

**ERASMUS UNIVERSITEIT ROTTERDAM  
FACULTEIT SOCIOLOGIE**



# **The Newly Created Class**

**Rotterdam's attempt to revive the inner city's new heart**

**November 2006**

**Rotterdam**

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## **Foreword**

My interest has been sparked in urban city planning in inner city Rotterdam. Having recently moved there I observed a substantial amount of activity concerning the construction of mainly luxury high-rise apartments. There is also a noticeable change towards more upmarket recreational activities such as restaurants, bars and shops. Being aware of Rotterdam's 20<sup>th</sup> century history, I really feel a new era has begun for the city, and particularly its centre.

Initially I was interested in the development of the inner city's residential function from the 1940s onwards - at certain points in time it is better to speak of lack of development. Eventually, it evolved into this research project.

In taking on the challenge of writing my thesis in English, I honour my English background and hope to reach a wider audience.

I particularly want to thank my coach, dr. A.M.E. Fermin, and co-reader, dr. F.G. Snel, for their time and effort.

Pieter Kirkpatrick

Rotterdam, November 2006

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## Chapter 1 – Introduction

Binnenstadbewoners zijn voorkeursbewoners. Zij dragen bij tot de kleurrijkheid die een stad behoeft en in principe selecteren zij zichzelf. In de Rotterdamse situatie dienen zij echter te worden aangemoedigd, hetgeen (.....) een bewust gemeentelijk beleid ter zake vereist. (.....) Veel wijder verbreid is het mensentype, dat graag, bij voorkeur zelfs, althans gedurende enige jaren in het hart van de stad woont, omdat het zich intens stedeling voelt en voor de stimulansen van het stadsleven een zekere mate van ongerief overheeft. – *Prof. Dr. R. Wentholt, social psychologist, 1968.*

[Inner city residents are preferential residents. They contribute to the colourfulness that a city needs and in principle they are self-selective. In the case of Rotterdam however, they ought to be encouraged, which (.....) requires a conscious municipal line of policy. (.....) Widespread is the type of person that gladly, even preferably, at least for some years lives in the heart of the city, because it feels intensely urbanite and is willing to bear a certain degree of inconvenience in order to experience the stimulants of inner city life. – Own translation]

Due to obvious reasons the city centre of Rotterdam has been the subject of an ongoing grand reconstruction from the 1940's onwards. This total reconstruction of the inner city, together with an open and tolerant embedded local culture and a sense of workmanship and entrepreneurship associated with harbour life, has resulted in Rotterdam being the dynamic and unique place that it is today.

However, demographically the inner city of Rotterdam is still underdeveloped. The centre of Rotterdam has a relatively low number of residents. It is basically a place where people work and recreate, not so much where people live. Not only does the centre of Rotterdam have a low residential number, also, the higher-income class and creative class are significantly underrepresented in Rotterdam's inner city.

The municipality regards this as a problem and has subsequently formulated plans to address this issue. In the 'Inner City Plan Rotterdam 2000-2010' it states its aim of building some 6.000 new accommodations in the inner city of Rotterdam (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2001). This is a large-scale project which has been instigated in the late 1990s and will continue through to at least 2010. According to the COS (the research centre for the municipality of Rotterdam) this will result in an increase of the population of about 7.000 inhabitants.

## 1.1 Research objective

The objective of my thesis is to analyse one of the most pressing issues concerning urban housing in the inner city of Rotterdam, namely the (lack of) housing accommodation for the higher earners. More precisely, I want to evaluate the assumptions the municipality of Rotterdam implicitly makes in its accommodation of housing for these groups.

Furthermore, regarding the longevity of this initiative, I would like to make suggestions regarding housing policies and future housing projects in Rotterdam's inner city. I want to do this by comparing these assumptions to data generated by interviewing people who are part of the creative class and who live in the inner city of Rotterdam, preferably in recently constructed upmarket housing accommodation. Hence, my research will be practice based and aiming for an evaluation of certain implemented housing policies in inner city Rotterdam (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2001).

This research theoretically evolves around the publication by Richard Florida named 'Rise of the Creative Class' (2002). Florida introduces the concept of 'creative class', with which he refers to the group of people who 'add economic value through their creativity' (Florida, 2002, p.68). This creative class, Florida argues, tends to live in a stimulating and vibrant environment, often in inner city areas. By creating additional economic value, this creative class has become a central factor in city economics (see chapter 3.3). Thus cities that want to increase their overall urban economy and attractiveness need to attract this creative class.

Subsequently, I will aim to contribute to the theoretical framework regarding a relatively new phenomenon, namely the creative class in the changing inner city environment of Rotterdam. Concretely, I will aim to contribute to the theoretical discussion regarding (1) the contribution of the creative class to the development of the (inner city) urban economy from a consumer perspective (2) the concrete accommodation preference of the creative class and (3) the ties of the new creative class in the inner city of Rotterdam with their city of residence.

## 1.2 Research problem

The function of a research problem is to set a definable objective central to the research activities (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2001). The research question that is central to this project is stated as follows:

***How do the assumptions concerning residential preferences made in housing policies in inner city Rotterdam compare to the actual residential preferences of new residents of this area, and how do they contribute to the discussion regarding the theoretical research questions as specified in chapter 1.3?***

First I will provide an overview of the relevant housing policies and historical background regarding inner city housing in Rotterdam in chapter two. Subsequently, I will discuss the theoretical framework upon which the municipality bases its current

policies in chapter three. After identifying the assumptions made by the municipality regarding inner city housing issues in chapter four, I will present the data gathered through interviews and subsequently address the central research question in chapter five. In order to properly address every issue in this approach and thus eventually address the central research question a set of sub questions have been formulated.

### 1.3 Sub questions

The function of research sub questions in general is to provide answers for the central research question. These questions are the specific questions asked during this research. All these research questions together provide a solution for the research problem.

1. The two most important sub questions are derived directly from the central research question and are stated as follows:

*What are the assumptions made in municipal policies regarding people's preferences on living in the inner city of Rotterdam?*

*What are the actual preferences and opinions of inhabitants of living in the inner city of Rotterdam?*

This first sub-question will be answered by identifying the relevant assumptions made. In order to do this three sub-sub-questions are formulated, which together form the relevant theoretical research questions. These research questions have been identified in chapter three by discussing the theoretical framework:

- *What is the contribution of the creative class from a consumer perspective to the development of the urban economy of Rotterdam?*
- *What is the level of satisfaction of the creative class in Rotterdam regarding their accommodation?*
- *Does the municipality succeed in keeping the creative class in the inner city of Rotterdam?*

2. The subsequent step is to gather relevant information about the residential situation in the inner city of Rotterdam, both past and present, in order to understand the situation at hand and the municipality's actions through its policies.

*What is the relevant background regarding residential planning in the inner city, which instigated the current housing policy?*

3. The next step is to specify the policy framework relevant to the inner city housing policy in Rotterdam.

*What is the relevant policy framework, in which the inner city housing policy in Rotterdam is embedded?*

#### **1.4 Definition of concepts**

*Inner city of Rotterdam:* The geographic area enclosed by the 's-Gravendijkwal, Coolhaven and Parkhaven on the west side, the river Maas up to the Oostplein on the south side, the Goudsesingel and the railway on the north side. A section of the Kop van Zuid area is also considered part of the inner city of Rotterdam.

Explanation: This is the definition as used by the municipality in the 'Inner City Plan Rotterdam 2000-2010' (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2001), the city's policy manual that refers to much of the developments described in this thesis.

*Creative class:* A specific, unorganised group of people who create economic value through their professional activities, or as Florida puts it 'create meaningful new forms' (Florida, 2002, p.68).

Florida divides this group into two components. First, there is the 'Super-Creative core' consisting of a wide range of professions ranging from designers and architects to non-fiction writers and IT-specialists. Secondly, there is the group of 'Creative professionals', consisting of workers in a wide range of knowledge intensive industries such as 'high-tech sectors, financial services, the legal and health care professions and business management' (Florida, 2002, p.69) .

*Urban economy:* The commercial, cultural and creative economy of Rotterdam, and the organisations, which directly or indirectly influence either of these parts of the economy such as social and non-profit organisations.

*High-income households:* Consists of the households that together comprise the upper 20 percent of the total income distribution.

*Middle-income households:* Consists of the households that comprise the top 40 percent of the total income distribution directly below the high-income households.

Explanation: Both definitions regarding income are standard definitions used by the Dutch institute for statistics (CBS).

*Residential preferences:* Motives regarding having chosen a certain housing accommodation in the inner city, both interior (kind of accommodation) and exterior (location of accommodation).

#### **1.5 Methodology**

This research project is of an evaluative, practice based nature (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2001), while also aiming to contribute to the relevant theoretical



framework. Through comparison of theory and gathered data, I want to analyse the current inner city housing policy in Rotterdam and make suggestions regarding the assumptions made about the so called 'creative class'. The methodology of this research project will be further addressed in chapter four.

### *1.5.1 Research material*

Data for this research has been gathered through open-question interviews. I have used this method because I want to be able to ask further questions, if necessary. In this manner, I want to obtain a more in-depth view of the relevant issues. By interviewing residents of already completed projects aimed at the more upmarket section I want to gain insight into the residential preferences of these specific market segments, which are relatively new in the inner city of Rotterdam. Depending on the response of respondents, interviews have become of a more closed-question. The aim is to interview around fifteen respondents, depending on availability of respondents and novelty of responses gathered. Due to the relatively difficult accessibility of respondents, the method used to gather respondents has been one of *snowball sampling*. All respondents need to be members of the creative class and residents of recently completed upmarket housing projects in the centre of Rotterdam.

### *1.5.2 Research strategy*

This research project is done in several stages. 1) investigating the (historical) background of Rotterdam with regards to inner city housing. 2) identifying the relevant policy framework. 3) investigating the literature for appropriate theories. 4) constructing a theoretical framework. 5) operationalising the variables of the framework and gathering the data through interviews. 6) empirically analysing the gathered data, in order to be able to draw conclusions regarding the actual residential preferences of the creative class in the inner city of Rotterdam, and (7) eventually try to contribute to the existing theories regarding the creative class.

## **1.6 Theory**

In chapter three the relevant literature regarding the creative class will be discussed. As stated in chapter 1.1, this chapter largely evolves around Richard Florida's 'Rise of the Creative Class' (2002). In chapter three the relevant theories will be discussed and will lead to conclusions regarding the research direction of this thesis and the theoretical framework, as also specified in the research questions.

## **1.7 Thesis structure**

This report is divided into six chapters, a reference list and several appendices. The next chapter discusses issues concerning housing policy in the centre of Rotterdam. There will be a historic overview, insight into the demographics, an elaboration of current housing policies and an overview of completed projects. Chapter three will elaborate on the

relevant literature and subsequently a theoretical framework will be constructed. Subsequently, chapter four will discuss the analysis of the relevant policy documents, providing insight into the assumptions made regarding inner city housing policies in Rotterdam. Chapter five will discuss the research data gathered and the central research question will be addressed. Finally, chapter six will provide the overall conclusions of this research, advice regarding relevant policies, summarising the results, contributions and the interpretations. Furthermore, it gives a solution to the research problem and sets forth limitations and future research directions.

## **Chapter 2 - Rotterdam**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a thorough descriptive background on important issues relevant to this research project.

The content of this chapter will be as follows. Firstly, some relevant statistics regarding the inner city of Rotterdam will be discussed in chapter 2.2. Subsequently, a brief historical overview will be given regarding Rotterdam's inner city housing issues. Third, the disproportionate nature of the inner city's population distribution will be addressed in chapter 2.4. Furthermore, the present-day policy framework will be discussed in chapter 2.5 followed by an overview of construction projects completed and yet to be realised in chapter 2.6.

### **2.2 Rotterdam and its inner city**

Rotterdam is the second largest city in The Netherlands. As of 1 January 2006 Rotterdam has around 588.500 residents, while the Greater Rotterdam area (including Schiedam, Vlaardingen and Capelle aan de IJssel among others) has over a million inhabitants (CBS, 2006). Rotterdam is best known internationally for its modern architecture and for being one of the busiest harbours in the world.

As defined in paragraph 1.4, the inner city of Rotterdam consists of the area enclosed by the 's-Gravendijkwal, Coolhaven and Parkhaven on the west side, the river Maas up to the Oostplein on the south side, the Goudsesingel and the railway on the north side. Also, the Kop van Zuid area on the other side of the Erasmus Bridge is considered part of the inner city.

According to official sources, as of 1 January 2006 there are 30.051 people living in the inner city (COS, 2006). This is actually quite a low figure, as the inner city residents constitute a mere 5% of the total population of Rotterdam. This roughly means an increase of 7% of the inner city's population compared to the beginning of 2000. The main growth area within the city centre is the 'Stadscentrum' area and to a lesser extent the 'Kop van Zuid' and the 'Nieuwe Werk' area (see figure 2.1 on the next page for a rough map of the inner city). The older area's 'Cool' and 'Oude Westen' both experienced a minor decline in resident numbers.

Rotterdam is the only city of the 'Big Four' (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht) whose population is actually rejuvenating. However, there is no clear indication this also applies to the city centre of Rotterdam. Compared to 5 years earlier, as of 1 January 2005 the biggest absolute increase has been in the '30 to 44 year' age group. The '20 to 29 year' and '45 to 64 year' age groups experienced a minor increase over the same period. However, the 'under 20' and 'over 64' year age groups experienced a slight decline (COS, 2005, p.15). As shown in Appendix B, the Oude Westen has the biggest

proportion of the 'under 20' age group, whereas the Stadscentrum houses the larger part of the '20-34 years' age group. Also, most of the 'over 65' age group is living in the Stadscentrum. One could conclude that over the period of 2000 to 2005, the percentage of inner city residents in a student and working age slightly increased while the inactive groups experienced a minor decline.

Figure 2.1: Map of inner city areas



Source: COS - Binnenstadsmonitor 2005

Regarding income, the most up-to-date detailed statistics regarding the inner city date from 2002. Most importantly, between 1998 and 2002 there was an increase of around 19% in the number of high-income households residing in the city centre (COS, 2005). This is quite significant when compared to the mere 2% increase in absolute numbers of the lower households during the same period. However, the relative percentage of low-income households in the inner city of Rotterdam was still 42% in 2002, whereas in 1998 it used to be 45%. High-income households increased during this period from 23% to 25%.

This paragraph has provided an overview of the present-day population of the inner city of Rotterdam regarding age and income. Concluding, one can say that the inner city has a relatively low number of residents, although it is slowly increasing. Also, the number of high-income households living in the inner city is increasing. Finally, the inner city is slightly rejuvenating. These developments can be regarded as the initial results of the inner city housing policy adopted by the municipality (see chapter 2.5.1). This policy involves attracting and retaining higher income households to the inner city. The emphasis lies on 'income' (and to a lesser extent 'age') and not on for instance 'education', since the parameter 'education' would also incorporate a relatively high number of students. Since a vital element of the research problem involves the fact that the inner city of Rotterdam has only recently been able to substantially attract high-income households (and accordingly has found it hard to retain graduated students to the city), involving the parameter 'income' would give a distorted view.

## 2.3 Historical background

This paragraph aims to provide an insight as to how the inner city developed into what it is today. This will be done from a city planning and architectural perspective, as this will contribute to issues raised later in this chapter.

The origin of Rotterdam's present-day city plan and demographics lies in the events of the early 1940s. On May 14<sup>th</sup> 1940, at approximately 13.30 hours, the German Luftwaffe heavily bombed the inner city and harbour of Rotterdam, mainly because of its strategic function as a major harbour. As a result, around 900 people were killed and the vast majority of the inner city was destroyed (Baarda, 1990, p.17). Even during the war city planners were already planning a reconstruction of the city centre.

After Germany's capitulation, a special commission headed by Cornelis van Traa was in charge of rebuilding the devastated city. In the 'Basisplan Van Traa' they laid down a new infrastructure for the destroyed city. In this new and prestigious master plan, the inner city was designated as a mainly commercial and recreational area. Whereas before the war Rotterdam had around 30.000 inner city residents, in the 'Basisplan Van Traa' there would only be room for 10.000 residents (Van de Laar, 2000, p. 462).

In the actual reconstruction of the inner city, which truly commenced around 1950, there were two main restrictions: money and time. Due to its economic significance, the reconstruction of the harbour was given priority. After this, there was a need for swift replacement of the important commercial and recreational functions of the inner city. This needed to be realised in a cost-efficient manner, due to the fact that the whole of Western Europe was recuperating after the war.

