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Thesis title: Exploring Bridging Social Capital Creation in Third Places in the Context of Gentrifying Katendrecht, Rotterdam.

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Summary

This thesis explored the role of Oldenburg's (1989) concept of third places for bridging social capital creation in the gentrifying neighborhood Katendrecht in Rotterdam South. The gentrification of Katendrecht is state-led and accompanied by a social mixing discourse with its assumed benefits. Much research has been done on public space interaction in mixed neighborhoods; this research follows more recent hints and aims to explore third places in that context. This study consists of three components. First, it analyzes how state-led gentrification shaped the context of social interaction in Katendrecht's third places from 2008 to 2024. The second component identifies third places that enable diverse encounters. This is done through a comprehensive case study, starting on the neighborhood level, narrowing down to a preliminary selection, and finally researching one place, the Café Norge, in-depth. Thirdly, the in-depth investigation analyzes the social interaction between attendants of different backgrounds within Café Norge and the outcomes regarding bridging social capital.

The thesis uses methodological triangulation and focuses on a theoretical literature review and a case study of Katendrecht, with selected third places as units of analysis. The primary methods of the study are interviews with experts and with long-term and newcomer residents, complemented by participatory observation.

The main findings are that Katendrecht has undergone a remarkable transformation due to state-led policies, shaping social interaction context by changing population composition, third places, and dynamics between the long-term residents and the newcomers. The gap between higher-income newcomers and working-class long-term residents is big, leading to little interaction in everyday life. Third places adapted toward higher income and became more exclusive, while most elderly long-term residents attend the traditional community center, which repels newcomers. Only very few places are attended by both groups; the most diverse is Café Norge, though certain groups are also missing here. The overall positive interaction between people of different backgrounds in Norge remarkably increases the bridging cohesion, and intangible resources, such as emotional support and access to information, succeed. Little access to tangible resources such as goods or improved services could be traced, which is explained by the superficiality of bridging connections in Café Norge. In contrast, tangible resources tend to require more organization and repetitiveness.

The research demonstrated the complexity of the topic and added nuances to existing knowledge. Regarding gentrification, most newcomers are elderly, and the socio-economic background seems more dominant than the years of residence for the question of identity. The study showed that accessibility does not guarantee diversity in third places; despite being a commercial bar, Norge is the most diverse third place in Katendrecht. With respect to bridging capital, differences between long-term residents and newcomers were proven, such as different kinds of information accessed and third places having different functions. These findings indicate the need for differentiated policymaking, supporting places that enable diverse encounters.

Keywords

Bridging social capital, Third Places, State-led gentrification, Heterogeneous social interaction, Katendrecht

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Structure of the paper

This thesis is structured into five chapters. First, the topic will be introduced and embedded in a broader context, and then the relevance of this study will be elaborated on. The second chapter reviews the academic discourse on the underlying topic of gentrification and the main concepts of third places and bridging social capital and their respective interconnections, closing with the research's conceptual framework. The third chapter elaborates on the methods used for the research, introducing the research design and the case study process with selected third places as units of analysis. Then, the principal methods, semi-structured interviews, and participatory observation are described. The fourth chapter presents the results of the analysis and is divided into three sub-parts. The first elaborates on the transformation of Katendrecht and how it provides the context for social interaction between long-term residents and newcomers, using policy documents and neighborhood statistics complemented by interviews. The second part briefly presents the findings about the preliminary selection, and the third part elaborates in detail on the focus unit, Café Norge, based on interviews added on with observation. The fifth chapter, the conclusion, compares the results with the academic discourse, answering precisely the research question.

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Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full form
IHS	Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies
Platform K	Foundation Platform Katendrecht

1. Introduction

Gentrification has been a popular policy instrument for achieving urban regeneration worldwide. One central element is introducing middle- and higher-income people in deprived neighborhoods to deconcentrate poverty. This social mixing has widely been justified with livability concerns, assuming it improves the living conditions in the neighborhood (Lees, 2008). In recent years, the concept of social bridging capital, resulting from the interaction of heterogeneous people, has increasingly been discussed in that context (Kleinhans et al., 2007). The core idea of social capital is that networks have value and benefits. Putnam (2001) distinguishes between bonding capital within a homogenous group and bridging capital, spanning across heterogeneous groups, like a “sociological WD-40”¹ (p. 23). Bridging capital benefits the broader society through cohesion across differences and enables individual access to various resources (Putnam, 2001; Granovetter, 1973; Halstead, 2022; Van Eijk, 2010; Szreter & Woolcock, 2004). Being beneficial for the overall society, it is especially crucial for the empowerment and inclusion of the less affluent residents (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000; Putnam, 2001), who are suffering from ‘network poverty’ because their social networks are smaller and contain fewer resources (Chaskin & Joseph, 2010). It is consensus that the creation of bridging capital depends on physical proximity and interaction of heterogeneous persons (Kleinhans et al., 2007; Arısoy & Paker, 2019). Social mixing advocates argue that the resulting physical proximity forces encounter between resource-poor and resource-richer people. This would result in the possibility of bridging capital creation, which would eventually benefit the poor (Blokland & Noordhoff, 2008; Bolt & van Kempen, 2013). However, there is sparse evidence that mixing policies improve the life chances of the lower-income group (Uitermark et al., 2007; Lees, 2008; Bolt & van Kempen, 2013); they have ambiguous effects on social capital and disregard the complexity of these neighborhoods (Lees, 2008).

State-led gentrification aiming at social mixing is a popular urban policy in the Netherlands (Kleinhans et al., 2007; Uitermark et al., 2007). Rotterdam is a highly diverse city with a concentration of poverty (Arkins & French, 2024), especially in Rotterdam-South, where old-industrial neighborhoods face transformation challenges (Kleinhans, 2019). The neighborhood Katendrecht transformed its built environment and population radically in the recent decades through state-led gentrification, from being known for its bad reputation (Stouten, 2017) to becoming “a hip and trendy destination for the middle class” (Doucet & Koenders, 2018, p. 3639). The municipality labels Katendrecht as an exemplary project for future neighborhood transformation (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2016; Nientied, 2021). This research aims to investigate this positive narrative, mainly focusing on bridging social capital, given that it is often used to justify such strong interventions (Kleinhans et al., 2007).

1.1. Research Problem

Much research has proven limited everyday social interaction in mixed-income neighborhoods (Chaskin & Joseph, 2010; Bolt & van Kempen, 2013; Lees, 2008). However, more recent research indicates the importance of the ‘setting-specificness’ for heterogeneous interaction and resulting bridging capital (Nast & Blokland, 2014; Peterson, 2017; Arısoy & Paker, 2019). Repetitive physical, meaningful interactions around a shared interest are basic conditions for developing relationships across different groups (Peterson, 2017; Amin, 2002; Wise, 2009). One promising research line in that context is the third place. Oldenburg (1989) coined the term ‘third-place’ for “a great variety of public spaces that host the regular, voluntary, informal, and happily anticipated gatherings of individuals beyond the realms of the home and work” (p. 16). Characterized by being accessible and leveling the “guests to a condition of social equity” (p.

¹ Bridging capital is compared with the popular lubricant WD-40 because it facilitates social connections between heterogeneous individuals and makes the system, here society, run smoothly.

42), third places host a diverse population and enable heterogeneous encounters in a way not found in formal settings (Oldenburg, 1989). The original concept referred to cafés, community centers, bookstores, bars, and hair salons. However, the concept has expanded to include various other settings such as public spaces, libraries, religious institutions, shops, and grocery stores (Hickman, 2012; Purnell, 2015; Littmann, 2022), but even the digital space has been explored (Yuen & Johnson, 2017). Third places can be the physical arena for bridging capital creation since their characteristics theoretically enable diverse interactions in a positive manner (hierarchy-free, comfortable, enjoyable), which creates bridging connections containing trust and respect across differences (Yuen & Johnson, 2017; Littman, 2022). Other proven resulting benefits from bridging capital formed in third places include increased cross-group cohesion, emotional support through a broader sense of being a community member, and access to resources (Littman, 2022).

Oldenburg's concept has been criticized for being idealistic and ignoring widespread issues with a lack of inclusiveness that counter diversity (Yuen & Johnson, 2017). Inclusiveness also requires a low economic barrier, and that consumption is not the dominant activity (Mehta, 2014; Yuen & Johnson, 2017). However, gentrification is associated with a change in existing and the emergence of new third places, often leading to them serving completely different functions and clients, sometimes highly exclusive (Martin, 2022; Burns, 2018; Karsten et al., 2013). Conflicts within third places are a common consequence of gentrification (Goode & Anderson, 2015). The substantial influx of higher-income newcomers in Katendrecht and the urban facilities adapting toward them (Stouten, 2017) raise questions about the inclusiveness and, hence, their ability to enable diverse interactions. However, others highlight the positive increase in third places in the context of gentrification (Brown-Saracino, 2010). The research problem consists of a general lack of knowledge about social interaction dynamics in third places and their outcomes (Hickman, 2012; Littmann, 2022), and more specifically on how exactly and by what mechanism social capital is created for low-income populations in these settings (Custers & Engbersen, 2022). Additionally, there is insufficient research on how gentrification shapes third places (Mullenbach & Baker, 2018), which indirectly affects the creation of bridging capital. Therefore, the following research objective is derived.

1.2. Research Objective

This research aims to investigate whether and how third places influence the creation of social bridging capital in the context of the state-led gentrifying neighborhood Katendrecht. The more specific objectives are to:

- 1) *Understand how the state-led gentrification shaped the context for bridging social capital creation in third places in Katendrecht.*
- 2) *Identify and map third places relevant for across-group interactions by assessing their characteristics and diversity patterns.*
- 3) *Explore the dynamics of across-group interactions in selected third places and evaluate their role in bridging capital creation.*

1.3. Research Question

If and how do third places in Katendrecht influence the formation of bridging social capital within the context of state-led gentrification?

Sub-Questions:

- 1) *How has state-led gentrification from 2008 to 2024 shaped the context for bridging social capital creation in third places?*
- 2) *To what extent and how do the characteristics of the mapped third places in Katendrecht enable heterogeneous interactions?*
- 3) *If and how do heterogeneous interactions in these third places lead to the creation of bridging social capital?*

1.4. The Relevance of Research

1.4.1. Academic Relevance

The research is academically relevant because it advances the understanding of bridging social capital formation in third places. It provides insights into the inner dynamics of heterogeneous interaction and the factors influencing these in third places, deepening knowledge about third-place characteristics with surprising findings, such as about accessibility. Moreover, it adds nuances to gentrification studies by showing the complexity of population change. Lastly, exploring the role of third places for bridging capital formation in the context of ‘mild’ Dutch gentrification (Bolt & Van Kempen, 2013; Doucet & Koenders, 2018) makes the results unique in the academic debate, given the complex intersection of the topics. Since Katendrecht’s transformation has been going on for decades, the time factor for bridging capital creation (Arisoy & Paker, 2019; Atkinson & Kintrea, 2000) was explored further. Lastly, Katendrecht keeps transforming (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2024a); however, not many recent publications explicitly dedicated to it were found, justifying the need for further academic exploration.

1.4.2. Societal Relevance

Despite being based on little evidence, state-led gentrification aiming at social mixing enjoys acceptance and popularity among the public and policymakers (Uitermark et al., 2007; Bolt & van Kempen, 2013). Given the ambiguous effects, more evidence-based decision-making is required. The complex issues related to class and race (Arkins & French, 2024) and related populist debates (Van der Horst & Ouwehand, 2012) enhance the need for evidence to oppose populism. In recent years, third places and neighborhood settings have seen growing attention from policymakers (Godart, 2023), but more knowledge is required to provide reliable recommendations. If evidence for bridging capital creation and a better understanding of the underlying mechanisms can be provided, it would allow for more precise policy interventions. For instance, policies could support specific place characteristics that have been proven to contribute to social capital building. Since bridging capital is crucial for empowering and including less affluent residents (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000; Putnam, 2001), it can potentially contribute to more social equity and justice.

