regulations facilitate sustainable forms of urban tourism.

6. Conclusion

This research aimed to analyse the potentials of community involvement with short-term rentals in Amsterdam. In particular, the potential of community involvement with short-term rentals to decrease issues such as overcrowding and disturbances was investigated. The perspectives of ten short-term rental hosts from Amsterdam Oud-West and Amsterdam-Noord on community involvement were analysed as well as their perspectives on the tourism legislation of the municipality of Amsterdam. Besides the perspective of short-term rental hosts, a focus on the municipality and the inclusiveness of its policy implementation was included in the research. In particular, policy documents that are available on the website of the municipality of Amsterdam and press releases of the municipality concerning short-term rental legislation and overcrowding were analysed with a content analysis in order to gather more insight on the plans of the municipality regarding short-term rental regulation and overcrowding.

The main research question of this paper was: "What are opportunities for the involvement of local communities with short-term rentals in Amsterdam Noord and Amsterdam Oud-West?"

The ten STR hosts that were interviewed during this research project are satisfied with the current low level of involvement of the local community and neighbours. Apart from handing over keys, or welcoming guests whenever the hosts are not able to, neighbours or other members of the community are not directly involved with the STR. Moreover, the municipality papers showed that the municipality claims to involve the community with developments. This research, therefore, also shows that there is a tension between the collective and individual interests, as the city's resources are shared and also used by tourists who temporarily "live like a local", and the tourism product is also partly made up by the community. Yet, the hosts do not involve the community actively. This is one of the main findings of this research and contributes to research on sustainable tourism and community involvement with tourism policy development and implementation. It is important relevant that the communication between hosts and the municipality regarding short-term rental regulation becomes more transparent in order to improve the current overcrowded situation in Amsterdam rather than involving local neighbourhood residents to be directly involved from the perspective of STR hosts. Moreover, it seems that many hotels are still being built which raises the question whether it is only the STRs which contribute to the overcrowding problem in Amsterdam in pre-COVID times. The alternative to fighting negative impacts of the rapid development of tourism would be degrowth measures. Both hosts and the municipality seem, however, to aim to strive for sustainable development rather than degrowth. If Amsterdam aims to find the balance between the (socio-)economic benefit of tourism and the wellbeing of the residents and their living environment, communication is key. Moreover, research on the perspective of the local residents who are not STR hosts is necessary in the future to get a better picture of the opportunities for involvement with STRs.

The analysis of policy documents on short-term rental regulation and overcrowding in Amsterdam shows that there is a disjuncture between the perception of the involvement of the municipality of the short-term rental hosts and City in Balance plans concerning the inclusiveness of policy development and implementation. The hosts that were interviewed during this research argued that they did not feel involved with policy development and implementation. Tosun's typology of community participation (1999) was used as an indication to understand what level of community involvement is taking place considering policy development and implementation according to the short-term rental hosts. An indication was made based on the host perspectives that this would be either the "coercive community involvement" or "induced community involvement", both top-down approaches. From the side of the municipality, based on the City in Balance papers and other policy documents that were analysed using content analysis, it seems that the municipality aims to cooperate with local residents and business owners as well as to communicate with them. This finding shows that the aims of the City in Balance plans are not perceived by the STR hosts the way they were intended by the municipality.

Since Airbnb is merely a platform which allows different users to rent out their property using their website, it is the municipality who most likely could enforce proper tailor-made regulations. Especially, considering the fact that currently not enough differentiation is being made between different types of short-term rentals and hosts feel their STRs are currently being categorized unsuccessfully. In order to overcome the disjuncture between the residents and the municipality, clear communication between all parties is necessary to make sure all voices are heard and no unnecessary conflicts arise, whilst optimizing the benefits of short-term rentals and reducing the negative impacts. If this were to be done, short term rentals could not only benefit local residents and tourists, but it could also be a driver for community development and the development of sustainable tourism in Amsterdam.

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Appendix

Questi	ons	Subquestions
Genera	l information	<u> </u>
•	Are you working at the moment?	
•	May I ask what your age category is?	
•	For how long have you been an Airbnb host?	
•	Is this Airbnb your own property?	 If yes, do you own multiple properties? If no, do you manage multiple properties?
•	How often would you say your Airbnb is rented out each year?	
Role of	the Municipality	
•	How would you describe the role of the municipality within the tourism sector in Amsterdam?	
•	Is the municipality involved with your Airbnb rental?	If yes, how?
•	Are you aware of the rules of the municipality for Airbnb rentals and STR's?	If yes, do you always stick to these regulations?
•	Would you change anything in the relationship between the hosts and the municipality?	
•	Have you heard of the "Stad in Balans" plans of the municipality?	 if yes, to what extent do you think the municipality includes local residents and hosts with decision-making in the tourism sector? Is there any type of involvement of the community with the plans of the municipality?
Comm	unity involvement & role of the community	
•	Are your neighbors or your neighborhood involved with your rental practices?	 If yes, how? Active or passive participation? Sharing of the benefits and evaluation? Involved in decision-making / implementation?

Table 1. Semi-structured interview questions