At the close of the 1950s renowned projects such as the Lijnbaan by Van den Broek en Bakema (1953) and the Groothandelsgebouw by Van Tijen en Maaskant had been realised. However, large patches of land in the inner city at this point still were empty. There was a large shortage of houses, due to the 'baby boom' after the war and economic prosperity. Although quite a few residential buildings arose in the inner city, mainly in the Lijnbaan and Stadsdriehoek areas, the vast majority of residential projects were conducted on the outskirts of Rotterdam in places like Schiebroek and Ommoord.

During the 1970s, a lot of people moved out of the older areas around the inner city into the newly constructed suburbs. Immigrants moved into these older residential areas. Due to this suburbanisation, the inner city lost some of its momentum regarding its commercial and recreational functions. However, while the harbour continued to grow, far less people were needed to work there due to ongoing modernisation (Aarts, 1995). Other sources of employment were needed to avoid large-scale unemployment.

So during the 1980s a lot of effort was put into attracting businesses to the city centre. Characteristic for this period is the realisation of a new World Trade Center (by architect Van Erk) on the Coolingsingel in 1986. Furthermore, the emphasis in city planning regarding the inner city of Rotterdam was very much on creating an attractive,

representative character. Also, Rotterdam was beginning to look for a new image. Its image as a 'working city' due to its close connection with the harbour was a bit dated, so Rotterdam started presenting itself as a cultural centre. First came a new 'Maritime Museum' and a new theatre (de Schouwburg), both by Quist. Later developments that were to help profile Rotterdam as a new cultural centre were (amongst others) Koolhaas' Kunsthal and the Netherlands Architecture Institute by Coenen.

Together with economic and recreational measures, the Inner City Plan 1985 also formulated ambitions towards enhancing the inner city's residential function in certain targeted areas amongst which the waterfront on the river. This resulted amongst others in the realisation of the three identical 'Boompjes' buildings (by Klunder Architects). Today's inner city policy towards attracting middle and higher incomes to live in the inner city can be seen as a continuation and intensification of this 1985 implementation.

A few years later planning and implementation began for the development of the Kop van Zuid area, which at that time was still a largely vacant remnant of the World War II bombardment. The Erasmus Bridge, designed by architect Van Berkel and realised in 1996, provides a vital connection between the continuation of the Coolingsingel on the north side and the Kop van Zuid on the south side. The Kop van Zuid would be developed as an extension of the city centre on the other side of the river, thus incorporating the river as a part of the city centre rather than it being one of its borders. The area was planned to consist of residential, commercial and recreational functions. However, it hasn't really lived up to expectations with some residential buildings only half rented out and a lot of commercial space still vacant.

This brief historical overview illustrates the unique background the inner city of Rotterdam has regarding city planning and inner city housing. To better understand the city's present-day policies regarding city planning and housing, these issues need to be viewed in historical perspective. As appendix A also shows, only from the 1980s onwards has there been a substantial amount of houses built. This illustrates the inner city has hardly been seen as a residential area and (since World War II) only from 1985 onwards has there been real discussion and municipal willingness to stimulate and nurture Rotterdam's inner city as a residential habitat.

## **2.4 Disproportionate population distribution**

As discussed in paragraph 2.2, compared to other major cities in The Netherlands Rotterdam has a large number of relatively low-income inhabitants. Whereas the national average for low-income households per definition is 40%, in 2002 this figure in Rotterdam stood at 52% (see appendix C). Regarding the inner city, at 42% this figure is just a little higher than the national average.

When looking at the average household income in 2002 (see also appendix C), Rotterdam has the lowest figure (considering The Hague's figure is compiled a little differently). Comparing the average household income for the whole of Rotterdam with the inner city's average household income, the inner city has an average annual income per

household that is around 7% higher. When comparing the average household income for the inner city of Rotterdam with the figures for Amsterdam and Utrecht, Rotterdam has the lowest figure.

However, it is not so much the average annual income that is a problem for Rotterdam, moreover it is the actual number of inner city households. Whereas Rotterdam in 2002 had 15.400 inner city households, Amsterdam with 46.200 inner city households had almost three times the amount of households. In combination with the low number of inner city inhabitants, the relatively low number of high-income households does pose a problem, since it means there is a rather low level of economic capacity present in the inner city. This economic capacity is required in order to increase the inner city's economy and overall attractiveness to outsiders. These issues will be further addressed in chapter 2.5.1 regarding the inner city's housing policy. Both issues can be partly explained by the historical events as described in chapter 2.3.

## **2.5 Policy Framework**

Rotterdam's long-term inner city housing issues are addressed through a plan called 'Inner City Plan Rotterdam 2000-2010' (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2001). This inner city plan is embedded in a policy framework. This section seeks to give an overview of this policy framework regarding Rotterdam's inner city housing. It starts with an overview of the actual inner city housing policy, and subsequently a bottom-up overview of relevant policies will be provided.

### *2.5.1 Inner City Plan Rotterdam 2000-2010*

The focal point of this study is the inner city of Rotterdam. Through the 'Inner City Plan Rotterdam 2000-2010', the municipality provides a conceptual overview of issues at stake within the inner city of Rotterdam.

As previously indicated, Rotterdam has an inner city which has a relatively low number of inhabitants. To illustrate this: On January 1<sup>st</sup> 2005, Rotterdam and Amsterdam both host approximately 83.500 jobs (Dienst Onderzoek en Statistiek, 2006). Subsequently, whereas at that moment the inner city of Amsterdam has over 81.000 residents, the centre of Rotterdam is home to a mere 30.000 residents (COS, 2005). Not only does the centre of Rotterdam have a low residential number, also, the higher-income classes are strongly underrepresented in Rotterdam's inner city.

The main aim envisioned in this plan is to increase the attractiveness of the city centre, this being part of the ongoing process of building a new city. The main idea is that the basic infrastructure for the 'future Rotterdam' is there, and at present there is a need for intensification of the residential function of the inner city. At the present time, the inner city largely functions as a professional, commercial and recreational area for a wide surrounding, mainly residential area.

Through intensification of the residential function of the inner city, mainly aiming for the higher income groups, the city hopes to fundamentally increase the level and intensity of the commercial, cultural and recreational functions of the inner city, making the city more lively and attractive. As previously stated, the 'Inner City Plan Rotterdam 2000-2010' states the municipality's aim of adding some 6.000 new residential accommodations to the inner city area of Rotterdam (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2001). According to the COS (the research centre for the municipality of Rotterdam) this will result in an increase of the population of about 7.000 inhabitants.

In attempting to attract and retain higher income households to the inner city centre in order to increase the overall attractiveness of the inner city, the municipality of Rotterdam is incorporating Richard Florida's ideas of attracting the creative class in order for a city to be prosperous (see chapter three).

The various building projects are scattered throughout the inner city, and are not merely located in traditional residential areas of the inner city (see appendix D for an illustrative overview of building projects). Areas like the Wijnhaven, the Kop van Zuid and the Lijnbaan are traditionally commercial and recreational areas.

Furthermore, the city's municipality aims to bring more culture into the city. Not only does it aim to do so by attracting museums and galleries (which are now concentrated mainly in the area around the Museumpark and the Witte de Withstraat). The municipality has also adopted a policy of attracting and retaining a large number of high profile festivals such as the North Sea Jazz Festival, the Rotterdam Film Festival and the 'Zomercarnaval', to name but a few.

### *2.5.2 Economic Vision Rotterdam 2020*

The Economic Development Board Rotterdam (EDBR) is a platform that consists of influential people from business, cultural and political sectors together with important governmental organisations. General objective of the EDBR is to increase the general wellbeing of the city with special focus on the economic perspective.

The Economic Vision Rotterdam 2020 (Economische Visie Rotterdam 2020) is the EDBR's long-term vision for Rotterdam. It incorporates creative entrepreneurship, emphasis on innovation and an international scope as well as more social cohesion and creating an attractive environment as far as living and recreating are concerned (EDBR, 2005).

The EVR 2020 has implications for other relevant policies such as the city's Inner City Plan. It provides highly influential people, as 'stakeholders' of the city who are not directly involved in the municipal aspects, with a chance to formulate goals and intentions for the city.



### *2.5.3 Executive Plan Urban Projects Rotterdam 2006*

The 'Executive Plan Urban Projects Rotterdam' (Uitvoeringsplan Stedelijke Projecten Rotterdam) is an annual execution and evaluation plan drafted by the previous city council (while writing this thesis a new council has just been installed). It covers the execution and evaluation of all types of city planning projects within the municipality of Rotterdam, all of which are part of the city council's four-year policy. Several issues discussed in the USPR 2006 are relevant to this research project (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2006).

Firstly, local government in 2005 has instigated several new lines of policy. In order to make the city attractive to potential benefactors, the city needs to be 'physically in shape'. Meeting demand regarding residential accommodation and variation in residential space, facilities and recreational space, among other things, are mentioned. In line with this, throughout the city there is an emphasis on creating attractive residential environments.

Second, different policy programs are evaluated. Regarding the housing program, there are two main goals which both apply to the inner city: to attract and retain middle and higher income groups and to limit the influx of underprivileged. In this research project, I will be particularly interested in the first goal.

### *2.5.4 Spatial Plan Greater Rotterdam 2020*

The 'Spatial Plan Greater Rotterdam 2020' (Ruimtelijk Plan Rotterdam 2020) is a collaboration between the 'greater Rotterdam area' and the province of Zuid-Holland. It aims to provide a comprehensive long-term vision and, through formulation of three objectives and ten focal points, provides a concrete strategy as to how different parties will contribute towards achieving formulated goals.

One of the focal points of the RR2020 is to stimulate the development of the inner city as an international cultural and trading centre as well as attractive investments in the housing market. Other focal points that are indirectly connected to inner city development policies are investing in the enhancement of infrastructure and junctions and also the investment in green space and water.

### *2.5. Urban Areas Policy*

The Dutch government has developed the 'urban areas policy' (Grotstedenbeleid) in order to aid Dutch urban areas in dealing with typical inner city problems such as crime and pollution. The GSB-policy was first introduced in 1994. The GSB-policy now aims at thirty-one large and medium-sized Dutch cities, one of which is Rotterdam. Agreements have been made with local governments regarding results in a wide range of topics such as education, crime and town and country planning.

These local governments are free to decide how to meet these agreed standards. In this way the national government gives local governments space to come up with custom-made solutions for specific problems.

Through the action program ‘Rotterdam zet door’ (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2003), Rotterdam’s local government is trying to break through negative trends, such as an increase of crime and degeneration in certain areas, and trying to improve Rotterdam’s image. This programme is adopted by the GSB in its ‘GSB III’ plan. Although it is not directly linked to city centre housing issues, it does help in building a positive image of Rotterdam and thus aids in increasing the city’s attractiveness to higher income households.

The ‘GSB III’ plan formulates targets for the period 2005-2009 agreed upon by the government and the relevant cities in The Netherlands. These targets cover issues regarding social, economic and physical aspects. Relevant targets for this research projects are, among others, finding more of a balance between supply and demand regarding the housing market, working towards a safer society and improving the quality of the cultural supply ([www.grotestedenbeleid.nl](http://www.grotestedenbeleid.nl)).

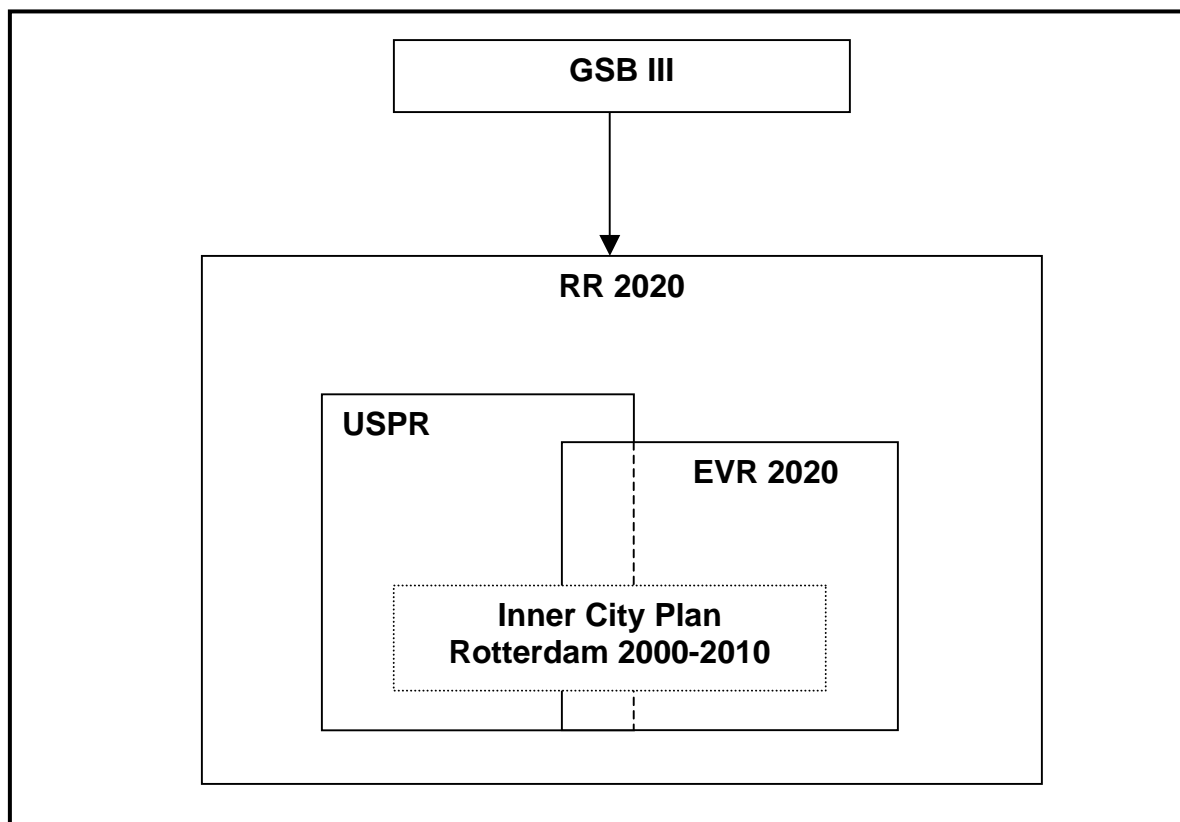


Figure 2.2: Policy Framework regarding spatial planning in the inner city of Rotterdam.

### *2.5.6 Overview policy framework*

Figure 2.2 provides an overview of the discussed relevant policies and their relation to each other. The third edition of the ‘urban areas policy’ (GSB III) is formulated by the national government together with the 31 involved urban areas, one of which is Rotterdam. Targets formulated in this GSB III regarding spatial planning are used to address these issues in a wider context between the municipality of Rotterdam and the province of Zuid-Holland, thus incorporated in the ‘Spatial Plan Greater Rotterdam 2020’ (RR 2020).

This regional policy plan is the background for both the ‘Executive Plan Urban Projects Rotterdam’ (USPR) and the ‘Economic Vision Rotterdam 2020’ (EVR2020), both municipal plans constructed by the municipality and a board of important stakeholders (EDBR) respectively. Then finally, at the level of the inner city, there is the ‘Inner City Plan Rotterdam 2000-2010’ with among other concrete targets regarding the amount of residential accommodation being built before 2010.

## **2.6 Building projects: realised, under construction and planned**

Appendix D shows an inconclusive list of building projects realised, under construction and planned regarding upmarket residential accommodation within the boundaries of the inner city of Rotterdam. This list does not cover all residential building projects. It merely illustrates the magnitude of the intentions of the municipality, the vast amount of projects and the ongoing change to the landscape of the inner city. These housing projects consist largely of high-rise apartment buildings, which are not really clustered in a residential zone but scattered throughout the inner city.

## **2.7 Conclusion**

Concluding, one can say that while Rotterdam is the only major city in The Netherlands that is rejuvenating, it has a very low number of inner city residents when compared to other cities like Amsterdam and The Hague. In comparison, the relative proportion of high-income households in the inner city is also quite low, however it is not an alarmingly low number.

An explanation for the low number of inner city residents can be found in its city planning history. After the destruction of most of the inner city during World War II, Rotterdam’s inner city has never been really seen as a residential area, and therefore there was never a large number of houses built. Only from the 1980s onwards has there been a resurgence in seeing the inner city as a residential area.

Therefore a substantial amount of residential projects has either been built or planned. Most of these buildings consist of high-rise apartment buildings and they are located throughout the inner city.

Rotterdam's local government is addressing this issue through adopting a policy of attracting the middle and higher income groups through building specifically for these income groups. It wants to achieve an intensification of the inner city functions so the inner city becomes a more attractive place to reside, work and recreate. To achieve this intensification of inner city functions there is a vast amount of residential accommodation being built in the inner city.