2. Literature review

To explore the role of third places in social bridging capital formation in the context of gentrifying Katendrecht, it is necessary to first understand the underlying context of gentrification and then the concepts of bridging capital and third places and all their interrelations in depth.

2.1. Gentrification

Gentrification has many faces that challenge its definition (Lees et al., 2010). First introduced by Ruth Glass in the year 1964 in her description of London's changing working-class neighborhoods, it can be broadly defined as “the transformation of a working-class or vacant area of the central city into middle-class residential and/or commercial use” (Lees et al., 2010, p. XV). This urban transformation includes physical, socioeconomic, and cultural changes (Phillips, 2018). Gentrification is a consequence of neoliberal policies and globalization, where the government acts as the agent instead of the regulator of the property market (Smith, 2002). The process of gentrification can be initiated generally by two drivers, the private market or the state, in the form of local or national government (Uitermark et al., 2007). The market explanation is based on the rent gap theory, describing how ‘capital agents’ cause rent gaps through systematic underinvestment and exploit rent gaps by taking advantage of market opportunities in underinvested, deprived neighborhoods (Slater, 2018). Investors upgrade the property, increase the rent, or change it into profitable ownership that attracts higher-income residents, followed by new amenities responding to the changed demand, ending in the displacement of original residents and enhanced socio-economic inequality (Lees et al., 2008). Conversely, state-led gentrification is characterized by more institutional aspects and is used as a tool by the state to ‘control’ and ‘civilize’ disadvantaged neighborhoods by introducing middle-class residents (Uitermark et al., 2007). Many urban policies have focused significantly on deconcentrating poverty over the past decades, mostly by supporting market-oriented strategies attracting higher-income residents to lower-income neighborhoods (Chaskin & Joseph, 2013). In the Netherlands, “the state induces housing associations and seduces private developers to invest in the construction of middle-class, owner-occupied housing in disadvantaged urban neighborhoods with many low-cost social rented dwellings” (Uitermark et al., 2007, p. 125).

The most visible effect of gentrification is its change in the built environment and landscape (Davidson & Lee, 2005; Phillips, 2018; Smith, 1987). It refers to upgrading existing housing stock and constructing new middle- and higher-income housing (Phillips, 2018). These material changes lead to higher rent and property values (Lees et al., 2008), linked to the socio-economic transformation by attracting higher-income people. Smith (1987) is one of the key authors who elaborated on how gentrification goes in hand with social restructuring and new cleavages, leading to an increasingly polarized city, which is also expressed spatially in clusters based on class and ethnicity (Ley & Dobson, 2008). The actions of this new group of residents are even central active players in the process of gentrification. Hippies moving into deprived inner-city areas function as pioneers of gentrification and “stormtroopers of the new middle class” (Ley, 2001, p. 194). Following the pioneers, a new gentrifying middle class emerges, which differs from the original working-class population by their lifestyles and more progressive values and goes in hand with these neighborhoods’ “embourgeoisement” (Ley, 2001, p. 8). Short (1989) uses the term yuppies, standing for young urban professionals, to describe this new class working in high-paid service sector jobs. Gentrification also leads to changes in ethnic composition because the intersection of class and ethnicity affects the distribution of benefits and losses from gentrification. Losses such as displacement tend to affect disproportionately ethnic minorities (Schuerman, 2019; Lees, 2016). Gentrification has been described “as a whiteness project” (Guzmán, 2018, p. 2), a policy being applied also in

Rotterdam to privilege the white population over working-class people of color (Arkins & French, 2024). Furthermore, gentrification changes the perception and acceptance of values, norms, and behaviors, potentially leading to tensions between old and new residents (Freeman, 2006). Lastly, Gentrification leads to a change in amenities and urban facilities that are orientated toward the new higher-income residents' needs (Doucet, 2009; Lees et al., 2008). This is related to introducing a creative class with an affinity for arts (Florida, 2005). Smith (1996) argues that art and gentrification come in hand; hence, gentrification is also associated with a cultural transformation. This includes more creative and cultural facilities and industries, replacing former local businesses (Zukin, 1990; Freeman, 2006; Phillips, 2018). Furthermore, it brings an image change, attracting further investment and enhancing gentrification (Gainza, 2017).

Gentrification is associated with a growing lack of affordable housing, and in many countries, it is even directly linked to the reduction of social housing. Social housing is an object of gentrification when its stock is reduced, and inhabitants are directly displaced or indirectly through social housing rent increase. The social mixing discourse guides the gentrification of social housing and is often accompanied by privatization and tenure conversion promoting ownership (Fernández Arrigoitia, 2019). The state-led gentrification in the Netherlands includes strong interventions in the housing stock, like the demolition and upgrading of social rental housing and new construction of higher-income owner-occupied housing (Kleinhans et al., 2007). However, one particularity of the Dutch context is its 'mild' gentrification, where direct displacement is rare, preventing many of the negative impacts discussed in the literature (Bolt & Van Kempen, 2013; Doucet & Koenders, 2018). Nevertheless, indirect displacement pressure can still be relevant. It can be of an economic nature caused by the increasing unaffordability of housing, community-related caused by the identity transformation and loss of sense of belonging, or in the form of neighborhood resource displacement caused by the transformation of amenities and services toward exclusively higher-income (Davidson, 2008).

2.2. Bridging Social Capital

The core idea of social capital is that networks, norms, and social trust facilitate cooperation for mutual benefit and, therefore, have value (Putnam, 2001). Putnam (2001) distinguishes between bonding capital within a homogenous group and bridging capital, spanning across heterogeneous groups; however, he acknowledges that this distinction is not always clear, and boundaries are fluent. Bridging social capital is contained in loose social connections between people of different backgrounds, often referred to as weak ties, that result from their interaction (Putnam, 2001; Granovetter, 1973). Heterogeneity refers to differences in the socio-economic, ethnical, background, gender or age (Putnam, 2001; Poortinga, 2012; Yuen & Johnson, 2017). Bridging capital benefits can be divided into two groups: by strengthening social cohesion across differences, they benefit the broader society, but it also enables accessing tangible and intangible resources to bring people 'ahead' (Putnam, 2001; Granovetter, 1973). Putnam (2001) claims that diverse social networks foster a sense of belonging, trust, mutual respect, and solidarity across differences, leading to community harmony and stability. Increased neighborhood cohesion with more trust and less prejudice was proven by Van Eijk (2010) in the Dutch context. Kleinhans et al. (2007) state that bridging capital contributes significantly to a feeling of belonging and security. Halstead et al. (2022) indicate that bridging capital fosters shared identity and common purpose. Multiple author's findings suggest a relationship between bridging capital and increased community engagement and civic participation (Putnam, 2001; Halstead, 2022; Van Eijk, 2010; Szreter & Woolcock, 2004).

The second group of benefits refers to individuals accessing concrete resources through reciprocal acts; sometimes, bridging cohesion elements, especially trust, is seen as their basis (Putnam, 2001; Lin, 1999), while others emphasize the abilities of weak links in enabling resource access without requiring deep trust (Granovetter, 1973; Halstead et al., 2022;

Poortinga, 2012). Putnam (2001) highlights “reciprocal social relations” (p. 19), which means tangible and intangible support people give and receive in communities. They are based on the expectation that individuals will reciprocate acts of cooperation, support, and kindness. If they are of bridging character connecting to another group, these relations enable access to a broader array of resources beyond the close-knit bonding networks (Putnam, 2001). One commonly mentioned intangible resource is experiencing emotional support (Putnam, 2001; Halstead et al., 2022; Szreter & Woolcock, 2004). Furthermore, job or educational opportunities or political alliances can arise by accessing these new networks and information, improving social mobility (Granovetter, 1973). According to Szreter and Woolcock (2004), bridging capital enables broader access to public services and, thus, counteracts social inequalities. Lin (1999) suggests that bridging ties enhances individuals' problem-solving abilities by providing access to various information and new ways of thinking. Poortinga (2012) explains these benefits with the ability of weak ties to promote novel information faster than strong ties, which may constrain the flow of information due to strong social norms. Moreover, bridging capital is associated with higher community resilience, especially regarding benefits for community health, since it enables fast access to useful health-related information and fosters collective action and innovation. Diverse networks also provide psychological support and improved access to concrete resources in case of disaster (Poortinga, 2012; Szreter & Woolcock, 2004).

Social capital in gentrifying neighborhoods

Bridging social capital is increasingly used to justify gentrification policies, closely linked to the social mixing discourse aiming to improve livability by introducing higher-income residents (Kleinhans et al., 2007; Blokland & Noordhoff, 2008). Despite sparse evidence that mixing policies improves the life chances of the lower-income group, they enjoy acceptance and popularity (Uitermark et al., 2007; Bolt & van Kempen, 2013; Lees, 2008). By contrast, Lees (2008) concludes that social mixing through gentrification causes overwhelmingly adverse effects, including destroying supportive networks in disadvantaged neighborhoods. They can also create tensions between the low- and higher-income, mainly because they tend to privilege the private property owners and higher-income (Chaskin & Joseph, 2013). Although having comparatively low levels of socio-spatial segregation, social mixing has been popular among Dutch policymakers since the mid-90s (Lees, 2008; Kleinhans et al., 2007; Uitermark et al., 2007; Bolt & van Kempen, 2013). In Rotterdam, the introduction of ‘Sterke schouders’ (translated as strong shoulders) is a policy objective in deprived neighborhoods. This refers to students and four groups of highly educated people: young professionals, highly educated families, highly educated people without children, and ‘empty nesters’ (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2016; 2022). The claimed benefits of social mixing can be divided into three rationales:

- 1) Introducing middle-class people into disadvantaged areas improves living conditions since they are seen as stronger advocates for public resources.
- 2) The local economy profits from the inflow of resource-rich inhabitants.
- 3) The network and contact rationale, inspired by Putnam’s work on social capital. It claims benefits deriving from diverse interactions between disadvantaged and more affluent residents. The network rationale is critical for Dutch policymakers who “appear to aim mainly at weak ties and bridging capital” (Kleinhans et al., 2007, p. 1075) when advocating for social mixing. The underlying assumption is that people living in concentrated poverty suffer from closed, dense social networks lacking bridging capital (Chaskin & Joseph, 2010). Perri 6 (1997) developed the concept of ‘network poverty,’ arguing that many socially excluded people have highly restricted and homogenous networks, and they would benefit from introducing them to broader, more diverse social networks. Despite homogenous networks with strong bonding offering benefits such as mutual support, they also bring the threat of excluding outsiders, leading to isolation and opposition to change (Putnam, 2001). Van Eijk (2010) has proven remarkable differences between the networks of

lower and higher-income residents in the Netherlands, where residents of low-income neighborhoods tend to have less resource-rich networks and the fewest ties reaching outside their neighborhood. Since mixing these neighborhoods results in physical proximity between poor and more affluent people, it forces encounters between them. This results in possibilities for bridging capital creation, eventually benefiting the poor (Blokland & Noordhoff, 2008; Bolt & van Kempen, 2013). Multiple authors emphasize that bridging capital creation benefits the overall society but is especially crucial for the empowerment and inclusion of less affluent residents (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000; Putnam, 2001). However, there were proven ambiguous effects of mixing policies for social capital (Lees, 2008). Living close to each other does not necessarily lead to more interaction between different groups. Much research has proven limited social interaction in mixed-income neighborhoods (Chaskin & Joseph, 2010; Bolt & van Kempen, 2013; Lees, 2008). The concept of ‘social tectonics’ describes the situation in a socially mixed neighborhood, where the different groups move past each other like tectonic plates below the Earth’s crust, with little contact (Jackson & Butler, 2015). Also, the findings of Van Eijk (2010) in mixed Dutch neighborhoods provide little basis for optimism about the effectiveness of social mixing policies since ties between resource-poor and resource-rich households do not come about automatically in mixed neighborhoods. In the context of gentrification-caused mixing, Dekker and Bolt (2005) argue that the bigger the differences between long-term and newcomers, the more difficult it is to establish social bonds between them. Moreover, positive social interactions might be just as likely as conflicts caused by cultural, class, and socio-economic differences (Goodchild & Cole, 2001).