## **Chapter 3 – Theoretical Framework**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter aims to provide an overview of literature relevant to this research project. The general purpose of this literature review is to locate and evaluate relevant literature concerning my research problem. Together with the research questions it enables me to focus the literature search and provide relevant research directions.

The structure of this chapter is as follows. First, I will discuss relevant literature in chapter 3.2 concerning the ‘creative urban economy’, leading up to Richard Florida’s ‘Creative class’ publication. Second, I will discuss Richard Florida’s publication itself in chapter 3.3. Subsequently, I will discuss some criticism and elaborations on Florida’s work (chapter 3.4). Furthermore, I will discuss the relevant literature on the creative class in The Netherlands (chapter 3.5). Finally, I will highlight the relevant conclusions of this chapter and the further theoretical directions of this research project in chapter 3.6.

### **3.2 Predecessors of the ‘Creative class’**

In this chapter I want to discuss ideas and theories that are regarded by Richard Florida as leading up to his creative class theory, illustrating their contribution to his theory and putting its novice into perspective.

One of the first to refer to the ‘creative urban economy’ was Jane Jacobs, who recently passed away. In her book *‘The Death and Life of Great American Cities’*, published in 1961, she advocates the compact city that combines residential, commercial and recreational functions in each neighbourhood. By doing so Jacobs broke with the modernist approach in the 1960s to urban planning in America (and the whole Western world). This modernist approach involved almost strict separation of functions, with rapidly increasing mobility leading to suburbanisation on a vast scale and inner cities deteriorating being merely inhabited by the poor and low-skilled workers with a large percentage of minority groups.

Jacobs discusses relatively densely populated areas, such as Greenwich Village in New York where she lived herself, with multifunctional use of space in neighbourhoods as well as in actual buildings. Subsequently, Jacobs argues that social interaction and diversity are the most important conditions for a social and economically fertile urban area. She is in fact implicitly referring to the dynamics of ‘social capital’, as would later be argued by Bourdieu (1986) and Putnam (2000) among others.

In *‘The Economy of Cities’* (1969) Jacobs elaborates on this by arguing that cities are at the root of all economic growth, much more so than countries, through the use of import replacement (factory towns and agricultural towns in the vicinity of large urban areas instead of having to import these products from other places). Thus, Jacobs further stresses the economic importance of cities to the expense of rural areas.

In his '*Cities in Civilization*' (1998) Peter Hall argues cities are the central economic entity in any national economy due to their innovative character, which he argues is mainly caused by their magnitude and complexity. His interpretation of urban history is as follows: prosperous cities have always had either a strong cultural aspect or a strong technological aspect. Furthermore, Hall argues nowadays a combination of this cultural and technological aspect is merging in large cities that have a highly diverse population and bring together a large set of skills.

The term 'creative city' was first introduced as such by Charles Landry and Franco Bianchini in their publication '*The Creative City*' (1994). In this era, cities (in their case in Britain but also elsewhere in the Western World) were in a structural crisis. Landry and Bianchini approach the city almost as an organism and argue that urban areas need to utilise their diversity and individuals need to constantly be reassessing their knowledge (thus dubbing the 'creative city' a 'learning institution') in order to regain their economic strength and help face inner city problems (Landry et al., 1996).

In his '*The Creative City: A Toolkit for Urban Innovators*' (2000) Charles Landry elaborates on this by reviewing urban history. Landry argues cities are the central economic entity due to their innovative character. Landry offers policy makers a 'toolkit' with seven elements an urban area will need in order to be truly 'creative' and competitive in the global market: creative people; will and leadership; human diversity and access to varied talent; an open-minded organizational culture; positive and strong local identity; urban spaces and facilities; and opportunities for networking.

Concluding, one can say that thinking about 'creative urban areas' has evolved from a neighbourhood perspective to becoming a global issue. Jacobs approaches the urban area from the perspective of a neighbourhood combining the commercial, residential and recreational functions. Later, she and Peter Hall place the inner city in a national context, stressing its innovative character. Subsequently, Landry and Bianchini approach the urban area as a creative 'learning institution'. Finally, Landry approaches the 'creative city' from a policy maker's perspective.

### **3.3 The Rise of The Creative Class**

In adopting a housing policy in which attracting and keeping higher-income groups is central, Rotterdam's local government is implicitly referring to Richard Florida's famous book '*The Rise of The Creative Class*' published in 2002. Florida introduces the concept of 'creative class', with which he refers to the group of people who 'add economic value through their creativity' (Florida, 2002, p.68). This creative class, Florida argues, tends to live in a stimulating and vibrant environment, often in inner city areas. By creating additional economic value, the 'creative class' has become a very important factor in city economics.

Florida's categorisation of his creative class subsequently applies to a wide range of occupations, from entrepreneurs to knowledge workers and professionals. Florida

distinguishes two broad categories. First, there is a core group – the ‘Super-creative core’ which includes all worker groups that ‘produce new forms or designs that are readily transferable and widely useful’ (Florida, 2002, p.69), and therefore directly add economic value. Examples of occupations that Florida includes in this core group are engineers, entertainers, editors and analysts. Second, Florida distinguishes the group of ‘Creative professionals’ who support the creative core in this adding of economic value, for instance legal and health care professionals and business management.

Florida argues there are three main factors that attract the creative class: tolerance, technology and talent (Florida, 2002, p.249). There needs to be a good mix between a concentration of a highly skilled workforce and a concentration of innovation and technology. A tolerant environment increases the possibility of attracting a diverse crowd with a good mix of knowledge and creativity. Florida compares an American ‘Gay-index’, which measures the concentration of homosexuals, with a high-tech index and found there is a high correlation between the two. The same goes for a ‘Bohemian-index’, a measure of artistically creative people. Florida argues in his research there are two variables that connect the two indices, namely tolerance and diversity. This highly concentrated mix of tolerance, technology and talent is most likely to be found in inner city areas.

This combination of talent and creativity in an inner city environment brings along a certain type of lifestyle for Florida’s ‘creative class’. This lifestyle, Florida argues, is a large part of the identity of the creative class. This typical way of life involves a big cultural and recreational involvement such as eating out at certain venues and going to art galleries. It is very much an experience-oriented lifestyle with a high level of consumption.

Another important factor in Richard Florida’s concept of the ‘creative class’ is that companies are no longer the most important entities. Florida talks about ‘horizontal hypermobility’, implying that ‘people are able to move from company to company in search of what they want’ (Florida, 2002, p.104). Therefore, Florida argues, however still being employees, these groups of people are relatively independent of their employers. Employers, mainly multinational organisations, adapt to this new situation in their choice of settlement by reviewing a city’s attractiveness to these groups of people. Subsequently, Florida argues, municipalities no longer should seek to attract companies in order for the urban economy to flourish, however they should focus on attracting and retaining this creative class.

Florida argues that because of the performance-based nature of our global economy the number of people supporting the creative core is growing, and thus his creative class is growing. Aside from the ‘creative class’ Florida also distinguishes a ‘serving class’ (Florida, 2002, p.71). These people are typically in low-pay, dead-end jobs, basically serving the creative class. Among this serving class Florida counts among others janitors, food-service workers and security personnel. Florida also distinguishes a traditional ‘working class’, consisting of the more ‘old-fashioned’ industrial kind of jobs such as production, transportation and maintenance jobs (Florida, 2002, p.74).

Another aspect of Florida's theory is what he calls the 'creative ethos'. This is how he coins the contemporary spirit of the age, which all creative class workers have in common. According to Florida, the most important aspects of this creative ethos are a strong individual identity, taking risks, integration of multiple interests, the will to achieve and combining work and leisure.

Florida makes an explicit distinction between 'creative capital' and 'human capital' as discussed by Castells (1996). The human capital theory says that highly educated people are the source of economic growth. However, Florida argues his 'creative capital theory' identifies a specific kind of human capital, namely creative capital. Subsequently Florida argues that his theory, contrary to the human capital theory 'identifies the underlying factors that shape the location decisions of these people' (Florida, 2002, p.223).

In this paragraph I have summarised Florida's intentions regarding his creative class. This next citation captures Florida's central claim:

(...) human creativity has replaced raw materials, physical labour and even flows of capital as the primary generator of economic value, and that a new class structure is emerging as a result of that basic economic transformation' (Florida in Lang et al, 2005: 218).

### **3.4 Criticism on Florida's Creative Class**

While Florida's theory of the creative class has created a near hype among urban policymakers and scientists alike, there is also quite some criticism on his work. Below I want to discuss the most important criticism on Florida's work. As the general amount of response to his work has been so large, I want to limit myself to discussing the relevant works of critique elaborating on Florida's theory of the creative class. In this chapter, as well as the next, I want to formulate theory based research questions regarding the creative class in the inner city of Rotterdam.

Glaeser argues it is doubtful if Florida presents any new ideas. Glaeser argues Florida's 'creative capital theory' does not substantially differ from the human capital theory of city growth (Glaeser, 2003), nor does Florida pose any new insights on relating creativity to bohemianism. Glaeser thinks Florida does deserve credit for linking lifestyle to occupation. However, on the policy spectrum Glaeser does not share Florida's view of, when wanting to attract creative people, having to attract bohemians who crave 'socially free areas with cool downtown areas and lots of density' (Glaeser, 2004).

Subsequently, Markusen (2005) agrees with Glaeser that it is actually a high level of human capital (Castells, 1996) that is linked to urban growth, and not what Florida refers to as 'creative capital'. Furthermore, she argues that at a sub-metropolitan level many of Florida's creative core workers do live in suburban surroundings. Also, she criticises Florida's conception of diversity, as he uses double male households (assumed to be gay) in his proxy for diversity, while acknowledging for instance Afro-American presence being far below normal in his 'creative cities'. However Florida does not further address



this issue. She also criticises his lack of argumentation for his choice of which occupations to include in his creative class and what exactly is their contribution to the development of the urban economy.

This void in the theoretical discussion regarding the contribution of the creative class to the development of the urban economy corresponds with an assumption made by the municipality of Rotterdam. As discussed in chapter 2.5, the inner city of Rotterdam aims to attract and retain higher-income households to live in the inner city. Through intensification of the residential function of the inner city the municipality aims to increase the level and intensity of the commercial, cultural and recreational functions of the inner city, making the city more lively and attractive. As I will discuss in chapter 4, I want to research this assumption by gaining insight into the contribution of the creative class from a consumer perspective to the development of the urban economy of Rotterdam and thereby also contribute to the theoretical discussion regarding this issue. This has led to the relevant research question in chapter 1.3.

### **3.5 The Creative Class in The Netherlands**

There have also been ample publications regarding the creative class in The Netherlands. Since this is also the background for my research, I will briefly highlight the most important issues. This will culminate in two further research questions regarding the creative class in Rotterdam.

Not surprisingly, Amsterdam is the main cultural centre of the Netherlands, with a high density and variety of cultural supply and a global appeal with regards to its global heritage. However, when one looks at the creative class as defined by Florida, a slightly different picture arises. Research by Marlet and Van Woerkens (2004) shows not only Amsterdam has a high score regarding the percentage of creative workers (27,2%), surprisingly it shows Utrecht has an even higher percentage (32,9%) and it is the country's hotspot regarding the percentage of people working in creative occupations. Rotterdam does not figure in the top ten of urban areas with regards to the creative class.

Van Aalst et al. (2005) have researched to what extent Florida's ideas apply to the situation in The Netherlands. They conclude that in The Netherlands factors such as tolerance and openness do correlate with preferences regarding location of the creative class. Also, they confirm Florida's statement that the creative class prefers a 'people's climate' over a 'business climate'. However, they conclude there is no significant correlation in The Netherlands between technology and the creative class. Finally, Van Aalst et al. confirm Florida's statement that the creative class is beneficiary to the regional economy.

Bontje and Musterd (2005) argue Florida ignores issues like housing preference and the property market in relation to the creative class. Bontje and Musterd argue the conceptualisation of Florida's creative class is too ambiguous to perform any relevant research on this matter. Therefore they split Florida's conceptualisation of creative class into three parts; the 'professional creatives', 'cultural creatives' and 'knowledge

workers'. After analysing housing preferences of each of these three groups in Amsterdam Bontje and Musterd conclude it is hardly sensible to supply specific kinds of housing to specific subgroups of the creative class. Moreover, they argue for a regional approach that has a focus on a divergent supply of housing situations.

Subsequently, Van der Land (2003) has researched the extent of urban ties amidst the new middle class of Rotterdam. He concludes this new middle class ('highly educated and/or qualified professionals and managers in the service sector or service occupations, who combine features of 'traditional' professionals and managers, cultural intermediaries, symbolic analysts and bricoleurs') mostly has ties of closeness with Rotterdam on a mental level. According to Van der Land this new middle class certainly takes pride in their city of residence and identifies itself with it. However the level of direct involvement with the neighbourhood is low.

Concluding, I will formulate two more research questions regarding the theoretical issues as stated above (see also chapter 1.3). The first research question concerns the criticism of Bontje and Musterd (2005) of Florida ignoring the housing preference of the creative class. Subsequently, I want to research the level of satisfaction of the creative class in Rotterdam regarding their accommodation.

Secondly, in reference to Van der Land's (2003) research on urban ties of the new middle class of Rotterdam (2003), I want to further elaborate on the ties of the creative class in the inner city of Rotterdam with their city of residence. Concretely, I want to research the future plans of the creative class in the inner city and establish if the municipality succeeds in keeping these groups in the inner city of Rotterdam.

### **3.6 Conclusion and theoretical framework**

In this chapter the relevant literature has been discussed regarding the main research question (chapter 1) and the relevant situation in the inner city of Rotterdam (chapter 2). The current housing policy is strongly based on the ideas of Richard Florida as published in his 'The Rise of the Creative Class' (2002). The literature discussed shows Florida has largely based his ideas on issues widely published by others.

Richard Florida's theory of the creative class is basically an economic theory on the shift of balance away from the 'corporate organisation' to the 'creative individual'. This economically creative individual according to Florida has certain ideas and expectations about the environment it wants to live in: diverse inner city areas with high levels of tolerance, talent and technology.

According to its municipality the inner city of Rotterdam is in need of residential densification in order to revitalise the area's residential and subsequently recreational function, because the city lacks high-income inner city inhabitants. So the inner city of Rotterdam is actually lacking what according to theory should be attracting its target group, namely a dense, diverse area with a rich recreational function.

In researching the housing preferences of the new creative class in the inner city of Rotterdam I want to elaborate on three theoretical issues discussed previously in this chapter: (1) The contribution of the creative class to the development of the (inner city) urban economy from a consumer perspective, in relevance to Markusen's (2005) criticism of Florida on this issue. (2) The concrete accommodation preference of the creative class, in relevance to the criticism of Bontje and Musterd (2005) of Florida's work. (3) In reference to Van der Land's research on urban ties amidst the new middle class of Rotterdam (2003), I want to further elaborate on the ties of the new creative class in the inner city of Rotterdam with their city of residence.

## **Chapter 4 – Hypotheses and methodology**

### **4.1 Introduction**

In this chapter I will discuss the assumptions made by the municipality in their housing policy by combining research results of the previous chapters. These assumptions will form the basis for the hypotheses that I will try to test in this thesis. Next I will discuss the methodology used in this and following chapters.

The structure of this chapter is as follows. First I will discuss the relevant assumptions made in the housing policies in the inner city of Rotterdam, according to the relevant theories as discussed in chapter three. Furthermore, I will discuss the relevant methodology in chapter 4.3. Finally, in chapter 4.4 I will discuss the conclusions of this part.

### **4.2 Assumptions made in housing policies in inner city of Rotterdam**

In this section I aim to provide an answer to the research sub-question, as stated in chapter 1.3, regarding the assumptions made in housing policies in the inner city of Rotterdam by reviewing:

- the social and historical background of the inner city of Rotterdam (chapters 2.2 to 2.4)
- the relevant policy framework (chapter 2.5)
- the theory-based research questions as stated in chapter 1.3.

#### *4.2.1 Increasing residential as well as maintaining recreational function*

As discussed in chapter two the inner city of Rotterdam mainly functions as a working and recreational area. For historical reasons discussed in chapter two the residential function of the inner city is duly underrepresented.

As also discussed in chapter two the municipality of Rotterdam has stated its plans regarding inner city housing policies in its ‘Inner City Plan 2000-2010’. In short, the municipality wants to attract higher income households to its inner city (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2001, p.14). It wants to achieve this by investing in new upscale housing developments, aiming to provide around 6.000 new accommodations, resulting in an approximate increase of the inner city’s population by about 7.000 inhabitants.