Formation of Bridging Social Capital

Although limited research has been done on bridging capital indicators and creating conditions (Callois & Aubert, 2007), this sub-chapter elaborates on existing knowledge on bridging capital constituting factors. Generally, weak ties outnumber strong ties and depend more on physical proximity and face-to-face encounters with people of different backgrounds (Kleinhans et al., 2007; Arisoy & Paker, 2019; Putnam, 2001) in terms of ethnicity, gender, age, and socio-economic backgrounds (Poortinga, 2012). Research indicates the relevance of time for the creation of bridging capital. Arisoy and Paker (2019) proved that time is vital within the context of a gentrifying neighborhood to develop social ties between long-term residents and newcomers. Mutual tolerance towards each other increased, and weak ties turned stronger with repeating interactions over time. Blokland-Potters (2003) sees a direct correlation between the formation of trust and social norms with the number of encounters, supporting the importance of time and repetition, supporting earlier findings of Atkinson and Kintrea (2000).

Another constituting factor is something that can be called ‘setting-specificness,’ which enables in-person heterogeneous encounters and offers a reason for strangers to interact. Despite recognizing the limited role of everyday neighborhood encounters in bridging capital creation, Nast and Blokland (2014) state that “ignoring how bridging relations are shaped through settings may lead to reinforcing unjust arrangements, based on the assumption that ‘social mixing’ is never relevant” (p. 484). Relatively little research has focused on bridging capital creation in neighborhood settings (Nast & Blokland, 2014), but there is some evidence of their importance. Nast and Blokland (2014) proved bridging capital creation between parents in a mixed-school setting, where the bridging links are exclusively “child-related” (p. 493), and parents feel only comfortable using their class-crossing links when being children-related. Peterson (2017) demonstrated the emergence of weak links and increased bridging cohesion between community center attendants in Feyenoord, which were primarily established in repetitive, organized interactions like a cooking course. The weak links are mostly limited to the community center activities; sometimes, they extend outside and develop into stronger friendships. Arisoy and Paker (2019) investigated the bridging capital creation between ‘newcomer’ artists and long-term residents working in traditional handicrafts, where frequent

encounters and mutual, work-related benefits between the two groups strengthened the creation of weak ties.

Summarizing, repetitive, meaningful interactions around a shared interest are critical constituting factors for bridging social capital formation (Peterson, 2017; Amin, 2002; Wise, 2009). This can also be a common need; attendants of different backgrounds seek to socialize (Peterson, 2017). Shared characteristics such as ethnicity, birthplace, passions, or point of life facilitate the creation of links (Wise, 2009). Amin (2002) highlighted the importance of physical places such as community centers, schools, or local clubs for super-diverse societies to negotiate differences. One promising research line in that context is the third-place concept, which has recently seen growing attention from policymakers (Godart, 2023).

2.3. Third places

Ray Oldenburg (1989) coined the term ‘third place’ for “a great variety of public spaces that host the regular, voluntary, informal, and happily anticipated gatherings of individuals beyond the realms of the home and work” (p. 16). Understanding third places’ characteristics is essential to grasp their potential role as a setting for bridging capital formation. Oldenburg (1989) defined them by eight criteria: 1) They provide a neutral ground; people can come and go as they want during the extensive opening hours; no (dominant) host is required, and all feel comfortable and welcomed; this also includes the ability to use the place without having to consume 2) they function as a leveler, meaning that an individual’s economic or social status is irrelevant; 3) conversation is the main activity; though other activities such as drinking or playing cards can occur 4) they are accessible and inclusive for all, this also includes the ability to adapt to their users’ needs and being affordable, economic-barriers have to be low 5) ‘regular’ users provide familiar faces, and welcome non-regular attendants; 6) they have a low profile in their appearance; 7) and a playful mood that makes interaction low-key and lighthearted; 8) they are a home away from home, creating a comfortable atmosphere and a feeling of belonging.

However, this concept has received criticism for not being evidence-based (Hickman, 2012), for being idealized, focusing on a white, middle-class, cis-male perspective, and for mostly ignoring issues with accessibility, inclusiveness, and neutrality (Littmann, 2022). Consequently, two third-place characteristics of outstanding importance have been highlighted by recent research to enable diverse community interaction: Inclusiveness in the sense of accessibility for all and that consumption is not the dominant activity (Mehta, 2014; Yuen & Johnson, 2017). Inclusive third places are characterized by diverse users of different genders, socio-economic classes, ethnicities, and ages (Yuen & Johnson, 2017). This is ensured by having a welcoming atmosphere for all, adaptability to all users’ needs, and no exclusion mechanisms such as prohibition signs and entrance controls (Mehta, 2014; Oldenburg, 1989). Taking the American coffee chain ‘Starbucks’ as a negative counterexample, in which expensive consumption is a prerequisite for access and is at the center of attention, Yuen and Johnson (2017) explain that consumption can be part of third places but should not be dominant and affordable. They argue that high prices attract selectively well-educated people and hinder diversity, and the more consumption-orientated a place is, the more it creates lifestyle enclaves. Concerning pubs, Oldenburg (1989) sees predominantly male attendants, an aspect threatening diversity (Yuen & Johnson, 2017). While regular attendants are usually perceived as helpful for interaction, Yuen and Johnson (2017) remark that the dominance of regulars might have an excluding effect and restrain openness for diversity and change.

Gentrification and third places

Third places change as their users' lifestyles change (Oldenburg & Brissett, 1982). They are fragile and vulnerable to change since unpredictable conflicts can arise from the “invasion of non-regulars, and misalignment of mainstreaming place used to modernize” (Goode & Anderson, 2015, p. 349). Both aspects might pose a source of conflict in the context of

gentrification if many higher-income newcomers invade the place; this could raise tensions with regulars and create incentives to modernize. Indeed, gentrification is associated with a change of existing and the emergence of new third places, often leading to them serving completely different functions and clients and sometimes being highly exclusive (Martin, 2022; Burns, 2018). Karsten et al. (2013) proved the emergence of new third places in gentrifying neighborhoods in Amsterdam; however, the new places are consumption-orientated and target exclusively middle-class families and yuppies. On the other hand, Ernst and Doucet's (2014) findings in the gentrifying Indische Buurt in Amsterdam suggest that brown Cafés function as 'safe havens' for long-term residents, remaining almost unchanged in a rapidly transforming neighborhood. These brown cafés are small, working-class pubs with a low-profile, old-fashioned appearance and affordable prices. Despite being mostly attended by long-term working-class residents, in some pubs, some yuppies attend, and small bridges between the two groups are built, contributing to social cohesion and better relationships. However, the authors also emphasize the potential temporality and see the threat of further commercial gentrification leading to the disappearance of brown Cafés, which could lead to social tensions. With more and more brown cafés disappearing, the importance of the remaining cafés increased. Their findings also suggest different importance between attendants. While long-term residents perceive them as vital, home, and essential for their social life, the attending newcomers see them as an occasional leisure-time activity but nothing substantial (Ernst & Doucet, 2014). Katendrecht's transformation includes changing urban facilities and shops, aiming more toward higher-income residents (Stouten, 2017). Few scholars have highlighted the increase in third places as a beneficial outcome of neighborhood renewals (Brown-Saracino, 2010).

Third place - Arenas for Bridging Capital Formation

The third-place essential function is enabling sociability (Oldenburg & Brissett, 1982), and by being accessible, providing a neutral ground, and leveling the "guests to a condition of social equity" (Oldenburg, 1989, p. 42), they host a diverse population that interacts in a way not found in formal settings (Oldenburg, 1989). Williams and Hipp (2019) combine Oldenburg's third-place characteristics with sociologist Lofland's (1998) three principles of facilitating stranger interaction; the latter recognized the importance of third places in fostering interactions: First, Open persons are more available for encounters with strangers than others due to their contextual status or identity. For example, Lofland (1998) names children due to their curiosity, policemen due to their profession, and Tourists in a country abroad; applied to Oldenburg's concept, this could be a regular attendant that is especially open for interaction or a barkeeper. Open regions refer to places that are mutually accessible to all inhabitants, aligning with the inclusiveness criteria. The third principle of Lofland is based on what Whyte (1980) introduced as 'Triangulation,' a common subject or object that provides a reason for strangers to interact and exchange. This can be a shared activity, such as a pool table in a pub, or a person providing a reason to interact, such as an entertainer. Although Oldenburg (1989) considers the role of a host limited, some research on bridging capital creation in third places has demonstrated the importance of 'organizers' for beneficial interaction (Peterson, 2017; Custers & Engbersen, 2022). They might function as social brokers, individuals often linked to a specific place, connecting informally "socially disparate segments of a population" (Stovel & Shaw, 2012, p. 153).

Third-place characteristics enable and facilitate heterogeneous interaction, which is why Audunson (2005) links Putnam's bridging capital concept directly with Oldenburg's third-place concept. Third places provide face-to-face meeting spaces "across social, ethnic, generational and value-based boundaries" (Audunson, 2005, p. 436), making people visible to each other and enabling low-intense and positive interactions not possible in other arenas. Putnam (2001) perceives such across-group encounters as essential and sees their occasions and spaces declining. Audunson (2005) advocates for more accessible and low-intense third

places, especially in diverse societies, since they prevent fragmentation and increase tolerance and cohesion across differences. Purnell (2015) proved that third places strengthen grassroots democracy and social cohesion. Williams and Hipp (2019) highlight how third places contribute to neighborhood cohesion by providing interaction context and functioning as a symbol. On the individual level, third places „are theorized to contribute to well-being” (Littmann, 2022, p. 438). Jeffres et al. (2009) have proven a positive correlation between the presence of third spaces and the perceived quality of life. Oldenburg (1989) describes them as “people’s own remedy for stress, loneliness, and alienation” (p. 20) and perceives third places as essential for a balanced and fulfilled life, raising participants' spirit and mental well-being. Third places are more critical for economically non-active residents such as unemployed, elderly, or residents with children. They spend more time in the neighborhood and its third places; thus, more of their social interactions occur there (Hickman, 2012). The importance of location and convenience for heterogeneous neighbors’ encounters has been proven. By providing a gathering place near the residence, the likelihood of encountering familiar faces and improved accessibility due to convenience is guaranteed (Goosen & Cilliers, 2020)

2.4. Conceptual Framework

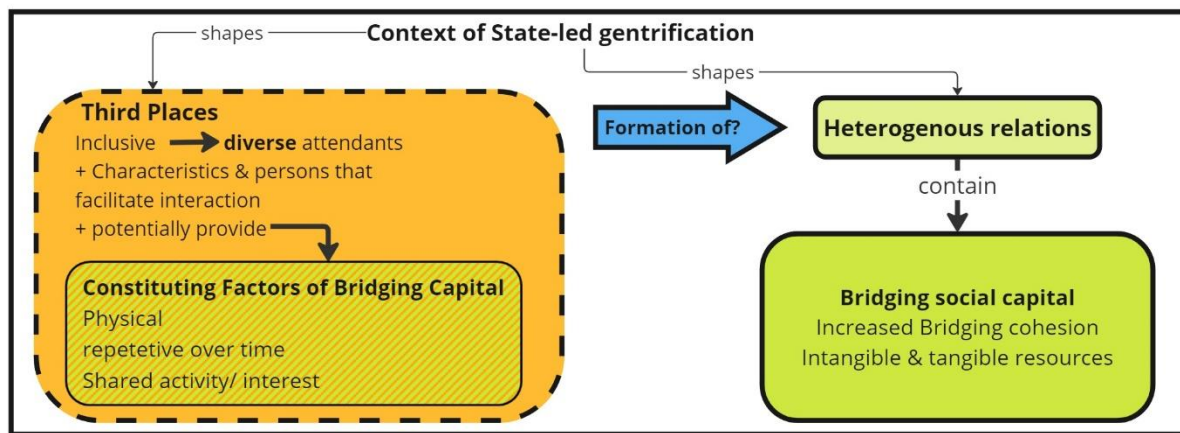


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

State-led Gentrification causes a transformation, which has three contextual implications: introducing newcomers of different backgrounds changes the population composition and affects who can theoretically encounter whom. Secondly, gentrification shapes social relations since it can cause conflicts and tensions between neighbors. Thirdly, it influences the **independent variable third places** that provide informal gathering opportunities. Thus, gentrification affects the actual encounters and their dynamics inside third places, which are theorized to enable diverse encounters and facilitate the interaction of strangers through their characteristics. Therefore, they could provide the arena for **bridging social capital creation** resulting from relations across heterogeneous persons. Bridging capital is theorized to strengthen cohesion across differences and enable access to tangible and intangible resources. Its formation depends on physical, repetitive encounters over time. Shared activities, shared characteristics, and specific persons can facilitate its creation, all of which could be provided in third places.