At the same time as trying to attract high-income inhabitants and expand on the residential functions of the inner city, the municipality aims to consolidate on the position of the inner city as a central recreational hub for a large part of the province and beyond (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2001, p.23), subsidising and promoting Rotterdam as ‘a great experience’ offering a diverse culture of museums, a large number of festivals as well as

a number of harbour-related activities located around the waterfront of the Maas. At least part of these recreational activities could present a problem to the increasing residential function of the inner city due to their grand scale or type of crowds they attract.

#### *4.2.2 New residential function versus traditional commercial and recreational function*

Also, while the objective of the municipality is to increase the number of inner city inhabitants by attracting higher-income households, the inner city still has a traditional function as a commercial area (Economic Development Board Rotterdam, 2005, p.12). These commercial activities vary from highly skilled services such as law and consultancy firms to the more traditional low-skilled blue-collar activities such as logistical, manufacturing and a wide range of retail services.

One may hypothesise, that whereas the high-skilled services don't cause many problems (they are actually a major employer for the middle and high income households targeted) the lower skilled activities are bound to cause much more inconvenience since their services are not based around intellectual activities and (for instance) involve a lot of transport activities, cause a lot of noise or don't have their own parking facilities. These situations might not contribute to a better quality of life for residents close by.

#### *4.2.3 Residential densification leads to recreational densification*

In its policies, the municipality also argues that an increase of inner city inhabitants will benefit the recreational industry in the inner city such as shops, restaurants, clubs, cinemas, theatres and museums (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2001, p.14). It is argued these new inner city inhabitants will comprise 'a humus layer' for the recreational industry, attracting further recreational customers (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2001, p.26). Furthermore, these new inhabitants will be relatively well off, thus having more than average to spend regarding recreational activities. According to the municipality, this will result in for instance longer opening hours for shops and an overall increase of attractiveness of the inner city. For this assumption to hold, it requires new inhabitants to actually spend their money and spare time in the inner city of their residence.

#### *4.2.4 Substantial recreational supply*

In trying to revitalise its inner city Rotterdam has chosen the strategy of trying to attract and retain middle and higher income households for the inner city. Florida argues that his creative class (due to their high market value and not necessarily by their income as stated by the municipality!) is able to demand a high cultural and recreational standard in their (urban) area of residence. Thus the municipality assumes that the cultural and recreational supply in the inner city is able to compete with other potential residential areas (such as for instance The Hague, Utrecht or Amsterdam) in trying to meet the initial demand of these potential new inhabitants (Economic Development Board Rotterdam, 2005, p.31).

#### *4.2.5 Kind of accommodation*

Chapter 2.6 provided an overview of upmarket residential development projects in the inner city of Rotterdam realised, under construction and planned, in the period from the 1990s until 2010. An obvious conclusion (apart from the question if the realisation of such an amount of accommodation in such short time would cause an oversupply of inner city dwellings) is that the vast majority of these projects consists of similar high-rise apartment buildings (often even without a balcony). Whether this rather homogenous supply of accommodation can meet the needs of the intended residents remains to be seen. The policy documents don't mention parents with young children, while this type of household can be considered part of the middle and higher incomes target group. As stated in chapter 3.5, Bontje and Musterd (2005) argue Florida ignores housing preferences. Also, they have researched accommodation preferences of the creative class in Amsterdam. Therefore I will research this issue regarding the creative class in Rotterdam.

#### *4.2.6 Retaining high-income households in the inner city*

The ultimate objective is not only to attract a new creative class into living in the city centre of Rotterdam, the municipality also wants to retain them (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2006, p.11). The question remains whether this creative class does actually stay in the inner city, and what factors contribute to this issue. As stated in chapter 3.5, Van der Land (2003) concludes the involvement of the new middle class of Rotterdam with the neighbourhood is low. In this research project, I want to elaborate on this by researching whether this low involvement with the neighbourhood is actually present, and if this leads to the municipality not being able to retain these groups.

#### *4.2.7 Contribution to urban economy*

Residing in a certain area does not mean one automatically also engages in economic activities in the same area. Apart from recreational activities, residents also need to obtain their groceries, clothes etcetera. It could very well be that people who work outside of the inner city area obtain their necessities at their location of work. Residing in a certain area does not automatically mean one contributes to the local economy in a way expected. Regarding this contribution to the urban economy, Markusen (2005) criticises Florida for not elaborating on this issue. This is why I want to research this assumption regarding the creative class of Rotterdam.

### **4.3 Methodology**

First I will construct hypothesis regarding the aforementioned assumptions. Secondly I will discuss the operationalisation of these hypotheses regarding the interviews, and subsequently I will discuss relevant issues concerning the gathering of data.

### 4.3.1 Hypotheses

The central research question of this thesis involves comparing the assumptions made by the municipality regarding residential preferences in inner city Rotterdam with the actual preferences of people having moved in to the city centre. In chapter 4.2 I have provided an overview of assumptions made in housing policies in the inner city of Rotterdam. I now want to use these assumptions to formulate hypotheses relating to the central research question.

As far as the assumption described in chapter 4.2.1 goes, regarding the enhancement of the residential function of the inner city versus its more ‘traditional’ role as a recreational area, I would like to formulate a hypothesis as follows:

*Hypothesis 1 – The inconvenience of the current recreational function poses an obstruction to the intended intensification of the residential function in the inner city.*

Regarding the assumption described in chapter 4.2.2, the intended increase of the residential function versus the current commercial function of the inner city, I will state a hypothesis as follows:

*Hypothesis 2 – The inconvenience of the current commercial function poses an obstruction to the intended intensification of the residential function in the inner city.*

As far as the assumption described in chapter 4.2.3 goes, stating the densification of the residential function in the inner city will lead to a densification of the recreational function, I would like to formulate a hypothesis as follows:

*Hypothesis 3 – The densification of the residential function in the inner city will lead to a densification of the recreational function.*

Regarding the assumption described in chapter 4.2.4, that the inner city of Rotterdam does have enough cultural and recreational supply in order to attract and retain a substantial number of residents belonging to the creative class, I will state a hypothesis as follows:

*Hypothesis 4 – The inner city of Rotterdam offers enough cultural and recreational supply in order to attract and retain a substantial number of members of the creative class.*

Subsequently, regarding the assumption stated in chapter 4.2.5, the kind of accommodation provided for these new inhabitants, I would like to formulate a hypothesis as follows:

*Hypothesis 5 – There is a varied supply of accommodation for the new inhabitants of the inner city.*

Concerning the long-term residential plans of inner city inhabitants as discussed in chapter 4.2.6, I will aim to evaluate the next hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 6 – On the long term most inner city residents will want to move out of the city centre, depending on their age and personal situation.*

Finally, regarding the assumption about the economic contribution of new inner city residents to the urban economy, I would like to formulate the next hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 7 - Residents of the inner city contribute significantly to the urban economy.*

These seven hypotheses represent the assumptions by the municipality that I want to research.

#### *4.3.2 Operationalisation*

Having identified the key hypotheses I now want to answer through my research, I next need to operationalise how I want to compare – albeit in a qualitative way – the research output with the hypotheses. Therefore I will construct per hypothesis one or more question(s), which I will put to the respondent in order to obtain an answer that will comply with the question concealed in the relevant hypothesis. The interviews will lead to an in-depth motivation regarding the relevant issues. Hypotheses will consequently not be confirmed or rejected, since this is a qualitative research method.

As far as hypothesis 1 goes (*hypothesis 1 – The current recreational function does not comply well with the intended intensification of the residential function in the inner city*) I want to evaluate whether inner city inhabitants have real objections to or complaints about certain aspects of the recreational economy. Therefore I will ask the respondent to name (if any) what to the respondent are disadvantages of living in the inner city of Rotterdam. If this does not lead to a usable answer I will ask the respondent a direct question regarding the issue above. However the response will then be of a lesser value.

As far as hypothesis 2 goes (*hypothesis 2 – The inconvenience of the current commercial function poses an obstruction to the intended intensification of the residential function in the inner city*) I want to evaluate whether inner city inhabitants have real objections to or complaints about certain aspects of the commercial economy. Therefore again, I will ask the respondent to name (if any) what to the respondent are disadvantages of living in the inner city of Rotterdam. If this does not lead to a usable answer I will ask the respondent a direct question regarding the issue above. However the response will then be of a lesser value.

Next, with hypothesis 3 (*hypothesis 3 – The densification of the residential function in the inner city will lead to a densification of the recreational function*) I want to find out if these new inhabitants of the inner city use the present recreational facilities, and if so, what facilities they use.



Similarly, regarding hypothesis 4 (*hypothesis 4 – The inner city of Rotterdam offers enough cultural and recreational supply in order to attract and retain a substantial number of members of the creative class*), I want to find out how these inner city inhabitants spend their free time, whether they find there are certain recreational facilities lacking in the inner city. Therefore, I want to ask respondents if they use certain facilities in other locations than the inner city of Rotterdam.

Also, regarding hypothesis 5 (*hypothesis 5 – There is a varied supply of accommodation for the new inhabitants of the inner city*), I would like to know if inner city inhabitants are satisfied with their present accommodation and what other wishes they have regarding this issue.

Similarly, regarding hypothesis 6 (*Hypothesis 6 – On the long term most inner city residents will want to move out of the city centre, depending on their age and personal situation*) I ask residents how they see their residential future in five years and what factors contribute to this. Furthermore, I initiate the interviews by asking an open question on the motives to have moved to the inner city of Rotterdam.

Finally, regarding hypothesis 7 (*Hypothesis 7 - Residents of the inner city contribute significantly to the urban economy*) I want to ask residents if they feel they contribute to the urban economy by doing all their purchases there, and if not why they go somewhere else. Furthermore, I ask whether they work in Rotterdam.

Put together these questions will form the basic structure of the interviews. An overview of the interview format can be found in appendix E.

#### 4.3.3 Gathering of data

As previously mentioned, I will hold fifteen interviews with inner city residents. Respondents will be gathered using the method of *snowball sampling*, since it will otherwise be hard to find any respondents. Respondents will be required to be part of the creative class. Also, they have to live within the boundaries of the inner city and having moved there no more than five years ago. In order to get a fair representation of respondents from different locations in the inner city, I will aim to interview respondents evenly according to their residential location as classified in figure 2.1. Due to the difference in size and the number of higher-income residential locations I will interview four residents of the ‘Stadscentrum’ area, three residents of the ‘Cool’ and ‘Nieuwe Werk’ areas, two residents of the ‘Kop van Zuid’ area and one of each of the ‘C.S. Kwartier’, ‘Dijkzigt’ and ‘Oude Westen’ areas.

Florida divides the creative class into two subgroups (see chapter 1.4). Therefore I also apply this division to the respondents of this research project. Appendix F gives an overview of the background of the respondents: gender, area, occupation and age. Six respondents belong to the ‘Super-Creative Core’. Nine respondents belong to the ‘Creative Professionals’.

*Hypothesis 1 – The current recreational function does not comply well with the intended intensification of the residential function in the inner city.*

*Hypothesis 2 – The inconvenience of the current commercial function poses an obstruction to the intended intensification of the residential function in the inner city.*

*Hypothesis 3 – The densification of the residential function in the inner city will lead to a densification of the recreational function.*

*Hypothesis 4 – The inner city of Rotterdam offers enough cultural and recreational supply in order to attract and retain a substantial number of members of the creative class.*

*Hypothesis 5 – – There is a varied supply of accommodation for the new inhabitants of the inner city.*

*Hypothesis 6 – On the long term most inner city residents will want to move out of the city centre, depending on their age and personal situation.*

*Hypothesis 7 - Residents of the inner city contribute significantly to the urban economy.*

Figure 4.1: Seven hypotheses regarding the assumptions made in inner city housing policies.

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

In this chapter I have specified the assumptions I have found in the municipality's policy towards residential preferences of the new creative class residing in the inner city of Rotterdam. Subsequently, I have formulated hypotheses regarding these assumptions and indicated how I would like to obtain data to evaluate these hypotheses. Figure 4.1 shows the hypotheses constructed in this chapter. The next chapter will discuss the responses gathered through interviews that will lead to an evaluation of these hypotheses and the theoretical issues as stated in chapter 3.

## Chapter 5 – Research Results

### 5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will discuss the research results obtained through interviews. Subsequently, I will focus on comparing the results with the hypotheses as stated in chapter four and thus come to conclusions regarding the municipality's assumptions and theoretical contributions.

### 5.2 Research results

In this section I present the results of my research interviews. My objective is to give an overview structured per research question as stated in appendix E. For a full overview of the interviews see Appendix F.

#### *5.2.1 Motives for moving to the inner city*

Regarding the motivation of inner city inhabitants to move into the city centre answers have been diverse. However, a number of respondents indicated they were already living in the greater Rotterdam area and basically jumped at the opportunity to live in the city centre, for various reasons. Several people expressed their sheer enthusiasm regarding the vibrant, even cosmopolitan inner city. The next quote is illustrative regarding this point:

I believe Rotterdam to be the most cosmopolitan city in The Netherlands and there is a lot happening here. Rotterdam is really going to the next level. I think there is real room for creativity here. (...) There is an open mind towards new ideas (...). Rotterdam is a real 'can-do' city. (...) I also really like the cultural atmosphere in Rotterdam. (...) Also, there is a good ethnical mix. (...) I need to at least have the impression that there is a lot going on and that I can walk out of the door and be in the midst of things in minutes. (respondent 3)

Others stated the mere convenience of living close to their work:

Before moving to the city centre a couple of years ago my wife and I lived first in Vlaardingen and after that in Maassluis. However, once our current apartment building was realised we decided to move to the city centre, since we were already spending most of our lives there. We both work in the city centre and used to both drive into the city every day. Now we are able to walk to work, which is just so convenient. (respondent 10)

Again others came here from various other places. Some specifically came here because of the attractive housing market:

I went to Amsterdam for my studies. After I finished, I found it quite difficult to find affordable and acceptable accommodation either there or in Utrecht. (...) At first, I didn't really know Rotterdam, and I wasn't even considering it as an option to live. Until I visited a friend of mine who had recently moved there. I instantly liked it, and was able to find a decent place almost right away, within an acceptable travelling distance of my work. (respondent 15)

Another respondent saw business opportunities here:

I came to live here with my parents when I was 16, because my father started to work here. I went to university here and afterwards stayed in Rotterdam. I started my own company (in logistics) and felt Rotterdam was the right place to do so because there is quite a bit of service industry and the type of logistics my company offered was still untapped here. Since then, I have become more involved in real estate and I have basically constructed and built the place we (me, my girlfriend and our children) live in myself. It is a former office space converted into a loft. That is basically why we live in the centre of Rotterdam. (respondent 9)

Finally, this couple with young children talked about the positive aspects of living in the city centre with their young son and daughter:

(...) I was already living in Rotterdam, first studying and later working. We are living in the city centre because of the vicinity of different facilities. My young son's day care centre is a five-minute bike ride away. (...) We are still young and want to go out every now and then so, having two young children, it is actually quite comfortable to already be in the city centre, instead of having the fuss of the journey every time. However (...) when the children get a bit older, we will be moving out. (respondent 6)

### *5.2.2 Future plans*

Regarding the anticipated duration of living in the inner city of Rotterdam, the large majority of respondents indicated not to expect to be living in the inner city for much longer than the next five years. The prime reason for this is that a lot of these respondents are in their late twenties or early thirties and expect to be having children in the next three to five years. Most of these people do not want to raise their children in the inner city:

We want to live here as long as we can. However at a certain point me and my girlfriend would like to have children. We are now approaching thirty, so it will be sooner rather than later. Then we would move out of the city altogether. We both agree that raising a child in the inner city is not something we would want to do. At least that is what we think of it now. (respondent 12)

Others were more decisive to stay and yet again others left options open:

As long as we feel young, I think we (my girlfriend and I) will be living here. I almost feel as if I have a moral obligation towards living in a city centre – coming from Apeldoorn. (respondent 5)

From the responses gathered, there seem to be two types of motives for people to move to the inner city of Rotterdam. Instinctive motives seem to be applicable to respondents who have moved in from the greater Rotterdam area and respondents who are looking for the cosmopolitan feel and for that reason choose to live in the inner city of Rotterdam. The other main reason for people to move into the city centre is to do with economic reasons. Respondents indicated to want to either live close to their work, see economic opportunities on the housing market or other business opportunities.

*Hypothesis 6 – On the long term most inner city residents will want to move out of the city centre, depending on their age and personal situation.*

Regarding hypothesis six, all couples without kids or without future plans regarding children intend to stay in the inner city. Half of the group of respondents who do plan to have kids intend to stay in the city centre, but want to move into larger accommodation. The other half of people who intend to have children intend to move out of the city centre all together. All respondents with (small) children intend to move out of the city centre in a short period of time.