3. Research design, methodology

This chapter introduces the methodological approach to answering the research question. It includes the research design, a detailed description of the case study process, and the main methods of interviews and participant observation. The chapter closes with limitations, followed by an operationalization table breaking down the variables into measurable indicators.

The qualitative-explanatory research design allows for flexibility and exploration of emergent patterns and relationships in the data (Neuman, 2007). This suits the complexity that is caused by the variable's third places and bridging social capital being contexted in state-led gentrification. Furthermore, it allows for an in-depth and contextual understanding of the how and why (Neumann, 2007) of residents' experiences and perceptions of social interactions within the investigated third place. A comprehensive literature review enabled an in-depth understanding of the main concepts and related research gaps (Flick, 2014), providing the basis for the operationalization. Awareness of previous research on the main concepts can add to the research and is essential to verify it. The period 2008-2024 for the research question was chosen since the central interventions and the most substantial transformation in Katendrecht took place from 2008 onwards (Stouten, 2017). Additionally, the data availability before 2008 is constrained.

3.1. Case study – Exploring bridging capital creation in third places in Katendrecht.

The research design is based on the single case study Katendrecht with multiple embedded units of analysis - four selected third places, one of them in-depth. It was chosen because of the revelatory rationale (Yin, 2003) since the bridging capital creation within third places has been researched little, let alone with gentrification as a shaping context. Starting from the neighborhood level allows for a holistic understanding of the topic. Through a systematic 2 step selection process, the research focused after an initial neighborhood-wide analysis on four third places that were explored through preliminary data collection to gain a deeper understanding of diversity and interaction patterns and then narrowed down to one primary unit of analysis for in-depth investigation. This allows for a comprehensive analysis within legitimate time and resource constraints (Gläser & Laudel, 2010), ensuring rich data collection and analysis.

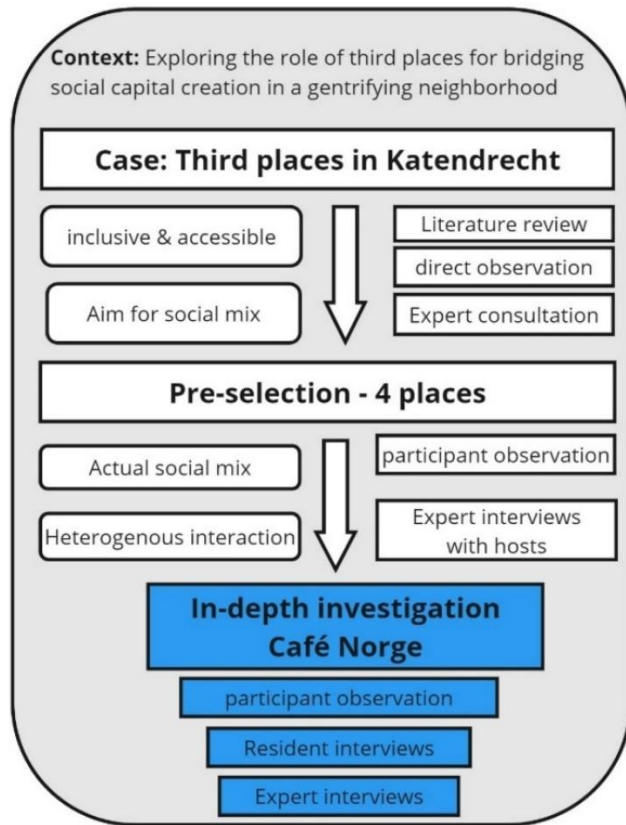
The case study includes multiple sources of evidence suggested by Yin (2003). The first is **Documentation** in the form of policy documents and case-specific literature to understand state-led gentrification policies and their justifications regarding social mixing. They are complemented with **archival records** consisting of municipal statistics and charts on the neighborhood level to describe Katendrecht's transformation. Semi-structured **interviews** with residents and experts and direct and participant **observations** were conducted to select and explore the units of analysis. Thus, the case study is characterized by triangulation of methods combining primary and secondary data with different strengths and weaknesses that complement their imperfections (Turner et al., 2016; Yin, 2003). For instance, information gained about interactions via observation, such as who talks with whom about what, etc., will be triangulated by interviews to capture background experiences, emotions, and meanings, and vice versa (Verloo, 2000). Combined with understanding gentrification as the underlying context through literature and neighborhood statistics, this triangulation allows for a comprehensive understanding and identification of patterns and inconsistencies and increases validity (Yin, 2003).

3.1.1. The selection of the unit of analysis

The initial identification of third places for further exploration was guided by an operational definition (Yin, 2003) derived from the operationalization table: *Inclusive third places that host diverse attendants and facilitate their interaction*. An informal expert consultation in the form of a neighborhood walk was realized to identify those places, a legitimate method to inform

research design and data collection strategies (Flick, 2009). Background research identified places welcoming explicitly diverse groups, and additionally, direct observation through field visits (Yin, 2003) was realized at different times-to gain a first impression of diversity and interactions. The information gained was channeled through spatial mapping (Neumann, 2007), which locates relevant places with short descriptions and pictures (Appendix 4: Third Place). This outcome was a pre-selection for further exploration of four places: Platform K, Verhalenhuis Belvédère, Community Center t’Steiger, and Café Norge.

Figure 2. The embedded, single-case study design and the unit of analysis selection



Source: Yin (2003)

In these pre-selected places, participant observations and expert interviews were conducted to collect preliminary data. In the case of t’Steiger, an interview with the responsible organizer was not possible; instead, the highly effective data collection technique of a focus group interview with two frequent attendees was undertaken to get more place-specific insight (Flick, 2014). This resulted in Café Norge being selected for in-depth investigation for five reasons: a) it hosts the most diverse attendants, b) it was mentioned in all expert interviews as a place of social mixing, c) It serves primarily the local population, d) it opens every day for a long time & hosts several events e) it best fits Oldenburg’s concept of third places.

The preliminary results of the other places are briefly presented in the results and detailed in Appendix 4: Third Place Mapping. The objective of the in-depth investigation was to conduct a comprehensive analysis of social capital creation within Norge, exploring and understanding the interactions between heterogenous attendants and their outcomes regarding bridging social capital in the context of gentrifying Katendrecht. Key methods applied were interviews combined with participant observation.

3.1.2. Semi-structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews focus on relevant topics for the research questions while allowing for flexibility. Two semi-structured interview forms were applied: Interviews with third-place attendants and systematizing expert interviews to capture the expert's outstanding knowledge in this specific field (Flick, 2014). The expert interview complements the resident's perspective by providing expert knowledge on bridging capital formation and about social dynamics shaped by gentrification in Katendrecht, as well as more specific details about the place's attendant diversity and interaction patterns. Experts can have a particular body of knowledge due to their profession, or they acquire this knowledge through many years of experience in dealing with the subject (Flick, 2014); this research applied a purposive sampling aiming at critical cases and considered experts who acquired their knowledge through their professional or voluntary role as hosts of the four places. This included one barkeeper and the owner of

Norge; the other barkeeper saw himself primarily as a resident and was interviewed as such. Additionally, independent of the explored places, one general expert² was interviewed to gain a neutral voice.

The resident interview partners were sampled purposively through the highly efficient “maximum variation-sampling” (Seidman, 2006, p. 52). Although qualitative-explanatory research does not aim at generalization, “it should try to be as representative of the object of study as possible” (Verloo, 2000, p. 42). Interviews with 'gentrifiers' and long-term residents were conducted to represent different perspectives and thus gain a comprehensive understanding. Interviewing the latter brings more feasibility concerns like the language barrier, but their perspective is critical since gentrification policies are justified by improving original residents living conditions (Kleinhans et al., 2007). Term-wise, this research refers to gentrifiers as newcomers because it is a more neutral word. The elderly, primarily white working-class long-term residents in Katendrecht, identify and refer to themselves as 'Kapeneze,' which is why the research will use the term when it applies. Newcomers, primarily homeowners, moved to Katendrecht in recent years and tend to be of high education and income. By contrast, long-term residents mostly grow up in Katendrecht, are associated with the working class having lower education and income levels, and often rent social housing. The interviewees' characteristics were consulted informally in advance and are covered in the introductory questions.

The interviewees (Appendix 5: List of Interviewees) showed the complexity of reality beyond the literature-described dichotomy of gentrifier and original residents. First, most interviewed experts have a double role as current or former residents of Katendrecht, including long-term residents and newcomers. All six newcomer interviewees bought property in Katendrecht, the majority in the last five years, Adriana already ten years ago. Five are elderly, white ethnical Dutch, most recently pensioners, and consider themselves high-income. Dimitrios stands out as a professional in his late 30s and is ethnically Greek. Four interviews were conducted with elderly, white working-class inhabitants living in social housing. Two of them are long-term residents; the others moved into social housing in recent years, replacing deceased residents. Nevertheless, they identify as Kapeneze, distancing themselves from the higher-income newcomers. This shows the boundaries of the dichotomy, whereas the categorization depends more on the socio-economic background and less on the years of residence. This dichotomy is further challenged by a second group of long-term residents who are of a working-class background but younger and ethnically diverse, such as Raul and Adewale, who do not identify themselves with the primarily white Kapeneze. Furthermore, the researcher had multiple in-depth informal talks, most with Kapeneze but also with young, diverse, long-term residents who did not want to give a formal interview but were willing to share their perceptions.

The language of the guidelines was simplified after the first attempt in the field, using community gathering places instead of third places and bridging connections as a synonym for bridging social capital. The sufficiency or saturation of information determined the number of interviews. Sufficiency refers to ensuring an adequate representation of participants to reflect the diversity of the population, while the saturation of Information is achieved when reaching a point in data collection where no new information is gained (Seidman, 2006).

3.1.3. Observations

Participant observations are a special form of observation in which the researcher actively interacts with the researched subjects, taking different roles. Active participation provides contextual understanding and unique insights into otherwise inaccessible fields (Kearns, 2016;

² The expert is a board member of KaapseKringen, a foundation that aims to increase social cohesion in Katendrecht by fostering interaction between long-term residents and newcomers. The foundation has no physical location and operates independently of the explored places, though it partially collaborates with them.

Yin, 2003; Verloo, 2020). I remained transparent about my role as a researcher while actively engaging with residents. By remaining in the background of the conversation, I reduced the disturbance to the ‘natural’ dynamics of the place. During participant observation, small talk and informal, natural interactions are of outstanding importance to create trustful relations in the field, enabling the recruitment of interviewees and providing ‘backstage’ information not accessible via formal interviews. This can include hints about underlying conflicts in the community and serves to sensitize the researcher (Driessen & Jansen, 2013; Kearns, 2016). While having these casual conversations, a few relevant questions can be introduced and contribute substantially to the data collection (Spreadley, 2016). This was used during observations in all pre-selected places to understand attendants' backgrounds better to assess diversity and gain an impression of their lived experience of interaction. In Norge, additional observations with a focus were conducted, for instance, on the role of the hosts and the bar and the interaction between long-term residents and newcomers. Daily regular operations at different times were observed to reflect the range of attendants and interactions happening at Norge and organized events that potentially attract residents of different backgrounds (Table 1). This is to gain an in-depth understanding of the attendants beyond the interviewees and inner dynamics to identify patterns and factors influencing diversity and interaction.

Date and Time	Place	Occasion	Focus
26.04.24; 12-14pm	Belvédère	Kaapse Tafel	Diversity of attendants, nature of interaction, atmosphere
16.05.24; 6-9 pm	t’Steiger	Pub Quiz	Diversity of attendants, nature of interaction, atmosphere
14.05.24 – 7-8:30 pm	Wijkhub	Neighborhood discussion about gentrification	Attendants and their perception of Katendrechts Transformation
24.05.24; 7–9:05 pm	Norge	Pub quiz with Alex Harrand	Diversity of attendants, nature of interaction, role of activity.
31.05.24; 12-1:30 pm	Belvédère	Kaapse Tafel	Diversity of attendants, nature of interaction, atmosphere.
01.06.24; 8-11 pm	Norge	Soccer - Champions League Final	Focus on who attends, the role of the activity and attendants’ interactions
02.06.24; 5-7:30 pm	Norge	Regular Café Observation	Comparison Daily Operation Dynamics – Outside & Inside
05.06.24; 9:15am-3 pm	Belvédère	Interview until 10:30 am, then observation.	Diversity and interaction of regular daily attendants and within the staff
05.06.24; 3pm-6 pm	Norge	Two interviews, in-between observation	Diversity of attendants, nature of interaction, atmosphere during daily operation, role of consumption
06.06.24; 6-7:30pm	Norge	Participant Observation	interactions during regular Bar operation, Focus on the role of the Bar and the barkeeper
06.06.24; 7:30-10 pm	Platform K	Sewing workshop	Diversity of attendants, their interactions, role of the activity
07.06.24;12-2 pm	Belvédère	KapieMakeen	Focus on attendants and (un)organized interactions
07.06.24; 2:20-10:20 pm	Norge	Undocumented center event	Diversity of attendants, their interactions, role of externally organized activity
10.06.24; 7:15-10:10 pm	Norge	Interview outside, then regular operation inside.	Diversity of attendants, nature of the interaction, Role of Salsa event, Deeper understanding of perceptions & experiences
21.06.24; 7:50-11:30pm	Norge	Soccer- Dutch national team	Focus on who attends, the role of the activity and the attendants interactions, role of consumption

Table 1. List of Observations

3.1.4. Data transcription and analysis

Following Verloo (2000), the observations were documented as descriptive field notes, first reflections in a diary, and a logbook. The field notes were made first in a condensed form and elaborated on later with details in an expanded account (Spradley, 2016). The recording was transcribed for the interviews to minimize data loss (Flick, 2014) and was analyzed along with the expanded field notes (Kearns, 2016) with the software AtlasTI. The analysis was based on Blaikie’s (2000) abductive approach, which combines inductive and deductive elements. Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) further refined this hybrid approach, describing four steps: First, open, inductive coding to explore the data and allow for themes to emerge. Second, prior theory-derived deductive categories, mainly operationalization indicators, were applied in this research to base the analysis on the relevant theoretical framework. Then, abductive reasoning and integration follow, which consists of going back and forth between data and theories, refining and merging them. In the fourth step, overreaching themes are identified to capture the essence of the data and develop a cohesive narrative capturing data and theory. The relevant codebooks can be found in Appendix 6: Codebooks.











	Name	Size	Created by
	Café Norge	49	Stefan Adamson
	Plattform K	16	Stefan Adamson
	t'Steiger	7	Stefan Adamson
	Belvedere	20	Stefan Adamson
	Bridging Capital Benefits	39	Stefan Adamson
	Bridging challenges	33	Stefan Adamson
	Bridging facilitators	27	Stefan Adamson
	Current social dynamics & networks in K	18	Stefan Adamson
	Gentrification as a context	29	Stefan Adamson
	Interviewees background	12	Stefan Adamson

Figure 3. Codebook of the Group Structure - AtlasTI

3.2. Challenges & Limitations

The lack of generalization of findings is a main limitation of qualitative, explorative research (Verloo, 2020). Similarly, case studies aim towards high internal validity, but external validity is difficult to achieve (Yin, 2003). Qualitative research requires a long personal commitment from the researcher, who can be influenced emotionally (Atteslander et al., 2010) or biased by interacting in the field (Yin, 2003). For instance, the researcher’s sympathy with certain participants can influence his behavior in the field and, thus, the subject and the data transcription (e.g., observation notes) and analysis (e.g., giving importance to certain statements). Triangulation and the reflection of bias and emotions, for instance, by reflecting with colleagues and participants, are essential to cope with this. The same is true for interviewees who might have a bias, such as a rosy retrospective of the past. The selection process brings the danger of excluding potentially relevant places, for example, through biased expert consultation. This was coped with by remaining open to the unexpected and willing to adjust the research design. In any case, researching selected places in Katendrecht means that the results are limited to those. Consequently, people who do not attend these places are not

represented, and bridging capital formed outside of these places in other settings or outside Katendrecht is not focused on. Therefore, the findings indicate the role of third places in bridging capital creation; however, little to no comparison with the importance of first (home), second (work or schools), or digital places is possible. Concretely, multiple interviewees highlighted their building blocks and schools as places of interaction, though with varying opinions of their bridging importance, and one example of organized digital bridging was mentioned. The researcher faced some distrust towards him as an 'outsider' (Neumann, 2007), and his limited Dutch level challenged the feasibility. The constant reflection and ethical acting, not only during the data collecting, are essential throughout the research process to guarantee confidentiality, privacy, and anonymity, especially since qualitative research tends to capture more contextual and confidential data than quantitative approaches (Flick, 2009). Consequently, all interviewees' names were changed to guarantee their anonymity.

3.3. Operationalization: Variables & indicators

Concept	Dimensions	Indicator	Measurement	Data Source
Third places are spaces of informal encounter beyond the realms of work and home, with characteristics that enable heterogeneous encounters not found in formal settings.	Characteristics that enable heterogeneous encounter	Accessibility and Inclusiveness ¹	No exclusion signs & entrance control	Direct and participant observation; Interviews, Background research
			Consumption not dominant & low profile	
			Neutral ground (comfortable for all, flexible come and go)	
			Place adapts to the users' needs	
	Actual user group	Diversity of ²	Genders	
			(Socio-economic) Classes	
			Ethnicity	
			Ages	
	Factors facilitating interaction	Positive encounters ³	Leveling – no hierarchy	
			Comfortable Enjoyable Atmosphere	
People facilitating interaction ⁴		Presence of ‘open persons’, ‘regulars’, or with brokering function		
		Incentives to interact ⁵	Triangulation – a common subject or object	
		Conversation as the main activity		
Bridging capital can emerge from heterogeneous interactions if they have certain constituting factors. It results in and broader societal and individual benefits.	Constitution of bridging capital	Heterogeneous interactions in terms of ⁶ :	Ethnicity	Interviews; Participant Observation
			Socio-economic status	
			Age	
		Heterogeneous interactions that are ⁷	Gender	
			Repetitive	
			Physical	
	Eased by ⁸	For longer periods		
		Shared interest or activity		
	Resulting Bridging Capital a) Benefits the Broader society	Bridging social cohesion ⁹	Shared characteristics (e.g. ethnicity, gender)	
			Mutual respect & tolerance of differences between neighbors	
Trust				
Sense of belonging				
b) improves individual integration into society through access to resources ¹⁰	Intangible norms of reciprocity	Increased Civic Participation		
		Emotional support		
	Tangible norms of reciprocity	Access to information & advice (e.g. career or service-related tips)		
		Access to goods & services (e.g. experienced how guidance/ contacts enabled concrete benefits)		

Table 2. Operationalization table

1) Yuen & Johnson, 2017; Oldenburg, 1989; Mehta, 2014; 2) Yuen & Johnson, 2017; Oldenburg, 1989; 3) Oldenburg, 1989 4) Putnam, 2001; Lofland, 1998; Stovel & Shaw 2012 5) Putnam, 2001; Lofland, 1998, Whyte, 1980 6) Poortinga, 2012; Szreter & Woolcock, 2004 7) Arisoy & Paker, 2019; Atkinson & Kintrea, 2000; Kleinhans et al., 2007; Peterson, 2017 8) Arisoy & Paker, 2019; Peterson, 2017, Nast & Blokland, 2014; Amin, 2002; Wise, 2009 9) Poortinga, 2012; Putnam, 2001; Peterson, 2017; Arisoy and Paker, 2019; Granovetter, 1973 10) Putnam, 2001; Granovetter, 1973, Halstead et al., 2022; Van Eijk, 2010; Szreter & Woolcock, 2004; Peterson, 2017; Nast & Blokland, 2014; Arisoy and Paker, 2019

4. Results & analysis

This chapter first provides findings about the context-giving state-led gentrification. This is based on policy documents and neighborhood statistics, enriched with interview insights and case-specific literature. Afterward, the findings of third-place exploration and their relations with bridging capital are presented and discussed, focusing on Norge's in-depth analysis.

4.1. State-led gentrification - context for social interaction in Katendrecht

Katendrecht's history is coined by migration and port facilities; however, after the latter's closure, it was well-known for hosting criminal activities, a red-light district characterized by poverty and unemployment (Stouten, 2017). In recent decades, the City of Rotterdam has promoted a strong social mixing strategy, explicitly using gentrification as a tool to achieve social differentiation and prevent segregation (Uitermark & Duyvendak, 2008). These policies focus on Rotterdam's South and are expressed with concrete objectives by multiple documents, the *Stadsvisie 2030* (2007), *Woonvisie 2030* (2016), and the *National Program of Rotterdam South* (NPRZ, 2019). Measures codified there include massive demolition, renovation, and partial selling of social housing and market incentives to attract higher-income people to increase livability. Katendrecht should become a creative mixed neighborhood and function as a second city center. Stouten (2017) criticizes that policies intervening in the housing market contradict the growing need for affordable housing in the context of rising rents and high poverty levels in Rotterdam, despite the demolition in Katendrecht being limited to 82 units and new construction happening on brownfields. One newcomer interviewee bought his property from a social housing cooperative that sold their stock partially (Dimitrios, 9 June 2024).

State-led flagship projects enhanced Katendrecht's transformation. The *SS Rotterdam*, a former luxury cruise ship, was brought to Katendrecht, offering a hotel service and high-class gastronomy since 2010. The intention was to promote tourism and change the neighborhood image to attract investments and higher-income residents (Nientied, 2016). The 2012 constructed pedestrian and cyclist bridge 'Rijnhavenbrug' improved Katendrecht's accessibility remarkably (Stouten, 2017) and was pivotal in accelerating the transformation (Interview with Adewale, expert & long-term resident, 5 June 2024). Other projects initiated or supported by the state are the luxury *Fenix Lofts*, the single-apartment *Cobana Cohesion*, and the *Walhalla Theatre* (Stouten, 2017). These state-led policies incentivized massive construction activity in recent years (Stouten, 2017). Over 50% of the total housing stock has been constructed since 2000 (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2023), focusing on ownership and high incomers (Interview with Jan, Newcomer, 13 June 2024). This has caused a sharp rise in average property values and an overrepresentation of the luxury property category. On the other hand, the old housing stock contains all social housing, although its share dropped remarkably below the city's average (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2023).

The new housing attracted new inhabitants, causing a significant total population growth (182%) and composition change in the period 2008-2023 (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2023). The population got younger on average, having higher rates of employment, income and education levels, and became ethnically more Dutch, lowering the migrant's share, especially of non-western background (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2023). Compared to the city average, Katendrecht's population is younger and has a slightly higher share of ethnical Dutch (46% vs. 43%), above-average income (116%), and share of Top-20%-earners (23% vs. 16%) (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2023). This transformation extends to the local economy, which shifted from car-related workshops toward the dominance of *Horeca* (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2023) and the establishment of a cultural industry (Stouten, 2017), increasing the total number of jobs remarkably (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2023).