### *5.2.3 Recreational activities*

When asked about their recreational activities most respondents replied they go out for dinner and drinks, go (window) shopping and engage in some sort of physical sporting activity. Most respondents indicated they spend the vast majority of their recreational time in the inner city. However, there were not a lot of respondents who indicated being very culturally active – going to museums etc. – although they value the presence of all this cultural activity. The following quote is illustrative:

We are not really very culturally active. We sometimes go to a museum, but not very often. I think we were actually more culturally active when we lived in Vlaardingen. It just isn't really a big part of our life right now. (respondent 10)

Others however revealed they tend to spend quite a substantial amount of their recreational time outside of the city centre:

We are only partly centre oriented. (...) Of course we go out occasionally for dinner or a drink to meet friends (...) However, I do have a car. And when we have the opportunity, we go out to the countryside for recreational purposes. We tend to go to the beach or some other quiet place where we can go for long walks. (...) I also have a dog that likes to run around and be free. This is not something he can really do here. It is not very much appreciated. (respondent 9)

Yet others are even more extreme in their spending of their free time outside of the city:

We use the car a lot for recreation. We often go away for weekends to Belgium or Germany.(....) It is really nothing to do with Rotterdam, we just like the experience of going somewhere else. And it is all relatively close by. (respondent 7)

Regarding hypothesis three, respondents have indicated to spend most of their recreational time in the inner city going out for food and drinks, shopping and sporting activities. Others indicated they leave the inner city in search of a greener environment. Few respondents said they go elsewhere entirely to recreate. However, the far majority of respondents indicated they frequent the café's, restaurants and bars in the inner city of Rotterdam, which will in the long term lead to growth in this sector. This seems to confirm hypothesis three.

*Hypothesis 3 – The densification of the residential function in the inner city will lead to a densification of the recreational function.*

#### 5.2.4 Facilities

Regarding the presence of recreational facilities there are really three issues that stand out. The first has to do with the direct quality of life. A lot of respondents argue there should be more greenery in the inner city:

I would like there to be a bit more greenery in the city centre, especially near the water. There is not enough open space for kids to play and people to relax. Also I would like there to be more trees on the side of the streets and on squares. I think it makes such a big difference. (respondent 3)

The second recurring issue regarding recreational activities is the lack of communal sporting facilities such as a swimming pool. Thirdly, most respondents indicated they hardly seem to frequent cultural institutions like museums, art galleries and the concert hall. Whether this finding is based on selection bias remains unsolved in this research project.

*Hypothesis 4 – The inner city of Rotterdam offers enough cultural and recreational supply in order to attract and retain a substantial number of members of the creative class.*

Hypothesis four seems to be in line with the responses gathered, however there are some side notes. There seems to be a (perception of) real lack of green in the inner city of Rotterdam. Respondents indicate they highly value this for recreational purposes. Another important side note is that most respondents indicated not to often engage in

cultural activities such as going to museums. Also the Super-Creative Core does not frequently participate in cultural events.

### 5.2.5 Inner city disadvantages

Regarding any disadvantages which come with living in the inner city, the area having a large recreational and commercial function, there were some very clear answers. Several people stated remarks about the large number of high-profile festivals or outdoor activities in the summer. This type of complaint was mainly heard in the areas 'Stadscentrum' and 'Cool'. The following quote is illustrative of this:

I love Rotterdam and I really value its cultural supply of good museums and architecture and places to wine and dine.(....) However, what I do object to is the number of festivals in summer. There is a festival about every weekend for two months on end. And I am not talking about something going on in the park or indoors (like the Film Festival). There seems to be a high-profile outdoor festival on the street every week. One week it is the Rotterdam Marathon, the next week it is the 'Zomercarnaval' and the week after that there is the 'Dance Parade' and so on. Not only do some of these - especially the 'Formula 1 race - cause a lot of noise. It disrupts the whole inner city during the whole weekend, especially in our area. This is not an ideal situation, especially when you have children. Every now and then it is not a problem at all, but not every weekend for two months on end. (respondent 13)

In the area 'C.S. Kwartier' and 'Oude Westen' respondents complained more about traditional problems concerning recreation:

I live on the Weena near the Hofplein. (....) There are a lot of bars and clubs around here and during the weekend it does cause quite a disturbance. There can be quite a bit of noise because of drunk teenagers. Of course this also brings along the usual violence and vandalism. (....) Another point is that I try to avoid being out at times of day when this occurs most. (respondent 4)

*Hypothesis 1 – The current recreational function does not comply well with the intended intensification of the residential function in the inner city.*

Although some respondents appreciate the fact that living in the city centre has its up sides as well as its down sides, and as such are not really bothered with the down sides, there does seem to be some friction between the inner city recreational function and the increase of the residential function. Apart from the more traditional annoyances of nightly recreational activities, three out of fifteen respondents indicated not to be amused with the inner city's function as a recreational area regarding large-scale festivals, mainly in summer.

With respect to any disadvantages which come with living in the inner city, regarding the commercial function of the inner city, respondents were much more positive. The only real issue stated is the commercial activities in the ‘Wijnhaven’ part of the area ‘Stadscentrum’:

The area we live in has only recently been designated a residential area, so the area is basically strictly small and middle size enterprises and then a number of high-rise apartment buildings in the middle. Apart from the logistic annoyance, there are often lorries unloading – especially during working hours - without room to pass, there is a school for late-teenagers with learning disabilities just outside our doorstep. So in their break, they are all hanging around, smoking and often being quite a nuisance. Other than that, the area has a far too clinical, commercial feel to it. (respondent 7)

When asked about disadvantages of living in the inner city, most respondents did not respond stating aspects regarding the commercial function of the inner city. However, when specifically asked they did respond with minor issues. For instance, some respondents stated heavy parking problems in their area (mainly in more traditionally residential areas such as ‘Oude Westen’ and ‘Cool’ and the more commercial ‘C.S. Kwartier’). Others, in the areas ‘Stadscentrum’, ‘Nieuwe Werk’ and ‘Kop van Zuid’, stated the occasional bad quality of the air, mainly as a result of fumes blowing over from harbour related factories.

*Hypothesis 2 – The inconvenience of the current commercial function poses an obstruction to the intended intensification of the residential function in the inner city.*

Apart from minor problems in locations such as the Wijnhaven in the Stadscentrum, which is basically still a traditional commercial area with some high-rise apartment buildings, and parking issues in the less spacious ‘Oude Westen’ and ‘Cool’ areas, respondents indicated there are no real obstructions between the residential and recreational functions of the inner city.

### 5.2.6 Accommodation

Regarding the type of accommodation supplied for the new relatively high-income inhabitants most respondents seem quite happy, however it must be stressed that a substantial part of respondents added they might not be living in their present accommodation for very long. Below an illustrative quote:

I’ve been living in my apartment (...) for nearly 2 years now. It is spacious – I live on my own, comfortable and affordable. (...) However, I’m bound to move sooner rather than later because my girlfriend and I want to start a family, which is not possible here due to lack of space. I don’t think we will be living in



Rotterdam. Also, there is a slight possibility of moving to the UK for work purposes. (respondent 11)

Other often-voiced opinions are that respondents don't have a garden or any private outdoor space:

I am very satisfied with our accommodation. (...) What I do miss here is some outdoor space. We live in an apartment building and we for instance don't have a balcony, which would be very nice in summer. That could be a reason why we would move in a few years. (respondent 10)

*Hypothesis 5 - There is a varied supply of accommodation for the new inhabitants of the inner city.*

Regarding hypothesis five, when viewing the specifics of building projects stated in appendix D, most apartments are of the same type: high-rise apartments with only a small balcony or no balcony at all. Also, respondents indicate that in the long term their accommodation may force them to move out. Especially the (future) presence of children is a reason for respondents to move out of their high-rise apartments. 'Age' alone is not a decisive factor regarding the preferred accommodation.

### *5.2.7 Economic Activities*

When asked about their economic activities most respondents acknowledged they spend most of their money in the inner city:

Although I do own a car, I hardly ever use it (...). I have everything here at hand. Shops, restaurants, clubs, you name it and it's here, so there are not really a lot of reasons to leave Rotterdam. (respondent 11)

Regarding the 'Kop van Zuid', a newly designated residential area, a respondent stated the following:

Regarding shopping and other commercial activity we live in a strange area. There have been quite a few shops here over the years but most of them have left the area. It just doesn't seem to work here. We can do our basic shopping here, but for more sophisticated stuff we cross the bridge into the (real) city centre. Altogether we still contribute to the urban economy of Rotterdam, only not so much in our near vicinity. (respondent 14)

However, there was one often recurring issue, namely the lack of quality regarding fashion stores. There seems to be a substantial demand for less commercial, more independent fashion:

I think Rotterdam is a great city for going out. A renowned club scene, a lot of quality restaurants and more and more trendy bars. Regarding clothing there are loads of useless commercial fashion stores which you are able to find in every major city in Western Europe. However there is almost a complete lack of good independent clothing stores. Why this is I don't really know. (respondent 15)

*Hypothesis 7 – Residents of the inner city contribute significantly to the urban economy.*

Regarding hypothesis seven, this indeed seems to be confirmed by the respondents. Apart from recreational activities engaged outside of the inner city Rotterdam respondents indicate they are mostly economically active within this area. However, several respondents stated they go elsewhere in order to buy clothing, since Rotterdam misses good, independent clothing stores in their eyes. The overwhelming majority (twelve out of fifteen respondents) work in Rotterdam.

## **5.3 Conclusion**

### *5.3.1 Central research question*

The seven hypotheses evaluated in chapter 5.2 together form a part of the answer regarding the central research question of this research project. The central research question was formulated as follows:

*How do the assumptions concerning residential preferences made in housing policies in inner city Rotterdam compare to the actual residential preferences of new residents of this area, and how do they contribute to the discussion regarding the theoretical research questions as specified in chapter 1.3?*

Concluding, one can say that some of the seven assumptions as formulated in chapter four have had a surprising outcome. A significant outcome is that the main reason to move out of the inner city of Rotterdam is the expected presence of children. This accounts for half of the respondents who expect to have children in five years. The other half, who does want to stay with their children in the inner city, would like to move out of their high-rise apartments.

Contrary to what the municipality assumes in its policies, the current recreational function does not always comply well with the intended intensification of the residential function in the inner city. Apart from the more traditional complaints regarding nightly recreational activities there seems to be a growing resentment regarding the inner city as increasingly being the area for large-scale outdoor festivals. A lack of parking facilities is also noticed. Surprisingly, the overwhelming majority (also the Super-Creative Core) does not actively participate in cultural events, although overall the majority of respondents is content with the recreational possibilities.

Regarding facilities missing in the inner city of Rotterdam, there seem to be two important issues. Firstly, inner city inhabitants seem to miss greenery in their habitat. Secondly, the inner city of Rotterdam does not provide the new inhabitants with enough good clothing stores, so they go elsewhere to purchase these.

Only three out of fifteen respondents work outside of Rotterdam. Spare time is also usually consumed in this city.

Subsequently, the assumption that the densification of the residential function in the inner city will lead to a densification of the recreational function, and the assumption that the inner city of Rotterdam offers enough cultural and recreational supply in order to attract and retain a substantial number of members of the creative class, do not directly comply with the interview results.

Both the assumption that residents of the inner city contribute significantly to the urban economy and the assumption that the current commercial function does not pose an obstruction to the intended intensification of the residential function in the inner city, seem to be in line with the answers of the respondents of this research project.

### *5.3.2 Theoretical contribution*

This research project, in examining a creative class in the inner city of Rotterdam, has contributed to the existing theoretical discussion in three different ways. This section also partly addresses the main research question.

Firstly, I have tried to elaborate on the initial critique on Florida by Markusen (2005), claiming Florida ignored the issue of the creative class contributing to the development of the (inner city) urban economy. I have gathered data on the relevant economic activities of the new creative class in the inner city of Rotterdam. This data shows simply that the creative class will basically engage in its economic transactions (from shopping, to eating out etc.) within its own inner city boundary, if the desired purchases are at all possible in this area. For instance, Rotterdam still, according to respondents, lacks good independent clothing stores. The new creative class in the inner city of Rotterdam, provided that it keeps increasing, will sooner rather than later create so much demand that this void will be quickly filled.

Secondly, regarding the accommodation preference of the creative class, in relevance to the criticism of Bontje and Musterd (2005) of Florida's work, the research results imply that the new inner city inhabitants in Rotterdam will have a high turnover regarding their residing in the inner city of Rotterdam. This is largely to do with the fact that these people do not wish to raise their children in the inner city of Rotterdam, and therefore move out of the inner city. Also, I have found indications that the current supply of inner city accommodation for higher-income households in Rotterdam is too uniform. There are almost only high-rise apartment buildings, with or without a balcony offered. The

mere fact that Rotterdam's inner city demographics contained such low numbers of higher-income households also gives implications regarding this issue.

Finally, I have tried to elaborate on research by Van der Land (2003) on urban ties amidst the new middle class of Rotterdam. He indicates that the new middle class mostly has ties of closeness with Rotterdam on a mental level. According to Van der Land, this new middle class takes pride in their city of residence and identifies itself with it. However the direct involvement with the neighbourhood is low. My research indicates that there is a divide between on one side instinctive ties with the new city of residence and on the other side economic ties with Rotterdam. Often these instinctive ties imply a deeper involvement in the neighbourhood and although these residents also imply they expect not to be residing in the inner city for a very long time, they are more inclined to stay in the greater area of Rotterdam rather than move out to the country or go to the suburbs of another city.

## Chapter 6 – Summary, conclusions, contribution and discussion

### 6.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research was to compare the assumptions made by the municipality regarding inner city housing issues with the actual preferences of inner city inhabitants of Rotterdam, and to accordingly contribute to the theoretical discussion regarding the creative class in Rotterdam.

The central research question of this research project therefore is:

*How do the assumptions concerning residential preferences made in housing policies in inner city Rotterdam compare to the actual residential preferences of new residents of this area, and how do they contribute to the discussion regarding the theoretical research questions as specified in chapter 1.3?*

Four research questions were formulated to help find a solution for the central research question: (1) What is the relevant background regarding residential planning in the inner city, which instigated the current housing policy? (2) What is the relevant policy framework, in which the inner city housing policy in Rotterdam is embedded? (3) What are the assumptions made in municipal policies regarding people's preferences on living in the inner city of Rotterdam? (4) What are the actual preferences and opinions of inhabitants about living in the inner city of Rotterdam? Three sub-questions were formulated regarding theoretical contributions: (5) What is the contribution of the creative class from a consumer perspective to the development of the urban economy of Rotterdam? (6) What is the level of satisfaction of the creative class in Rotterdam regarding their accommodation? (7) Does the municipality succeed in keeping the creative class in the inner city of Rotterdam?

In general, the relevant background on the inner city of Rotterdam regarding housing is as follows: Rotterdam has – compared to other cities - a relatively low number of inhabitants living in the inner city. This has a lot to do with the inner city being for the most part destroyed during World War II. During the reconstruction of the inner city it was mostly planned as a commercial and recreational area, since most people were moving out into the suburbs. Although attempts have been made in the past, the inner city as a residential area has really only been in the spotlight since recently.

Not only is the number of inner city inhabitants rather low, the inner city population are also mainly low-income households. The municipality has stated in its policy plan 'Inner City Plan Rotterdam 2000-2010' (2001) its intention to intensify the inner city's residential function by constructing upmarket housing accommodation to attract higher-income households. By attracting high-income household, the municipality is hoping to increase the attractiveness by assuming a densification of the residential function will also lead to a densification of the recreational function.

Elaboration of the research problem as a result of analysis of the relevant historical and social background as well as the relevant policy framework has led to the formulation of seven issues of assumption. Accordingly, seven hypotheses have been formulated as follows: (1) The inconvenience of the current recreational function poses an obstruction to the intended intensification of the residential function in the inner city. (2) The inconvenience of the current commercial function poses an obstruction to the intended intensification of the residential function in the inner city. (3) The densification of the residential function in the inner city will lead to a densification of the recreational function. (4) The inner city of Rotterdam offers enough cultural and recreational supply in order to attract and retain a substantial number of members of the creative class. (5) There is a varied supply of accommodation for the new inhabitants of the inner city. (6) On the long term most inner city residents will want to move out of the city centre, depending on their age and personal situation. (7) Residents of the inner city contribute significantly to the urban economy. By gathering data through interviewing fifteen inner city residents from high-income households I have evaluated these hypotheses.

## **6.2 Conclusions**

Some assumptions made by the municipality regarding the residential preferences of the new creative class in the inner city of Rotterdam seem to be in line with the interview outcomes.