Source: Geemente Rotterdam 2023; 2024

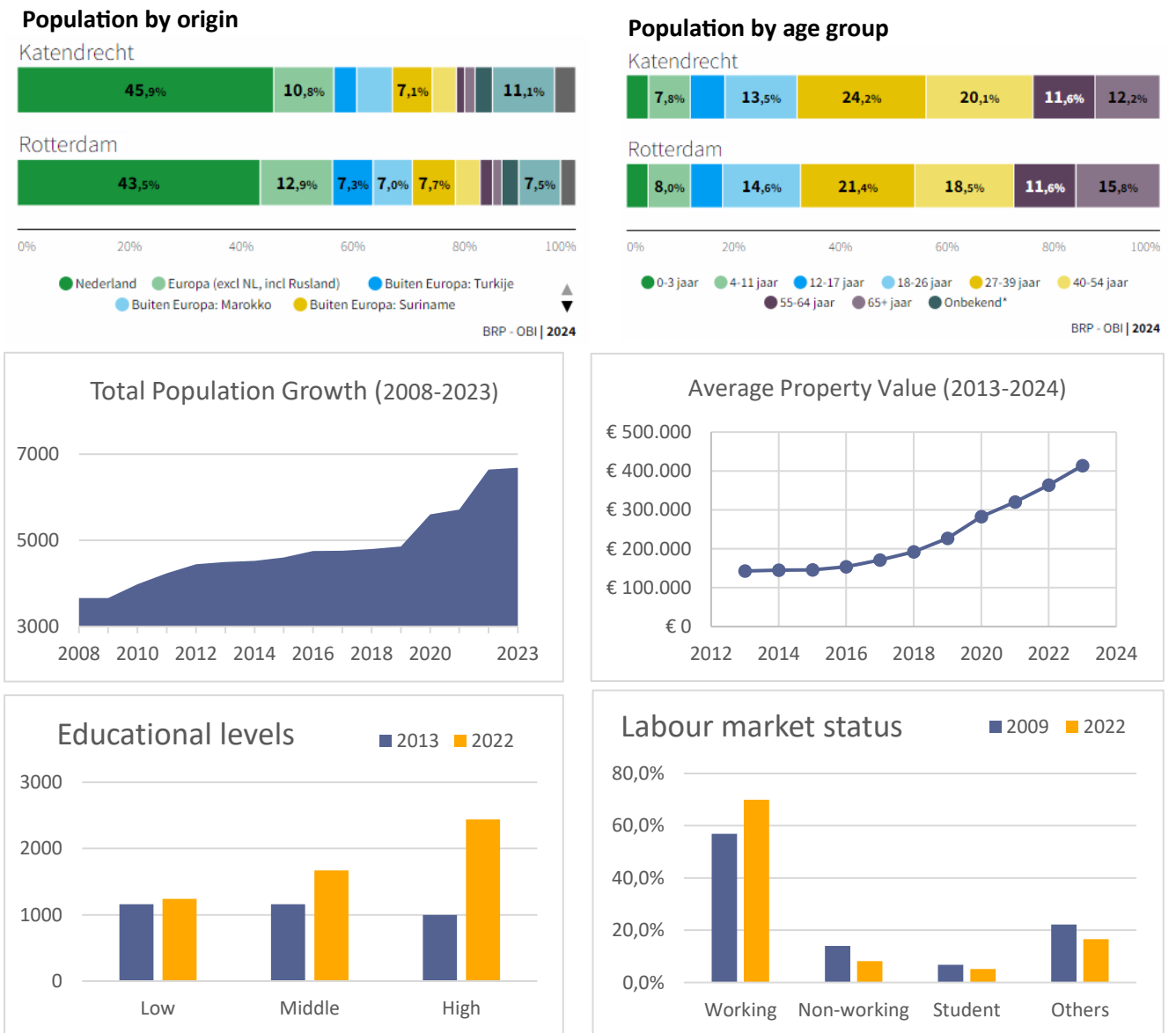


Figure 4. Katendrecht's socio-economic transformation in numbers.

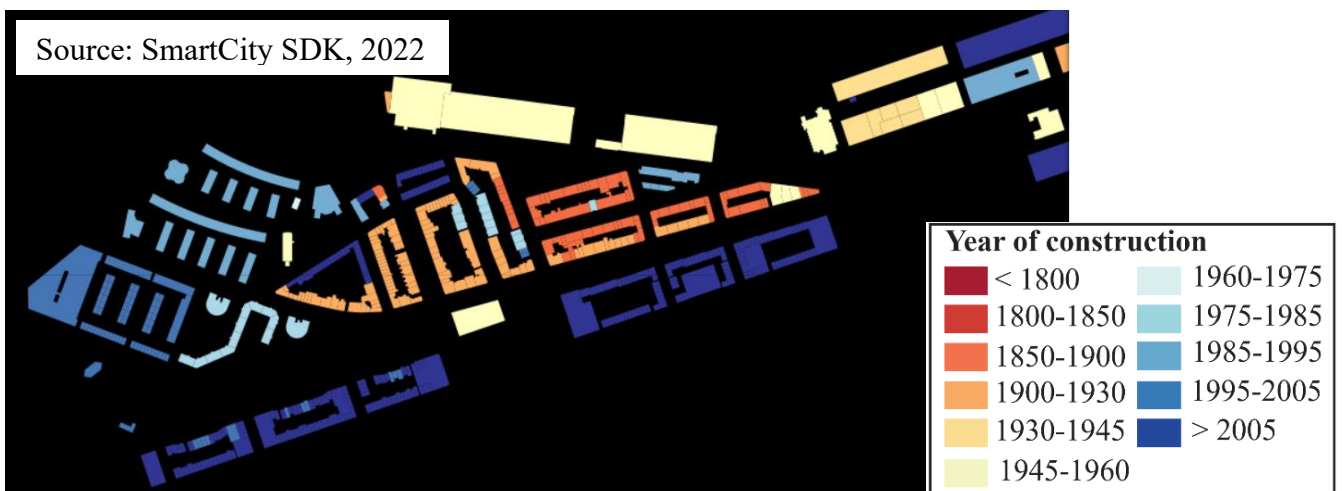


Figure 5. Overview of building age in Katendrecht.

The radical transformation of Katendrecht is marketed as a success story, changing from a problematic to one of the trendiest neighborhoods. Katendrecht performs best in its district and better than many in the citywide neighborhood index, comparing a mix of objective and subjective livability indicators (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2024b). The interviewed Expert Raul (27 May 2024) criticized this index, claiming that gentrification overshadows persistent social problems. Nevertheless, multiple interviewees highlight the livability benefits of Katendrecht's transformation from a redlight district to a clean and safe neighborhood (Adewale, expert & long-term resident, 5 June 2024; Elisabeth, expert & newcomer, 31 May 2024; Observation, informal talk, 10 June 2024).

4.2. Mapping relevant third places for heterogeneous interaction in Katendrecht

From here on, the findings come exclusively from interviews, supplemented with observations. Therefore, the 'interview with' is dispensed but implied in the referencing. The independent expert Elisabeth was born initially in Katendrecht in wealthy circumstances, left in her youth, and returned five years ago to a newly built complex. Elisabeth (31 May 2024) believes the rapid transformation causes a lack of social cohesion, with newcomers and long-term residents living in segregated worlds: "These people are usually not very interested in each other. They didn't grow up together, they have no history together. The only thing they do is they live here on this small peninsula. [...] the worlds are very much apart" (l. 65). On the other hand, the newcomers share three critical similarities: "They are people that can afford apartments that start at €500,000. And they are mainly well-educated, and they all want to come to Katendrecht" (Elisabeth, 31 May 2024, l. 69). Expert Johanna (5 June 2024), social geographer and co-founder of Belvedere, sees this gap enhanced by "very strict bonding of Kapeneze" (l. 46), describing it as part of their DNA. Experts Adewale (5 June 2024) and Elisabeth (31 May 2024) explain the strong bonding with mutual support and the isolated location. Experts (Raul, 27 May 2024) and newcomer residents (Pieter, 17 June 2024; Jan, 13 June 2024) highlight the substantial socio-economic inequality in Katendrecht, expressed in spatial segregation: "the old population will be more and more in islands isolated in a big sea of newcomers. And spatially segregated also because the main social housing is around t'Steiger. So this is where they come" (Adriana, expert, 6 June 2024, l. 127). Newcomer Jan (13 June 2024), like Elisabeth, a board member of KaapseKringen³, describes how the new luxury complexes form a ring on the former brownfields around the historic core of Katendrecht, where the long-term, low-income residents concentrate. He is concerned that the absence of a middle class, caused by unaffordable new buildings, widens the gap between the two groups. The experts Raul (27.05.24), who grew up in Katendrecht, and Elisabeth (31 May 2024) both blame the gated character of the new blocks, including facilities and their own gathering, for reducing the already limited interaction between the two groups. That relates to little life on the streets, which is also caused by a lack of shops and little shared public space since Deliplein is attended exclusively by newcomers (Dimitrios, Newcomer, 9 June 2024; Adriana, expert, 6 June 2024). Consequently, there is less interaction between neighbors of different backgrounds. Multiple experts see gentrification-caused changes in third places: "A lot of places have been added for the people who can afford it. That's for the newcomers. Yes, because there's economy there, there's money there [...] It's all a bit hip" (Johana, 5 June 2024, l. 24). Experts Adriana (6 June 2024) and Barkeeper Hendrik (25 June 2024) describe the rise of exclusive catering, which displaced almost all affordable gathering places like brown bars.

³ Foundation that aims to increase social cohesion in Katendrecht by fostering interaction between long-term residents and newcomers.

Gentrification also shaped the places explored during the pre-selection. Expert Raul (27 May 2024) perceives a decrease in gathering places and founded Platform K 2019 as a direct reaction to gentrification to bridge the division of groups and enable everyone to benefit from Katendrecht's transformation. The foundation aims mainly at the youth and offers art and music classes for children to foster diverse encounters between their parents when picking them up, as well as a textile workshop for adults (Adriana, expert, 6 June 2024). However, Platform K is constrained by limited resources, leading to little activities and impact, recognized internally and externally. Volunteer Adriana (6 June 2024) sees no bridging connections resulting from the children's activities, contradicting the foundation's objective. Instead, she perceives her textile workshop as a promising but small-scale experiment.

The Verhalenhuis Belvédère has a long history of serving the neighborhood in different functions. It has been run by a foundation since 2008, preventing it from being converted into luxury apartments (Johanna, co-founder, 5 June 2024). Belvedere is perceived as inclusive but also mainly as a cultural place with a leftish-progressive and NGO character and not as a neutral gathering place (Jan, newcomer, 13 June 2024; Dimitrios, newcomer, 9 June 2024). Kapeneze interviewees perceive the entry barriers as higher than at Steiger or Norge (Willem & Anna, 23 May 2024). The diversity of attendants is questionable; they are primarily described as elderly and mostly highly educated. Moreover, many people are outsiders attracted by the program, which is not limited to Katendrecht (Emma, newcomer, 22 May 2024; Raul, expert, 27 May 2024). One event aims to mix newcomers and Kapeneze. It works as a gathering for the latter but fails in mixing (Sophie, expert, 5 June 2024).

Experts (Johanna, 5 June 2024; Adriana, 6 June 2024) perceive the community center t'Steiger as the only explored place that has remained unchanged by gentrification. Being inclusive, it functions as a traditional social community center financed by the municipality, offering selective activities for children and the elderly. However, the diversity of attendants is very low, attracting exclusively Kapeneze, who have strong bonding and fixed groups (Raul, expert, 27 May 2024; Jan, newcomer, 13 June 2024; Willem, Kapeneze, 23 May 2024). This, the run-down conditions, and the unattractive offer repeal newcomers and ethnically diverse, younger residents (Adriana, expert, 6 June 2024; Emma, newcomer, 22 May 2024).