The overwhelming majority of respondents works in Rotterdam and is otherwise economically active in the inner city.

In general, the respondents are content with the recreational facilities.

However, there are some significant deviations to the assumptions made by the municipality.

Firstly, there is the assumption that the inner city will be able to retain the new residents attracted. The respondents of this research project do however not confirm this assumption. Many people indicated they would be moving out of the city centre in five years time, largely due to the fact that they do not wish to raise their children in an inner city environment such as Rotterdam presently has. Also, some respondents indicated that in five years time, they would like to move to another kind of accommodation than is currently supplied in the inner city housing policies.

Also, the results indicate that in the perception of the new inner city inhabitants there is a lack of greenery in the city centre, as well as of good independent clothing stores.

Finally, respondents indicated a certain amount of annoyance with the growing amount of large-scale festivals during the summer in the inner city of Rotterdam. These festivals turn the inner city into a logistical nightmare and often are quite noisy and too present, according to respondents.

Surprisingly, the respondents do not engage in cultural activities often, regardless of their Super-Creative Core status. This is contrary to what Florida claims.

Besides the type of profession, age was also not a discriminative feature in the interview outcomes, nor was the residential area.

### **6.3 Contributions**

This research project has contributed to the theory stream of the creative class in The Netherlands regarding the role of the creative class in the development of the urban economy (Markusen, 2005). Secondly, the concrete accommodation preference of the creative class in the Netherlands has been further addressed. Finally, I have elaborated on Van der Land's (2003) research regarding urban ties of the new middle class of Rotterdam.

### **6.4 Advice regarding housing policies**

Following the conclusions of this research project, I would like to make the following suggestions regarding the inner city housing policies.

Future policies should take into account the separate residential preferences of people with (young) children and of people who expect to have children in the near future. This might influence the type of accommodation, for example the wish to have a garden.

Although inhabitants of the inner city in this research project are rather content with the recreational facilities, large-scale festivals appear to have a down side for the residential function. The municipality should take an interest in the opinions of the people affected by these festivals.

In these interview outcomes, relatively few people engaged in cultural activities. Since this is an important feature even in the municipality housing policies, the municipality should adapt these specific policies to the actual interest of residents.

The features of the respondents in this research project, although a small biased sample in a qualitative analysis, do not justify the application of the creative class concept, as stated by Florida. The municipality should therefore not apply Florida's concept on the Rotterdam practice without comments.

### **6.5 Research limitations and future research**

Regarding the research limitations of this research project, I would like to state the following issues. (1) I realise the data gathered through interviewing a selection of as low a number as fifteen respondents has its implication regarding the scope of the conclusions of this research project. (2) For this research project I have used the snowball-sampling

method. Otherwise it would be very difficult to find respondents. Often through one respondent, I found one or several others. This can of course imply a certain biased selection, however I have tried to select respondents with as weak a tie to one another as possible.

What is theoretically interesting is that there seems to be some real friction between the three different functions of the inner city, especially the residential versus the recreational function of the inner city of Rotterdam. The municipality is aiming to increase the residential function of the inner city, while also building on the recreational function in attracting high-profile festivals. This could be a topic of further research, as would be to research (in a couple of years) how much the inner city has changed due to the intensification of the residential function. Other research suggestions involve the consequences of building such an amount of (rather homogenous) housing accommodation in the inner city. Also the different roles and functions of the creative class in established 'creative class environments' as New York or London as opposed to developing 'creative class environments' (on a different scale) such as for instance Rotterdam, could be an interesting topic of research.



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**APPENDIX A: NUMBER OF HOUSES PER BUILDING PERIOD IN THE INNER CITY, 2005**

		Stadsdriehoek	Oude Westen	Cool	C.S. Kwartier	Kop van Zuid	Nieuwe Werk	Dijkzigt	Total
<b>Houses built before 1906</b>		1	1.104	706	0	0	154	8	1.973
<b>Houses built between 1906 - 1930</b>		10	601	33	0	0	54	1	699
<b>Houses built between 1931 - 1944</b>		14	578	58	0	0	38	28	716
<b>Houses built between 1945 - 1959</b>		2.082	4	829	2	0	76	0	2.993
<b>Houses built between 1960 - 1969</b>		5	0	94	0	0	2	1	102
<b>Houses built between 1970 - 1979</b>		301	144	131	0	0	1	3	580
<b>Houses built between 1980 - 1989</b>		3.364	1.502	655	332	0	0	119	5.972
<b>Houses built after 1990</b>		1.576	489	136	196	107	151	74	2.729

Source: COS, BIRD.

## APPENDIX B: AGE DISTRIBUTION PER AREA IN THE INNER CITY, 2005

Age group	Stadsdriehoek	Oude Westen	Cool	C.S. Kwartier	Kop van Zuid	Nieuwe Werk	Dijkzigt	Total
<b>0 - 19 years</b>	908	2.575	576	52	36	118	30	4.295
<b>20 - 34 years</b>	5.480	2.817	1.504	428	369	624	371	11.593
<b>35 - 54 years</b>	2.992	2.888	1.339	348	58	296	65	7.986
<b>55 - 64 years</b>	1.202	1.104	485	100	13	157	31	3.092
<b>65 and over</b>	1.472	957	656	56	x	101	89	3.333
<b>Total number of inhabitants</b>	12.054	10.341	4.560	988	483	1.300	587	30.313

Source: COS, BIRD; adapted.

**Information:**

x = below threshold value

## APPENDIX C: INCOME FOR ROTTERDAM AND THE INNER CITY IN 2002

		Percentage low-income households	Percentage middle-income households	Percentage high-income households
<b>Inner city</b>		42	33	25
<b>Rotterdam</b>		52	34	15
<b>The Netherlands</b>		40	40	20

Source: Cos, Binnenstadsplan 2005.

			Number of households in 2002	Average Income per household in 2002 (in euro's)
<b>Rotterdam</b>			279.330	25.600
	<b>Inner city</b>		<b>15.400</b>	<b>27.300</b>
<b>Amsterdam</b>			372.000	26.300
	<b>Inner city</b>		<b>46.200</b>	<b>27.800</b>
<b>Utrecht</b>			118.460	28.600
	<b>Inner city</b>		<b>10.214</b>	<b>29.300</b>
<b>The Hague</b>			216.780	27.800
	<b>Inner city</b>		<b>44.070</b>	<b>25.108*</b>

Source: COS, Dienst Onderzoek en Statistiek, Gemeente Utrecht and Gemeente The Hague.

\* Taxes and social security premiums have been deducted.

**APPENDIX D (1): RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION IN THE INNER CITY  
OF ROTTERDAM**

**Projects realised**

<b>Realisation</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Nr. of apartments</b>
1989	Boompjes I, II and III	Waterdriehoek	336
1990	Weenatoren	C.S. Kwartier	72
1990	Weenacenter	C.S. Kwartier	124
1996	Schielandtoren	Stadscentrum	110
2000	Hoge Heren I en II	Nieuwe Werk	290
2001	Hoge Erasmus	Nieuwe Werk	64
2002	Harbour Village I en II	Stadscentrum	unknown
2002	De Admiraal	Stadscentrum	62
2003	Witte de With	Dijkzigt	unknown
2004	Waterstadtoeren	Stadscentrum	168
2005	De Witte Keizer	Stadscentrum	107
2005	Montevideo	Kop van Zuid	192
2006	Coopvaert	Stadscentrum	124

Source: OBR and [www.skylinecity.info/rotterdam/](http://www.skylinecity.info/rotterdam/)

**Projects under construction**

<b>Realisation</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Nr. of apartments</b>
2007	Scheepmakerstoren	Stadscentrum	50
2007	The Red Apple	Stadscentrum	202
2007	Wijnhaeve	Stadscentrum	80
2008	Cité I and II	Kop van Zuid	494
2008	Statendam	Stadscentrum	125
2008	Linea Nova	Stadscentrum	105

Source: OBR and [www.skylinecity.info/rotterdam/](http://www.skylinecity.info/rotterdam/)

**APPENDIX D (2): RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION IN THE INNER CITY  
OF ROTTERDAM**

**Projects planned**

<b>Start of construction</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Nr. of apartments</b>
2008	Calypso I and II	Stadscentrum	408
2008	New Orleans	Kop van Zuid	225
2009	Salmpoort	Kop van Zuid	170
2009	De Lange Juffer	Stadscentrum	240
2010	Havana	Kop van Zuid	210
2011	De Rotterdam	Kop van Zuid	260
unknown	Bijkorama	Stadscentrum	72
unknown	Corso	Stadscentrum	unknown
unknown	Vectorgebouw	Stadscentrum	232
2012	San Francisco, Boston and Philadelphia	Kop van Zuid	300

Source: OBR and [www.skylinecity.info/rotterdam/](http://www.skylinecity.info/rotterdam/)



## **APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW FORMAT**

- **Why did you move to the inner city of Rotterdam?**
- **Do you work in Rotterdam?**
  
- **How do you spend your spare time?**
- **Do you think there are facilities lacking in Rotterdam?**
  
- **Do you often go out of Rotterdam to recreate?**
- **Do you often go out of Rotterdam to be economically active?**
- **Are there any disadvantages to living in the inner city?**
  
- **Do you have any complaints regarding recreational activities taking place in the inner city?**
- **Do you have any complaints regarding any commercial activities taking place in the inner city?**
  
- **Are you satisfied with your accommodation?**
- **How long do you see yourself living in your present accommodation?**

## APPENDIX F: OVERVIEW BACKGROUND RESPONDENTS

<b>Respondent number</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Age</b>
1	Female	Stadscentrum	Junior doctor	27
2	Male	Stadscentrum	Financial strategic consultant	29
3	Male	Cool	Junior tax consultant	27
4	Male	C.S. Kwartier	Insurance account manager	30
5	Male	Oude Westen	Architect	28
6	Female	Cool	Infrastructural and maritime consultant	31
7	Male	Stadscentrum	Financial consultant	40
8	Female	Dijkzigt	Freelance journalist	25
9	Male	Cool	Entrepreneur	35
10	Male	Kop van Zuid	Nautical consultant	39
11	Female	Nieuwe Werk	Photographer	33
12	Male	Nieuwe Werk	Visual artist	29
13	Female	Stadscentrum	IT Specialist	30
14	Female	Kop van Zuid	Data analyst	37
15	Female	Nieuwe Werk	Junior psychiatrist	28

## APPENDIX G: LIST OF COMPLETE INTERVIEWS

### RESPONDENT 1

AGE: 27

OCCUPATION: JUNIOR DOCTOR

RESIDENT FROM: 2005

LOCATION: STADSCENTRUM

#### **Why did you move to the inner city of Rotterdam?**

I did my studies in Amsterdam. When I finished, I moved here to live with my boyfriend, basically. This is also the place where I grew up. Also, it is much easier to find an affordable house here than it is in Amsterdam. I also really feel comfortable in Rotterdam. The centre of Rotterdam is a very interesting place, for me much more attractive than the outskirts. I want to live in a dynamic place, where we can do everything on foot or by bike (we don't have a car). Have places to go out for dinner or a drink close by. A unique thing to Rotterdam is the river. A river dividing the city in two halves really makes it a cosmopolitan place.

#### **Do you work in Rotterdam?**

Yes, my work is quite close by, about 15 minutes by bike.

#### **How do you spend your spare time?**

I would say I work about 55 hours a week. Because of my profession, I never have to work at home, except read some journals. When I'm not working, I spend my time resting at home, having a drink or bite with friends. I wouldn't say I'm very culturally active outdoors. I think I go to a museum once every two months. I do think I spend most of my time (and money) in the centre of Rotterdam.

#### **Do you think there are facilities lacking in Rotterdam?**

I think the direct area where we live (Wijnhaven) is rather boring. It is still very much in transition. There is not a lot to do, and it isn't really a very nice place to be in. What I really miss here is for instance a swimming pool for exercising and also some affordable independent, clothing stores. I also miss a bit of green in the neighbourhood. I think the 'Park bij de Euromast' is not sufficient for the whole of the centre of R'dam.

#### **Do you often go out of Rotterdam to recreate?**

Approximately once every two weeks I spend my Friday evening in Amsterdam with my former college friends. Usually we eat out. That's about all of my activities outside Rotterdam

#### **Do you often go out of Rotterdam to be economically active?**

Every now and then. As said above, I spend some money going to bars and restaurants in Amsterdam with my old friends. Since there are hardly any good (independent) clothing stores in Rotterdam, I buy most of my clothes outside of the city.

#### **Are there any disadvantages to living in the inner city?**

Parking fees are quite high here, however, it works both ways of course. I wouldn't want more vehicles frequenting the inner city either.

**Do you have any complaints regarding recreational activities taking place in the inner city?**

I'm fond of the Rotterdam marathon, I like the enthusiasm with this event takes place every year. Personally, I do not really appreciate the latest 'Formule 1' and the 'Airaces', but I'm not opposed to it either. Many people in the suburbs and the province like to visit Rotterdam for these events, so it's positive for Rotterdam. We live in an area with not so many bars or clubs, so there is no real nuisance in that department.

**Do you have any complaints regarding any commercial activities taking place in the inner city?**

As said above, a certain diversity in (clothing) stores is lacking. I would like the press and newspapers to move back from the suburbs to the inner city in order to bring in an additional type of person. Otherwise no.

**Are you satisfied with your accommodation?**

For now I am very happy where we are. We have a nice view. It is affordable, modern yet comfortable.

**How long do you see yourself living in your present accommodation?**

In five years I would definitely still want to be living in the centre of Rotterdam, but most likely not where we live now. In 5 years we would be thinking about children and our place would be far too small. Also, then, I would like to have a small garden.

RESPONDENT 2

AGE: 29

OCCUPATION: FINANCIAL STRATEGIC CONSULTANT

RESIDENT FROM: 2001

LOCATION: STADSCENTRUM

**Why did you move to the inner city of Rotterdam?**

I have chosen to live in Rotterdam because I think it is a beautiful city, I love all the new architecture and I think it has a very metropolitan feel to it. Furthermore, I come from the greater Rotterdam area so this is the place where I really feel at home. I also really like people's attitude over here, a business-like, no-nonsense attitude.

I have chosen to live in the inner city of Rotterdam because it is a vibrant place with a lot to do. I can go everywhere on foot (I don't have a car). I find it very important to live close by all the things I am engaged in, not only work, but also the things I love to do in my spare time.

**Do you work in Rotterdam?**

I work quite a lot, around 60 hours a week, I find it important not to have to spend a lot of time travelling from A to B, but just have everything close by. It takes a five minutes walk to get to my work. If my work should move to another place I would still want to

live in this vibrant area. However, I find it important that my working environment is also diverse and vibrant, because it inspires me and it makes life more interesting to be able to incorporate a lot of different places/venues in one's daily schedule. So I for instance wouldn't really mind my work being in the centre of The Hague, although I would prefer it to stay where it is. Work is an integral part of my life. I enjoy working a lot. I work at irregular hours, both in the office and at home.

**How do you spend your spare time?**

When I am not working I spend most of my time outside of my home. The main activities I engage in are: political activities, sports, shopping and going for drinks/eating out.

For me personally, cultural events are not a crucial factor to be in Rotterdam. Every now and then I go to a museum. I visit the Film Festival on an annual basis. That's basically it.

**Do you think there are facilities lacking in Rotterdam?**

The main thing I think is still missing in this neighbourhood (and I think also other mainly residential spots within the centre) is the availability of small commercial establishments such as a snackbar or a dry-cleaners at hours beyond nine-to-five. These are small things, yet very important to me. Another thing I miss here is a swimming pool, as sporting is a big part of my life. This variety of facilities within a residential area is what I miss. The city should be cautious not to create purely residential areas, but also integrate commercial facilities into these areas.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to recreate?**

I would say that I spend most of my time in the centre of the city. There are also quite some nice places in for instance 'Noord' but for some reason I never really go there. It isn't really part of the city in my experience.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to be economically active?**

Apart from my job (which takes me to Bruxelles and The Hague), I spend my time in Rotterdam. I do frequently visit London for vacation.

**Are there any disadvantages to living in the inner city?**

No, as far as I am concerned there aren't, really.

**Do you have any complaints regarding recreational activities taking place in the inner city?**

When you're asking: I think there are a bit too many festivals in summer. The city then becomes a logistical nightmare and the streets are overly full. The number of festivals and the scale has risen a lot in the recent years – I have been living here since the spring of 2001. Sometimes in summer I would like there to be a weekend without a festival disrupting the inner city.

**Do you have any complaints regarding any commercial activities taking place in the inner city?**

No, there is hardly any around where I live.

**Are you satisfied with your accommodation?**

At the moment my house provides a good enough living and working environment. I can work at different locations in the house, which keeps inspiring me.