4.3. In-depth investigation of Café Norge

Experts and residents are concerned that the ongoing influx of newcomers outnumbers the increasingly isolated, aging, and shrinking Kapeneze group (Raul, 27 May 2024; Emma, newcomer, 22 May 2024; Hendrik, Kapeneze, 25 June 2024). The segregation extending to third places underlines the relevance of shared places for interaction. Despite surprisingly few conflicts and open tensions, newcomer and urbanist Dimitrios (9 June 2024) highlights the necessity of more social interaction between the two groups. The most promising place resulting from the selection process was Café Norge.

4.3.1. Introducing Norge

Café Gezellig by Norge, founded by Norwegian sailors, has served for over 70 years as a working-class pub bar in Katendrecht (Stichting Wijkcollectie, 2024). In September 2022, long-term resident Adewale (5 June 2024) became the bar owner through a personal connection. Two ladies invested in the bar and contracted Adewale's brother to renovate it. Shortly after reopening, they decided to resell it and offered it to Adewale before putting it formally on the market. He took the chance to realize his vision of a social business, a community place to enable connections between diverse neighbors, explaining: "Gentrification in the way they think, that if you put people with higher income, higher education, it will stimulate automatically the people with lower income, lower education. That is not really like that. There has to be something in-between that will link those two together" (Adewale, 5 June 2024, l. 89). He welcomes everybody, explicitly addressing long-term residents and

newcomers. The efforts made to cater to everybody are also perceived by external experts (Adriana, 6 June 2024). Independent expert Elisabeth (31 May 2024) highlights Norge as the only place that succeeds in bringing together long-term and newcomer residents. Norge is mainly a corner bar with extensive opening hours from 2 pm until late at night, seven days a week, with family-business character Adewale being present around the clock. It offers a large bar, seats, and tables inside and outside, music, and a wide variety of food and drinks (Adewale, 5 June 2024; Hendrik, barkeeper, 25 June 2024; Observation, 2 June 2024). Norge hosts events to gather people of diverse backgrounds. This includes monthly neighborhood drinks, salsa dance evenings, karaoke nights, pub quizzes, soccer matches, or events other neighborhood organizations host (Adewale, 5 June 2024; Observation, 7 June 2024).

4.3.2. Third-Place Characteristics: Accessibility and Inclusiveness

Independent expert Elisabeth (31 May 2024) and Barkeeper Hendrik (25 June 2024), a Kapeneze who was the Norge's owner for 20 years, perceive it as the last brown pub in Katendrecht. Expert Johanna (5 June 2024) coincides but sees a slight change in the atmosphere away from being a folk pub. Regarding Norge's change, barkeeper Lisa (5 June 2024) states: "When I was first living here, there were many places I didn't want to go to. Also, this cafe with the old owner was a little bit strange to enter" (l. 17). This indicates the complexity of accessibility, showing that affordable third places are not necessarily inclusive, and changes have versatile implications. Current Norge is widely perceived by newcomers (Pieter, 17 June 2024; Dimitrios, 9 June 2024), an external expert (Sophie, 5 June 2024), and the barkeepers (Hendrik, 25 June 2024; Lisa, 5 June 2024) as inclusive and of very low profile, having no entry barriers and being welcoming and pleasant for everybody. Likewise, several Kapeneze highlight feeling welcomed and comfortable at Norge, unlike other places (Anna, 23 May 2024; Observation, informal talk, 7 June 2024). For newcomer Jan (13 June 2024) and expert Elisabeth (31 May 2024), ethnicity does not play a role in Norge, and the Antillean and Surinamese communities feel welcomed because they identify with the black owner. The barkeepers (Hendrik, 25 June 2024; Lisa, 5 June 2024) and owner Adewale (5 June 2024) describe the bar's atmosphere as always friendly and positive. Multiple newcomers like that hierarchy play no role in Norge (Jan, 13 June 2024; Pieter, 17 June 2024; Dimitrios, 9 June 2024). Kapeneze and Barkeeper Hendrik (25 June 2024) believes that attendants are equal, independent of income. However, for multiple interviewees, an economic barrier exists. Some see it as inevitable for bars (Dimitrios, newcomer, 9 June 2024) and caused by inflation, not higher than it would have been in the former Norge before renovation (Adriana, expert, 6 June 2024; Adewale, owner, 5 June 2024). For barkeeper Lisa (5 June 2024), it is not a relevant decision criterion between Norge and another bar. Other residents, including both groups, see an exclusion of the poorest since attending Cafés is generally costly, while poverty levels are high (Pieter, newcomer, 17 June 2024; Observation, informal talk with Kapeneze, 23 June 2024). Also, the former owner Hendrik (25 June 2024) sees many Kapeneze challenged by inflation-driven prices due to their small pensions. On the other hand, several interviewees and observations suggest that there is interaction happening in Norge without or little consumption, examples being small talks with Adewale, watching football, kids playing, or people using the outside area to hang out (Pieter, 17 June 2024; Dimitrios, 9 June 2024; Lisa, barkeeper, 5 June 2024; Observation, 21 June 2024). The hosts highlight their efforts in adapting flexibly to the client's wishes regarding the menu and music to allow for a pleasant experience for everybody (Adewale, 5 June 2024; Lisa, 5 June 2024), an impression supported by observations (5, 10, 21 June 2024). These observations additionally revealed a differentiated consumption pattern where Kapeneze drinks Coffee or the cheapest beer, while Newcomers tend to choose higher-priced wines.

4.3.3. Diversity within Café Norge

Independent expert (Elisabeth, 31 May 2024), the hosts (Hendrik, 21 June 2024; Adewale, 5 June 2024), Kapeneze (Anna, 23 May 2024) and newcomers (Pieter; 17 June 2024; Emma, 22 May 2024), perceive the diversity in Norge in terms of different income, age, gender, and ethnicity backgrounds as high. All interviewees perceive the presence of newcomers and long-term residents, though expert Adriana (6 June 2024) believes that fewer Kapeneze attend. This impression is supported by my own observation (10 June 2024) and the former owner Hendrik (25 June 2024), who notes regularly attending Kapeneze, but getting less because many have died in recent years.

Newcomer Jan (13 June 2024) identifies three groups: some Kapeneze from the old Norge, though not that many because most attend t'Steiger, many higher-income newcomers, and ethnically more diverse young people in their 20-30s, most born on Katendrecht. This perception coincides with my observation (1, 10, 21 June 2024), whereas the group of younger, ethnically diverse long-term residents tends to attend mainly during the later evening and for specific events such as watching soccer or the Salsa evening. Owner Adewale (5 June 2024) believes that everybody comes, mentioning in addition to the other interviewees, students, middle-agers, and tourists. Nevertheless, Norge is perceived by residents as mainly serving the local market (Dimitrios, 9 June 2024; Pieter, 17 June 2024), and most interacted attendants live in immediate proximity, one regular Kapeneze highlighting the importance of proximity and comfort in an informal talk (Observation, 07 June 2024). Not being mentioned by any interviewee, the observation (21 June 2024) reveals a tendency towards more males, especially during soccer-related activities and at the bar, interestingly, the gender distribution is similar across all attending groups. By contrast, predominantly females and children attended the Undocumented Center Event (Observation, 07 June 2024) more, demonstrating that activities influence attendants' diversity. When asked about missing people, Jan (Newcomer, 13 June 2024) highlights the absence of elderly Muslims. Adewale (5 June 2024) sees fewer people they describe as not open-minded, living in the past, and rejecting everything new. Barkeeper Lisa replied: "I know some people are missing, like old neighbors who are a little stiff. They maybe cannot handle the change or the idea that it's also going to be fun to be with new people" (l. 37). This quote is underlined by multiple informal talks, where newcomer and Kapeneze actively thematized politics. Both claimed to be progressive and anti-populist and suspect many Kapeneze of voting right-wing populists, especially those living around and attending t'Steiger (Observations, 7, 10 June 2024). This suggests that Norge attendants tend to be more liberal-progressive independent of their background, which might match primarily positive views on the neighborhood transformation (Observations, Informal talks, 1, 16, 20 June 2024).

4.3.4. Inner Social Dynamics

The bar has very different dynamics at different times; during the day, it is Café-like, but Norge is open until late at night, with music and party guests (Pieter, 17 June 2024; Lisa, 5 June 2024). Therefore, it serves different clients at different times, which blends very well, according to barkeeper Lisa (5 June 2024). For newcomer Pieter (17 June 2024), Norge "feels more like a community place than a café" (l. 21). This impression is underlined by Dimitrios (9 June 2024) passing by often to greet and my observation (24 May 2024): Kids play around, use the washroom, or charge their phones, and people come in and out greeting and chatting without consuming.

Conversation is perceived as the main activity in Norge (Pieter, 17 June 2024). Barkeeper Lisa (5 June 2024) always sees a conversation with multiple people taking place around the bar, which is easy to join and enables people coming alone to interact. Newcomer Jan (13 June 2024) highlighted the importance of the large bar enabling heterogeneous interaction because people of different backgrounds interact at the bar, supported by observation (6 June 2024): Every person ordering or paying comes to the bar and often engages shortly with the sitting

clients. Jan (Newcomer, 13 June 2024) believes that due to the nature of a café, you interact with your neighbor, who is always someone else. For him, the attendants' diversity facilitates low-key social interaction. Talks in Norge consist mostly of small talk like the weather, conversations about children, Katendrecht's new developments or old times, or where people come from if they are newcomers. Politics is seldom discussed (Pieter, 17 June 2024; Hendrik, 25 June 2024), which is remarkable, given that in informal talks with the researcher, politics was a popular topic, as described above.

The meaning of Café Norge varies between attendants. The barkeepers believe that for some, it is just a bar; for others, it functions as a home and safe space (Lisa, 5 June 2024; Hendrik, 25 June 2024). The newcomer interviewees come 1 to 3 times a month and perceive the diversity and getting outside of their bubble as exciting and enjoyable (Pieter, 17 June 2024; Emma; 22 May 2024; Dimitrios, 9 June 2024). Observations indicate that most Kapeneze come more often (6,7, 21 June 2024). Barkeeper Hendrik (25 June 2024) affirms this: "The old customers come here two, three times a week. When they have vacations, they come five times. Those are just enjoying themselves here, also with the new owner, and they already came to us [Old Norge by Hendrik]" (l. 105).

4.3.5. Factors facilitating interaction in Norge

Adewale (5 June 2024) perceives a very good relationship between newcomers and long-term residents in Norge and underlines this by giving the example of newcomers giving long-term residents a round of drinks because they know they have less money. One newcomer (Emma, 22 May 2024) and one Kapeneze (Hendrik, 25 June 2024) highlighted Norge's importance in creating their personal bridging connections. Barkeeper Lisa (5 June 2024) believes that Norge incentivizes positive interaction between both groups, especially through events: "The old and the new are coming. They will talk to each other, laugh with each other, and have conversations. So there was almost hate between the two groups or like the old group against the new group. I think that will disappear a little bit or will fade. So I think that's the biggest thing that is going on here in the Café" (l. 25).

The importance of events, explicitly the Pub quiz and neighborhood drinks, to facilitate heterogeneous interactions was highlighted (Jan, newcomer, 13 June 2024; Hendrik, barkeeper, 25 June 2024; Emma, newcomer, 22 May 2024). Soccer matches also attract diverse attendants and encourage talks between them (Anna, Kapeneze, 23 May 2024; Observations, 1, 16, 21 June 2024). Expert Elisabeth describes the atmosphere in Norge when the local soccer club plays: "There are the artists, the professor, the millionaire, and the people that were born here. Black, white, everybody [...] and they clap each other on the shoulder" (l. 137). Externally organized events hosted in Norge, for instance, by the Center for Undocumented Migrants (Observation, 7 June 2024), facilitate diverse interaction by providing an occasion to interact with strangers. This aligns with the experts' highlighting the criticality of a common interest or activity, which should be independent of other characteristics such as age or class (Raul, 27 May 2024); however, the activity should not be in the foreground to allow for conversation (Sophie; 5 June 2024; Adriana, 6 June 2024). Newcomer Emma (22 May 2024) describes how having a drink together in Norge is sufficient as a base activity, and a more profound common interest develops through chatting. Common topics of conversation, such as children or the neighborhood, are perceived as essential to incentivize heterogeneous interaction (Elisabeth, 31 May 2024). Owner Adewale (5 June 2024) explains how shared profession or professional interest can facilitate bridging. Multiple interviewees believe that drinking together facilitates interaction (Adewale, 5 June 2024; Pieter, newcomer, 17 June 2024), and barkeeper Lisa (5 June 2024) sees that alcohol lowers the barrier to interaction and makes people more talkative. However, alcohol was also mentioned as an excluding factor for elderly Muslim residents (Jan, newcomer, 13 June 2024).