**How long do you see yourself living in your present accommodation?**

I find it difficult to say anything about the near future (next 5 years). I would still like to go work abroad (for instance NY, London or Brussels). What I can say is that at a certain point I would like to have kids. Then I would for sure move out of the city altogether. I wouldn't really want to live in the suburbs, because I think the suburbs give you a lot of

the bad things of living in the city (crime etc.) and not so much of the good things (facilities). Living in the inner city, I wouldn't say it is the other way around, but at least you can enjoy the good things.

The type of accommodation I would like to live in: The most important thing to me is, the place needs to have character, something special. This can come in different forms, for instance a very nice location or nice views. Or some converted warehouse, or a place with high, ornamented ceilings. In general, I wouldn't find these things in newly constructed housing, although there are some exceptions.

### RESPONDENT 3

AGE: 27

OCCUPATION: JUNIOR TAX CONSULTANT

RESIDENT FROM: 2005

LOCATION: STADSCENTRUM

#### **Why did you move to the inner city of Rotterdam?**

I live in Rotterdam because I studied in this city and liked it much and wanted to stay. I believe Rotterdam to be the most most cosmopolitan city in The Netherlands and there is a lot happening here. Rotterdam is really going to the next level. I think there is real room for creativity here. Why that is the case, I can't really pinpoint. There is an open mind towards new ideas, and maybe even more important, an open infrastructure for new ideas. Rotterdam is a real 'can-do' city. I also think it is to do with the local government. There seems to be a great decisiveness going on in the municipality. I also really like the cultural atmosphere in Rotterdam. I think there is a great cutting-edge supply of museums and festivals and events going on over here. That is a real plus. I also think there is a great supply of restaurants here. Also, there is a good ethnical mix. There is a wide variety of ethnicities in the city centre (Middellandstraat and Nieuwe Binnenweg area). This also brings about a wide variety of ethnic shops and restaurants, so to say. I live in the city centre because as mentioned, I like to be a bit of a metropolitan. I need to at least have the impression that there is a lot going on and that I can walk out the door and be in the midst of things.

#### **Do you work in Rotterdam?**

My work is right in the city centre and I find it great to be able to walk to work in five minutes. This way you don't need to have a car, which is also good for the environment.

#### **How do you spend your spare time?**

My planning range as far as leisure goes is extremely short-term. So I find it great to be able to walk to the cinema in five minutes, or to a nice bar or restaurant or the main shops for that matter. The same goes for work. It is great to be able to go for lunch somewhere else every day, or do a bit of shopping in your lunch break. There is a park rather close by, so when the weather is nice we can go and relax there.

#### **Do you think there are facilities lacking in Rotterdam?**

I would like there to be a bit more greenery in the city centre, especially near the water. There is not enough open space for kids to play and people to relax. Also I would like there to be more trees on the side of the streets and on squares. I think it makes such a big difference.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to recreate?**

No, hardly. Other than vacations, I spend my spare time in the inner city of Rotterdam.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to be economically active?**

Our city provides us with everything, basically. You can find every sort of 'toko' and restaurant in Rotterdam you want. Actually it is the 'cuisinal' capital of The Netherlands. Regarding shops, you can also basically find everything you need. However, now that I think about it, I buy most of my clothes outside of Rotterdam. Mostly on vacation (London or New York) or at home either in Amsterdam or Antwerpen.

**Are there any disadvantages to living in the inner city?**

No, not really. Although there is quite a lot of building activity going on here, which can be a bit noisy. But that is only when I'm not working during weekdays.

**Do you have any complaints regarding recreational activities taking place in the inner city?**

No, not really. As I said, having recreational facilities at your doorstep is worth a little noise or hassle.

**Do you have any complaints regarding any commercial activities taking place in the inner city?**

Having a large harbour, there is quite a bit of refinement industry around Rotterdam. When the wind is in the wrong direction there can be some nasty fumes, mainly around the waterfront area. This can be quite a nuisance, for instance when I go for a run over the bridges.

**Are you satisfied with your accommodation?**

Now I live in an apartment building overlooking the city. I quite like it there, however it is a bit small. It is fine for the time being.

**How long do you see yourself living in your present accommodation?**

In a few years I would like to move to a bigger place, preferably with a garden in a bit quieter neighbourhood, although still very close to the city centre. Maybe something like the Veerhaven (Nieuwe Werk) or so.

RESPONDENT 4

AGE: 30

OCCUPATION: INSURANCE ACCOUNT MANAGER

RESIDENT FROM: 2005

LOCATION: C.S. KWARTIER

**Why did you move to the inner city of Rotterdam?**

When I completed my studies in Maastricht, I came to Rotterdam because of my job. I first lived in a sort of student house for a few years. Then I got a better paying job and this house basically came along and I took it. It is a pure coincidence that I am living in the city centre.

**Do you work in Rotterdam?**

Yes, I find it very convenient to be able to walk to work.

**How do you spend your spare time?**

I go shopping, work out doing fitness, go to the casino, meet my friends, go to the movies. I actually never go to a museum or any festival at all.

**Do you think there are facilities lacking in Rotterdam?**

.I think all the facilities I need are provided, I couldn't really think of anything lacking.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to recreate?**

I spend all my time and money here.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to be economically active?**

I actually never leave Rotterdam. I can walk everywhere I need to go, to work, to the shops and other leisure activities

**Are there any disadvantages to living in the inner city?**

I live on the Weena near the Hofplein. (.....) There are a lot of bars and clubs around here and during the weekend it does cause quite a disturbance. There can be quite a bit of noise because of drunk teenagers. Of course this also brings along the usual violence and vandalism. In winter it is not that bad, but when it is very warm I really want to keep my windows open, and this can sometimes be a problem. Another point is that I try to avoid being out at times of day when this occurs most.

Another disadvantage: I don't own a car myself, but when I get visitors from out of town they find it very hard to find a parking space in this area. It is mostly private parking for residents, and it can be very busy otherwise during weekends.

**Do you have any complaints regarding recreational activities taking place in the inner city?**

None other than stated before.

**Do you have any complaints regarding any commercial activities taking place in the inner city?**

No, not really.

**Are you satisfied with your accommodation?**

I am very satisfied with my accommodation. I have all the space I need.

**How long do you see yourself living in your present accommodation?**

I have no other plans than to stay here.

RESPONDENT 5

AGE: 28

OCCUPATION: ARCHITECT

RESIDENT FROM: 2005



LOCATION: OUDE WESTEN

**Why did you move to the inner city of Rotterdam?**

I studied in Delft. After that I moved to Rotterdam and rented in Kralingen for a while. I moved here (to Rotterdam) because of my work, basically. And also because of my profession I really like this place. Rotterdam is real cutting-edge when it comes to architecture. I bought my own place in the city centre because I was able to get a really good deal. I decorated the place myself and invested a lot of time and effort into it. If I hadn't been able to buy so cheaply I probably wouldn't be living here because I would find it worth the money to buy something. Mind you, if my work moved I think after a long hard think I would move along.

**Do you work in Rotterdam?**

Yes, I do. I work about 40 hours a week and don't work at home.

**How do you spend your spare time?**

When I'm not working I'm basically in and around my house. I don't really consider myself to be culturally active, I get enough of that out of my work. Having a garden is a real plus, although it is only a small patch. It just gives you something extra for recreational purposes.

**Do you think there are facilities lacking in Rotterdam?**

The only thing I really miss here, is enough parking space. We regularly need to park our car three blocks away because there is just no space. It is not so much only the walking, we often have to park somewhere where the car is not really safe. Not a very good feeling.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to recreate?**

No, although we do have a car I consider myself very much centre-oriented.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to be economically active?**

No, hardly ever.

**Are there any disadvantages to living in the inner city?**

Other than the lack of parking space, no not really.

**Do you have any complaints regarding recreational activities taking place in the inner city?**

No, not really. There are quite a few coffeeshops in our area, they bring along a certain kind of crowd which is not always comforting. But it's a very minor thing.

**Do you have any complaints regarding any commercial activities taking place in the inner city?**

No, there is very little commercial activity in our near vicinity.

**Are you satisfied with your accommodation?**

Very satisfied, I designed it myself. I'm very proud of it.

**How long do you see yourself living in your present accommodation?**

As long as I feel young, I think we (me and my girlfriend) will be living here. I almost feel something like a moral obligation towards living in a city centre – coming from Apeldoorn.

RESPONDENT 6

AGE: 31

OCCUPATION: INFRASTRUCTURAL AND MARITIME CONSULTANT

RESIDENT FROM: 2006

LOCATION: COOL

**Why did you move to the inner city of Rotterdam?**

Before we moved into the city centre I used to live abroad, working for the UN. Before that I was already living in Rotterdam, first studying and later working. We are living in the city centre because of the vicinity of different facilities. My young son's day care centre is a five-minute bike ride away. My work is also very close by. We are still young and want to go out every now and then so, having two young children it is quite comfortable to already be in the city, instead of having the fuss of the journey every time. However, now the children are still very young (from 0 to 2 years old), but when the children get a bit older, we want to be moving out of the city centre.

**Do you work in Rotterdam?**

Yes, I do. It is a ten minute bike ride from where we live. I work about 32 hours a week and I never work at home.

**How do you spend your spare time?**

I spend my free time taking care of our two kids, working out, assisting my husband in his profession, going out for lunch or dinner, going for long walks or going to the beach. I don't consider myself to be very culturally active, and it is no longer something I attach a lot of value to in a city.

**Do you think there are facilities lacking in Rotterdam?**

The main thing I miss in the city centre is a bit of green. I think there is too much concrete. Planting a few trees here and there can so much improve ones perception.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to recreate?**

I don't have a car, but my boyfriend does, and we use it quite a bit for recreational purposes. So from a recreational perspective I wouldn't say we are very oriented towards the city centre.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to be economically active?**

However, from an economic perspective I would say we are quite centre-oriented, although with small kids, we don't go out that often anymore. We do all our shopping here. It's not like I go somewhere else because I can't find something in Rotterdam.

**Are there any disadvantages to living in the inner city?**

Also, but that is more personal, for some reason I think it is very hard to make contact with people in the neighbourhood. I would like to know the people in my neighbourhood but it doesn't really seem to work out.

Also, there are quite a few facilities in the neighbourhood that I don't really want my kids to be around, like homeless shelters and a methadone centre.

**Do you have any complaints regarding recreational activities taking place in the inner city?**

No, it comes with the territory.

**Do you have any complaints regarding any commercial activities taking place in the inner city?**

Just the homeless shelters and methadone centre.

**Are you satisfied with your accommodation?**

Reasonably. In our present house we have a lot of inside space, however there is no outside space for our kids. So we would like to move to a more spacious environment in a few years.

**How long do you see yourself living in your present accommodation?**

Our kids are growing up fast. I don't see us living here for much longer than one, maybe two years. I would like to move out of the city altogether, however, still be in the vicinity of a city's facilities.

## RESPONDENT 7

AGE: 40

OCCUPATION: FINANCIAL CONSULTANT

RESIDENT FROM: 2002

AREA: STADSCENTRUM

**Why did you move to the inner city of Rotterdam?**

I was born in Paramaribo and moved here when I was very small. We have always lived in Rotterdam. First Schiebroek, later Prinsenland. We (me and my girlfriend) chose to live in the city centre because we love the fact that there is always something going on. Also, I wanted to live close to the water. I love the feel of the harbour and watching the Maas go by. Also, I wanted to live 'high above the sky'. It gives a real urban feel to be living in an apartment building on the 13<sup>th</sup> floor.

**Do you work in Rotterdam?**

I don't work in the city centre, I work in Nieuwegein. So I go there by car. But that is not the reason why we own a car. We would also have one if I worked here.

**How do you spend your spare time?**

When I'm not working, I go and work out or spend time with my girlfriend (mostly out of town).

**Do you think there are facilities lacking in Rotterdam?**

I don't really have any complaints as far as the facilities in our neighbourhood goes.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to recreate?**

We think mobility is very important. We use the car a lot for recreation. We often go away for weekends to Belgium or Germany. So, our recreational time is not really spent here in the centre of Rotterdam.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to be economically active?**

For shopping much the same, actually, like clothing etc.. It is really nothing to do with Rotterdam, we just like the experience of going somewhere else. And it is all relatively close by. So we are not really contributing to the city a lot other than the basic shopping and the odd takeaway.

**Are there any disadvantages to living in the inner city?**

I do think Rotterdam is quite a dirty city. There is quite a lot of litter, also in the water. Another negative thing about Rotterdam is that there is always so much building going on.

**Do you have any complaints regarding recreational activities taking place in the inner city?**

No, that is partly why I like the inner city, due to it's liveliness and the fact that there is always something going on.

**Do you have any complaints regarding any commercial activities taking place in the inner city?**

The area we live in has only recently been designated a residential area, so the area is basically strictly small and middle size enterprises and then a number of high-rise apartment buildings in the middle. Apart from the logistic annoyance, there are often lorries unloading – especially during working hours - without room to pass, there is a school for late-teenagers with learning disabilities just outside our doorstep. So in their break, they are all hanging around, smoking and often being quite a nuisance. Other than that, the area has a far too clinical, commercial feel to it.

**Are you satisfied with your accommodation?**

Yes, very much. We have all the space we need. Because we live in a high-rise apartment building there is hardly any noise. The only thing we lack is a balcony, but I don't think it is a big deal.

**How long do you see yourself living in your present accommodation?**

I think we will be living here for quite a while, unless we will be able to find a nicer location, which would then also be in the inner city (maybe Kop van Zuid).

RESPONDENT 8

AGE: 25

OCCUPATION: FREELANCE JOURNALIST

RESIDENT FROM: 2005

LOCATION: DIJKZIGT

**Why did you move to the inner city of Rotterdam?**

I was born in Rotterdam. I studied in Utrecht and was able to get a parttime job at a national newspaper based Rotterdam. Also my boyfriend bought a house in the centre of Rotterdam and he asked me to move in with him, which I did. It is ultra convenient. Everything is closeby, it is a lively area and there are a lot of young people.

**Do you work in Rotterdam?**

I work as a freelance journalist so I travel all over the country by car for my interviews and articles. Although, as said, my job is based in Rotterdam and I do work quite a bit at home elaborating on my articles and interviews.

**How do you spend your spare time?**

When I'm not working I usually study or sport or go out. I wouldn't consider myself very culturally active, every now and then a museum and the outdoor film fest.

**Do you think there are facilities lacking in Rotterdam?**

Having a bit more variety shopping wise is something that I think should be realised. Otherwise, I can't really think of any facilities missing. I do think our immediate neighbourhood is a bit cramped, so in that respect I think there should be a bit more open space.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to recreate?**

No, hardly. Only for visiting family.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to be economically active?**

When I'm going somewhere for an interview I tend to go shopping there too, just for a change. Also because, as I said earlier, the shopping facilities in Rotterdam are not brilliant.

**Are there any disadvantages to living in the inner city?**

No, hardly.

**Do you have any complaints regarding recreational activities taking place in the inner city?**

Something which I do notice is all these festivals during the summer. Although it doesn't bother me directly in my habitat, I do find it very annoying when I am shopping and half of the city is either closed down or overcrowded or something else. And usually these mass entertainment festivals like that formula one race or the dance parade don't really attract the brightest people. Sometimes it is actually quite scary.

**Do you have any complaints regarding any commercial activities taking place in the inner city?**

No.

**Are you satisfied with your accommodation?**

Actually, I do think it is rather small. But that is just because I used to live in a rather big house. It can be a bit noisy, but that is what you get in these more traditional inner city areas.

**How long do you see yourself living in your present accommodation?**

I don't see us living here in five years. I would like to have kids and the house would be too small. I do think I would still like to live in the centre of the city. It wouldn't be a problem for me to have small children in the city.

RESPONDENT 9

AGE: 35

OCCUPATION: ENTREPRENEUR

RESIDENT FROM: 2000

AREA: COOL

**Why did you move to the inner city of Rotterdam?**

I came to live here with my parents when I was 16, because my father started to work here. I went to university here and afterwards stayed in Rotterdam. I started my own company (in logistics) and felt Rotterdam was the right place to do so because there is quite a bit of service industry and the type of logistics my company offered was still untapped here. Since then, I have become more involved in real estate and I have basically constructed and built the place we (me, my girlfriend and our children) live in myself. It is a former office space converted into a loft. That is basically why we live in the centre of Rotterdam. Also, living here is of course very convenient. Everything is close by, shops, places to eat or go for a drink, etc..

**Do you work in Rotterdam?**

Basically, yes.

**How do you spend your spare time?**

We are only partly centre oriented. Of course, commercially we do spend a lot in the centre of R'dam. However, I do have a car. And when we have the opportunity, we go out to the countryside for recreational purposes. We tend to go to the beach or some other quiet place where we can go for long walks.

I don't think there is too little green in the centre of R'dam. It simply doesn't compare to going to the beach or into nature. I also have a dog who likes to run around and be free. This is not something he can really do here. It is not very much appreciated.

**Do you think there are facilities lacking in Rotterdam?**

One thing I miss here is basically an abundance of choice. If you want to go to a nice restaurant or need some clothes there isn't really much on offer. It is all very much commercially orientated instead of being creatively orientated. This is of course a matter of causality. Rotterdam wants to bring in the people with the money, and creativity will follow. I think it should be done the other way around. Local government should nourish and invest in creativity in certain areas, not dissimilar to Christiania in Copenhagen. When creativity blossoms, real estate agents and investors will be lining up to be a part of it.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to recreate?**

As said, we really go out at every opportunity at hand.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to be economically active?**

I hate shopping or anything like it, so I tend to do it as quickly as possible, which of course involves doing it here, because here I know where to go. It is not something I enjoy doing on holiday, because then it is not on my mind. Although as I said before, the abundance of choice is not overwhelming here.

**Are there any disadvantages to living in the inner city?**

Basically I think the air is very dirty. There is so much pollution going on over here. And that makes it even less of a child-friendly environment. An inner city area is almost per definition a child-unfriendly environment.

**Do you have any complaints regarding recreational activities taking place in the inner city?**

We especially tend to flee the city when there is another of these big open-air festivals. It is dreadfully noisy and there are always a lot of weird and crazy people around.

**Do you have any complaints regarding any commercial activities taking place in the inner city?**

No, Rotterdam is traditionally a commercial place, so you just have to live with it. Except for the pollution. Sometimes it really smells nasty.

**Are you satisfied with your accommodation?**

Yes, I designed it myself. The only thing we don't have, is our private outdoor space like a garden or even a balcony.

**How long do you see yourself living in your present accommodation?**

Of course at a certain point, kids need space and need to be able to play outside. So we will move out in a short time. I am actually designing boats on which you can live, and plan to live on one myself. So during the week we will be lying in the centre of Rotterdam, and on Friday afternoon we will head off for Zeeland or the Friese Meren or something of the sort.

## RESPONDENT 10

AGE: 39

OCCUPATION: NAUTICAL CONSULTANT

LIVING HERE SINCE: 2003

LOCATION: KOP VAN ZUID

**Why did you move to the inner city of Rotterdam?**

Before moving to the city centre a couple of years ago my wife and I lived first in Vlaardingen and after that in Maassluis. However, once our current apartment building was realised we decided to move to the city centre, since we were already spending most of our lives there. We both work in the city centre and used to both drive into the city every day. Now we are able to walk to work, which is just so convenient. Also, all the main shops are a few minutes walk away and there are so many nice restaurants here. These are the main reasons why we live in Rotterdam. Also, I really like the architecture here. Also, when the weather is bad, you can still just pop out, because everything is so close. This was something we didn't usually do in Vlaardingen or Maassluis.

**Do you work in Rotterdam?**

Yes. I work 40 hours a week and I hardly work outside these hours.

**How do you spend your spare time?**

We are not really very culturally active. We sometimes go to a museum, but not very often. We actually were more culturally active when we lived in Vlaardingen. It just isn't really a big part of our life right now.

**Do you think there are facilities lacking in Rotterdam?**

I think the prospects are good for our neighbourhood. There needs to be a bit more livelihood, maybe some café's, but not too much because then it attracts too many youths and noise etc.. There needs to be a good mix of different ages and lifestyles.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to recreate?**

We do own a car, but we hardly use it, mainly for going to the beach. So I do consider us being very much inner city oriented. We don't really have a lot of reasons to go out of R'dam.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to be economically active?**

No hardly, no need. Especially not when it comes to shopping or restaurants or the like.

**Are there any disadvantages to living in the inner city?**

No, not really. The only thing I can think of is the lack of green open space for people to spend time. This would be especially nice on the waterfront.

**Do you have any complaints regarding recreational activities taking place in the inner city?**

No, not really.

**Do you have any complaints regarding any commercial activities taking place in the inner city?**

No, not really.

**Are you satisfied with your accommodation?**

I am very satisfied with our accommodation. However, come to think of it...What I do miss here is some outdoor space. We live in an apartment building and we for instance don't have a balcony, which would be very nice in summer. Also, I usually don't work at home, so I don't have any specific needs regarding the interior of our house for that matter.

**How long do you see yourself living in your present accommodation?**

That could be a reason why we would move in a few years. First, we would consider another apartment in the centre of the city. If we wouldn't be able to find anything of our liking then we would consider other locations.

RESPONDENT 11

AGE: 33

OCCUPATION: PHOTOGRAPHER

LIVING HERE SINCE: 2004

LOCATION: NIEUWE WERK

**Why did you move to the inner city of Rotterdam?**

I have always lived in the Greater Rotterdam area. I grew up there and went to art school there. Subsequently, I started building up a loyal client base in this area. I like cosmopolitan places like New York and Paris, I just feel really at home there. The inner city of Rotterdam is quite like these places; cosmopolitan, relatively fast life, great high-rise architecture. So when I got the chance to buy my apartment I quickly took the



opportunity to do so. There is so much going on here. There are also a lot of creative people here, and on a much more friendly note than in 'overhip' Amsterdam.

**Do you work in Rotterdam?**

Yes, my studio is in the inner city of Rotterdam. Also, most of my clients are based here. Every now and then I go to a shoot outside of the city but this is not so often.

**How do you spend your spare time?**

When I am not in bed, I like to go out for dinner and drinks with my friends. I also like to work out in the gym to keep myself in shape. I'm also quite active in the cultural scene. I go to the 'Fotomuseum' quite often, and also other galleries and museums if there are interesting things going on.

**Do you think there are facilities lacking in Rotterdam?**

Although I do live close to the park, I think Rotterdam lacks green. On a lot of streets, there is hardly a tree in sight. This is really something the municipality needs to address. Especially on the lovely waterfront, it would be great to be able to relax in a nice green environment, not unlike the park close by here.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to recreate?**

Although I do own a car, I hardly ever use it for recreational purposes. I like what Rotterdam has to offer.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to be economically active?**

I have everything here at hand. Shops, restaurants, clubs, you name it and it's here, so there are not really a lot of reasons for me to leave Rotterdam.

**Are there any disadvantages to living in the inner city?**

None that I didn't anticipate prior to moving here.

**Do you have any complaints regarding recreational activities taking place in the inner city?**

No, I live on the 15<sup>th</sup> floor of a high-rise apartment building. It is nice and quiet here.

**Do you have any complaints regarding any commercial activities taking place in the inner city?**

None whatsoever.

**Are you satisfied with your accommodation?**

I've been living in my apartment in the inner city of Rotterdam for nearly 2 years now. It is spacious – I live on my own, comfortable and affordable.

**How long do you see yourself living in your present accommodation?**

However, I'm bound to move sooner rather than later because my boyfriend and I want to start a family, which is not possible here due to lack of space. I'm not sure whether we'll be staying in the city centre. Also, there is a slight possibility of moving to the UK for work purposes.

RESPONDENT 12

AGE: 29

OCCUPATION: VISUAL ARTIST

LIVING HERE SINCE: 2003

LOCATION: NIEUWE WERK

**Why did you move to the inner city of Rotterdam?**

I basically moved here because I like to live close to my work. I can walk to my studio in ten minutes. Also, the ‘inner city lights’ of Rotterdam give me great inspiration and all the cultural amenities I also need for my work are close by.

**Do you work in Rotterdam?**

Yes, my studio is basically just around the corner from my apartment.

**How do you spend your spare time?**

Other than visiting cultural institutions I like to spend time going to bars and clubs with my friends. Also a movie every now and then. Otherwise mostly relaxing at home.

**Do you think there are facilities lacking in Rotterdam?**

Rotterdam needs more green and comfortable recreative space in general.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to recreate?**

Although I love and need the comforts of the inner city, I also really enjoy the green countryside and the beach. The contrast of environments gives me a real feeling of richness. Every now and then, weather permitting, my girlfriend and I rent a car and go somewhere nice and quiet. We hardly ever go to another city, except when there is a must-see exhibition going on somewhere, but that is only sporadic.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to be economically active?**

No. not really. Other than the above mentioned, I really spend all my money in Rotterdam....Well, for clothing I sometimes go to The Hague or Amsterdam.

**Are there any disadvantages to living in the inner city?**

A lack of greenery and recreational space in general.

**Do you have any complaints regarding recreational activities taking place in the inner city?**

Only the odd drunk every now and then.

**Do you have any complaints regarding any commercial activities taking place in the inner city?**

The only thing I can really think of is the occasional dirty smell of the refineries of Pernis. But I just accept this as a given.

**Are you satisfied with your accommodation?**

I live on the second floor, so I don't have a garden. What I would have liked is a balcony, but I don't have that. Otherwise, I am not really happy with the quality of my apartment building. Cheap material has been used here and there and it shows. Also, I can tell it has been constructed in a hurry, not really paying attention to detail. However, to compensate this we do have a private fitness and swimming pool, when it is working.

**How long do you see yourself living in your present accommodation?**

We want to live here as long as we can. However at a certain point me and my girlfriend would like to have children. We are now approaching thirty, so it will be sooner rather than later. Then we would move out of the city altogether. We both agree that raising a child in the inner city is not something we would want to do. At least that is what we think of it now.

RESPONDENT 13

AGE: 30

OCCUPATION: IT SPECIALIST

LIVING HERE SINCE: 2003

LOCATION: STADSCENTRUM

**Why did you move to the inner city of Rotterdam?**

I moved here for work purposes. I work for a multinational on the Weena and got tired of commuting from Zoetermeer, where I used to live.

**Do you work in Rotterdam?**

Yes, see above.

**How do you spend your spare time?**

I really like going to the different museums and galleries like the NAI and Boymans. Also the galleries on the Witte de Withstraat are nice. I also love good food, and Rotterdam has lots to offer regarding restaurants and bars. I consider myself a bit too old for clubbing. Otherwise, I like to relax at home.

**Do you think there are facilities lacking in Rotterdam?**

I think everything I might need is right at my doorstep.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to recreate?**

No not really, I am a real city person. Just for family visits.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to be economically active?**

Also not really. I think I spend most my resources here.

**Are there any disadvantages to living in the inner city?**

I love Rotterdam and I really value its cultural supply of good museums and architecture and places to wine and dine.(...) However, what I do object to is the number of festivals in summer. There is a festival about every weekend for two months on end. And I am not talking about something going on in the park or indoors (like the Film Festival). There seems to be a high-profile outdoor festival on the street every week. One week it is the Rotterdam Marathon, the next week it is the 'Zomercarnaval' and the week after that there is the 'Dance Parade' and so on. Not only do some of these - especially the 'Formula 1 race - cause a lot of noise. It disrupts the whole inner city during the whole weekend, especially in our area. This is not an ideal situation, especially when you have children. Every now and then it is not a problem at all, but not every weekend for two months on end.

**Do you have any complaints regarding recreational activities taking place in the inner city?**

Not really anything except the above.

**Do you have any complaints regarding any commercial activities taking place in the inner city?**

I live fairly close to the market on the Blaak and it can be a real mess there. Especially on Saturdays. Traffic is horrible then. For visitors it is almost impossible to even make their way over here, let alone find a parking space. When there is no market, the Binnenrotte

(the area where the market is) stinks of fish and waste, and there are always a lot of seagulls. Very annoying.

**Are you satisfied with your accommodation?**

Yes, I have all the room I need and nothing to complain about.

**How long do you see yourself living in your present accommodation?**

For the time being, I see myself living here. I don't have a partner so I can do what I want and there are no kids on the way.

RESPONDENT 14

AGE: 37

OCCUPATION: DATA ANALYST

LIVING HERE SINCE: 2006

LOCATION: KOP VAN ZUID

**Why did you move to the inner city of Rotterdam?**

I used to live in Barendrecht, not so far away from here. After my relationship with my then husband ended, I wanted something completely different and wanted to 'be entertained'. Then the inner city of Rotterdam is only a natural choice. There is so much to do and see, entertainment enough. I also have a new partner now, who moved in recently.

**Do you work in Rotterdam?**

No I actually work in Breda. I didn't want to live there because, as I said, I wanted something new. I either take the train or go to work by car.

**How do you spend your spare time?**

I only moved here quite recently, so in my spare time I like to discover the city. Go for long walks through the different neighbourhoods. Try restaurants of exotic nationalities. Also I tend to work out a lot, since my age is beginning to show. Otherwise I relax at home.

**Do you think there are facilities lacking in Rotterdam?**

My area, the Kop van Zuid, is relatively new and still lacks a certain amount of cosiness. There are basically no nice café's or restaurants there, and shops come and go. The other thing that strikes me about Rotterdam is the lack of green in the city. The city council should make it a priority.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to recreate?**

No, I hardly go somewhere else. As said above, I am discovering Rotterdam.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to be economically active?**

As said above, regarding shopping and other commercial activity we live in a strange area. There have been quite a few shops here over the years but most of them have left the area. It just doesn't seem to work here. We can do our basic shopping here, but for more sophisticated stuff we cross the bridge into the (real) city centre. Altogether we still contribute to the urban economy of Rotterdam, only not so much in our near vicinity.

**Are there any disadvantages to living in the inner city?**

What strikes me sometimes, is the bad quality of the air over here. Especially when you cross the Erasmusbridge on foot or by bike.

**Do you have any complaints regarding recreational activities taking place in the inner city?**

No, our area is relatively quiet. Except when Feyenoord is playing, then it can be very hard to find a parking space, even though we live quite a long way away from the stadium.

**Do you have any complaints regarding any commercial activities taking place in the inner city?**

No. I guess I haven't lived here long enough to have an opinion about that.

**Are you satisfied with your accommodation?**

Yes, very. Lots of space, and relative quiet. We even have a garden. The only thing is, it is a bit new. There is some authenticity lacking, but that's what you get with a new neighbourhood.

**How long do you see yourself living in your present accommodation?**

I can't really tell. I tend to take one day at a time, nowadays.

RESPONDENT 15

AGE: 28

OCCUPATION: JUNIOR PSYCHIATRIST

LIVING HERE SINCE: 2005

LOCATION: NIEUWE WERK

**Why did you move to the inner city of Rotterdam?**

I went to Amsterdam for my studies. After I finished, I found it quite difficult to find affordable and acceptable accommodation either there or in Utrecht. These cities have a real problem regarding the housing market. I really wonder how young people get on the market there. At first, I didn't really know Rotterdam, and I wasn't even considering it as an option to live. Until I visited a friend of mine who had recently moved there. I instantly liked it, and was able to find a decent place almost right away, within an acceptable travelling distance of my work.

**Do you work in Rotterdam?**

No, actually I work in The Hague. I go there by train every day. In a while I will be taking the new 'Randstadrail'.

**How do you spend your spare time?**

Meeting with friends. Relaxing at home. I paint a lot.

**Do you think there are facilities lacking in Rotterdam?**

Coming from Amsterdam, what I really miss here are good quality clothing stores. There only seem to be the usual chain stores here. There are a few good clothing stores, but you want some variety in this respect.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to recreate?**

I have a lot of friends in other places, so I do spend quite a bit of time (and money) outside of Rotterdam, although I do like the 'scene' in Rotterdam.

**Do you often go out of Rotterdam to be economically active?**

I think Rotterdam is a great city for going out. A renowned club scene, a lot of quality restaurants and more and more trendy bars. Regarding clothing there are loads of useless commercial fashion stores which you are able to find in every major city in Western Europe. However there is almost a complete lack of good independent clothing stores. Why this is I don't really know.

**Are there any disadvantages to living in the inner city?**

No not really, everything is closeby. There is even a park around the corner.

**Do you have any complaints regarding recreational activities taking place in the inner city?**

I do think there are a lot of high-profile outdoor festivals in the inner city of Rotterdam in summer. Much more so than in Amsterdam. This can be quite annoying and also noisy.

**Do you have any complaints regarding any commercial activities taking place in the inner city?**

No, not really.

**Are you satisfied with your accommodation?**

Yes, very. I have a lovely view from my apartment and I have loads of space. My friends are actually quite jealous.

**How long do you see yourself living in your present accommodation?**

I am currently enjoying myself here very much. However, I can see myself moving out of the city centre at a certain point. At a certain point one wants some peace and quiet with neighbours who you know and who know who you are. Also, I would like to have kids at a certain point, and I don't see myself raising children in the inner city.