Persons facilitating interaction

Familiar faces and regular attendants in Norge are perceived as pleasant by the attendants (Pieter, newcomer, 17.07.2024), important to feel part of the group (Anna, Kapeneze, 23 May 2024), and for creating social safety, not even needing verbal interaction (Dimitrios, newcomer, 9 June 2024). Jan (Newcomer, 13 June 2024) perceives 10-15 regulars of different backgrounds. He explains how some of these familiar faces function as open persons, constantly forming conversations with people they do not know previously. Barkeeper Lisa (5 June 2024) states that being a familiar face does not automatically mean being open since some of the elderly regulars drinking beer at the bar are not the most talkative persons. She sees herself as a familiar face and an open person. Kapeneze (Willem & Anna, 23 May 2024) and newcomers (Emma, 22 May 2024; Pieter, 17 June 2024) see an individually differing willingness to socialize with people of different backgrounds; open people are looking actively for it, but some people close themselves up, independent of class. The same interviewees all mentioned the outstanding social character of people in Rotterdam, particularly in Katendrecht, making connecting easier than elsewhere, as Kapeneze Anna (23 May 2024) expresses: “You cannot name one neighborhood social like Katendrecht” (l. 301). This indicates positive feelings and pride about the neighborhood.

Multiple interviewees perceive owner Adewale as the central person for interactions in Café Norge. Given his own biography, “he knows the neighborhood like nobody else” (Elisabeth, expert, l. 61). The ethnically diverse younger residents identify with him, as do the Kapeneze because they knew his parents, and he is respected by everyone for being as humble and hospitable (Elisabeth, 31 May 2024). Adewale is perceived by his barkeepers (Lisa, 5 June 2024; Hendrik, 25 June 2024) and newcomers (Jan, 13 June 2024; Pieter, 17 June 2024) as the active driver behind activities in Norge, bringing in diverse groups through his personal connections. They all label him as a social broker for having good relations with both groups and incentivizing their interaction through organized events. Independent Expert Elisabeth (31 May 2024) perceives Adewale as “the only person [with brokering function] I would know on Katendrecht at this moment [...] He's a spider in the Web” (l. 113). She sees some Kapeneze with extensive social networks within their group, but they lack trust in the newcomers, while Adewale is the only one with good connections to all. Adewale (5 June 2024) himself declares that he has always liked connecting to people and has a mindset open to change and adapt, enabling him to profit from the gentrification and connect with the newcomers. He interprets his role as the host in telling the story of the bar and the neighborhood and describes that he actively connects attendants with each other when he sees a common interest: “Every week, there's a new encounter. Every week, there are [...] people who come here most of the time for me. And then when somebody else is there that I maybe already talked to. I see the link, then I open the link, and that's how it grows both (Adewale, 5 June 2024, l. 69).

4.3.6. Critical Discussion of Heterogeneous Interaction

However, there are also more skeptical voices about Adewale's role as a connector. Pieter (17 June 2024) finds it pleasant to know Adewale but does not see him incentivizing talks on purpose. Dimitrios (9 June 2024) supports that perception: “I haven't noticed that. I mean, I can imagine that this is happening. But I haven't noticed that” (l. 117). My own observation (10 June 2024) is that Adewale incentivizes talks at the bar by involving all the people sitting around; however, the talks remain superficial and aimed networking was not observed. Compared to Norge, the experts of Belvedere (Johanna & Sophia, 5 June 2024) and of Plattform K (Adriana, 6 June 2024, Raul; 27 May 2024) share experiences of more proactive connecting within their places and perceive brokering as their explicit task.

Skepticism is also expressed about heterogeneous interaction within Norge. Pieter (Newcomer, 17 June 2024) believes that both groups could mingle but is unsure how much they do, though

stating later that they do during events. Despite not seeing open conflicts, barkeeper Lisa (5 June 2024) sees subtle aversion from some newcomers against long-term residents: “For example, someone who always wants to sing at Friday night is coming, you will see like there are faces like all right, he's here again” (l. 61) and “You're feeling like they're looking the people a little bit with a side eye” (l. 69). Referring to general social dynamics on Katendrecht, expert Elisabeth (31 May 2024) sees prejudices on both sides, though more from the lower income against the rich than vice-versa, expressed in repelling: “They're very suspicious, who are you? Go away, we don't need it. We are the Yuppies, we are the millionaires, and they have all sorts of negative thoughts about why we are here, and we are taking their place away” (l. 26).

Experts highlight the importance of repetitive encounters over time to form bridging capital (Elisabeth, 31 May 2024; Adriana, 6 June 2024). Underlining this, newcomer Dimitrios (9 June 2024) sees more bridging connections among the newcomers living in the neighborhood for a couple of years. Time is viewed as essential when establishing more solid bridging connections to enable civic participation (Raul, 27 May 2024; Elisabeth, 31 May 2024). Given that encounters in Norge rely on coincidence, Expert Raul (27 May 2024) is skeptical: „Low income and high income don't get to know each other. Because of course, they can go to Norge [...] But, you have to hope that they meet each other“ (l. 87). Newcomer Jan (13 June 2024) shares this belief in organized bridging and receptiveness. The experts Johanna (5 June 2024) and Raul (27 May 2024) see outreach and proactive work as key to difficult-to-reach groups and highlight the importance of stability and consistency for community building. While stability is given in Norge, it is not a social organization with the clear objective of proactive community work, an aspect that falls into a similar notch as the lack of repetitiveness.

Remarkably, multiple residents of both groups perceive shared characteristics such as ethnicity, age, or gender as irrelevant for developing bridging connections in Norge (Anna, Kapeneze, 23 May 2024; Dimitrios, newcomer, 9 June 2024). In contrast, barkeeper Hendrik (25 June 2024) believes they ease interaction.

4.4. Bridging Capital Benefits

Multiple experts highlight the blurry boundaries between bridging capital benefits and facilitators since trust, respect, and interest across differences are outcomes of heterogeneous interaction and can be perceived as bridging capital but are also the basis for bridging connections that enable further benefits (Raul, 27 May 2024; Elisabeth, 31 May 2024). Expert Adriana (6 June 2024) points out that many benefits are difficult to measure, especially subjective perceptions like safety or seeing causal relations since they come step-by-step or indirectly.

All interviewees, experts, and residents unanimously confirmed increased social cohesion as an outcome of bridging connections. This includes improved respect and mutual tolerance between neighbors of different backgrounds, strengthening empathy, and caring for each other, as Raul (27 May 2024) explains: “you say *onbekeend maakt onbemind* in Dutch, if you know each other, you feel more for each other” (l. 188). Bridging connections enhances trust between people of different backgrounds and makes residents feel safer (Elisabeth, 31 May 2024). Adewale (5 June 2024) sees this trust expressed by neighbors letting their children play under his supervision, and Adriana (6 June 2024) experienced rising trust and declining skepticism from Kapeneze neighbors toward her through connecting. Jan (13 June 2024) believes that young long-term residents have more trust in newcomers than the elderly, which he links directly to their diverse contacts. Likewise, all interviewees mentioned the outstanding importance of bridging for their sense of belonging. Especially Newcomers systematically attend third places and seek heterogeneous interaction to integrate and achieve a feeling of belonging: “for me it was mostly the idea of getting there, the *Wijk*, the Neighborhood. The

social feeling that you belong to a bigger part or belong to a place” (Dimitrios, newcomer, 9 June 2024). He continues explaining that third places function as social anchor points if they serve primarily the locals. Norge specifically symbolizes old Katendrecht (Hendrik, barkeeper, 25 June 2024).

Some interviewees see increased civic participation. Raul (27 May 2024) believes that bridging helps to find a common goal like a clean and safe Katendrecht, which is then collectively worked on. Three of the newcomer interviewees are actively volunteering at KaapseKringen, and another newcomer (Pieter, 17 June 2024) is willing to help with tax declarations and is currently exploring potential engagement. Both experts of Platform K are volunteers, one newcomer, and one former long-term resident. Two newcomers claim to be the more proactive group regarding civic participation, though one of them mentions a socially mixed bike fixing initiative (Jan, 13 June 2024; Pieter, 17 June 2024). Both highlighted especially the monthly neighborhood drinks at Café Norge, where ideas for a neighborhood library or a new water taxi stop emerged. Barkeeper Lisa (5 June 2024) describes the neighborhood drinks: “a lot of people are saying, we want to do something for the neighborhood here. What can we do? What can we organize? How can we help? I think because they're in this place, their eyes will be opened a bit, and they all think about what can we do” (l. 121).

The experts of Platform K, Raul (27 May 2024) and Adriana (6 June 2024), believe that access to resources is enabled through mutual learning and reciprocal acts in bridging connections, while newcomer Jan (13 June 2024) sees reciprocal acts more within bonding connections. Multiple experts highlighted emotional support as an intangible resource accessed through bridging connections. It reduces loneliness (Raul, 27 May 2024; Elisabeth, 31 May 2024), highlighted especially in Norge where the barkeepers (Lisa, 5 June 2024; Hendrik, 25 June 2024) see providing emotional support as their task, for instance, by asking about their well-being if clients have been absent. The relationship between clients and barkeepers describes Hendrik (25 June 2024) as exceptionally good. The profoundness and type of relation with the client differ, being especially good with some elderly attendants (Lisa, 5 June 2024). Adewale (5 June 2024) states: “I have lots of people that are very lonely. And then they have a daily routine. They go to work, come back home, eat, and then come to the bar, have a drink, and chat. Then, the days are fulfilled, and they can go home, and they have conversations that they normally don't have.” (l. 85). Newcomer Dimitrios (9 June 2024) feels indirect emotional support but believes that it is possible to receive direct support when asking for it.

Multiple interviewees highlighted access to information. Expert Raul (27 May 2024) states that knowledge differs between groups. Hence, bridging is beneficial for accessing resource-rich networks coming to Katendrecht with the newcomers. Adewale (5 June 2024) shares his experience of musicians giving advice or opportunities to talents at his Café. Newcomer Emma (22 May 2024) helped other people receive information about searching for apartments and accessing social assistance. Vice versa, she mostly received contacts or information about cultural events or a new hairdresser. Dimitrios (newcomer, 9 June 2024) received information about places to go in Katendrecht, helping him to integrate. For two experts (Raul, 27 May 2024; Elisabeth, 31 May 2024), access to new networks opens opportunities, especially regarding jobs. Others consider job offers possible but go very far (Adriana, 6 June 2024; Jan, 17 June 2024). Elisabeth (31 May 2024) sees benefits for education because newcomer volunteers give workshops at schools. Jan (13 June 2024) helps civic initiatives access municipal funding, while Adewale (6 June 2024) mentions a case where a company donated leftover material to their bridging connection made at the Café.

Asked about the policymakers' assumption that low-income residents primarily profit from bridging capital, most interviewees state that both sides profit from it (Raul, 27 May 2024;

Sophie, 5 June 2024; Adriana, 6 June 2024). Others see both profiting but with a tendency towards lower-income people since they have less and can gain more (Elisabeth, 31 May 2024; Johanna, 5 June 2024; Dimitrios, 9 June 2024). The main difference is that interviewees see the low-income profiting from access to information, guidance, or assistance (Raul, 27 May 2024; Pieter, 17 June 2024; Dimitrios, 9 June 2024), while the wealthy learn from different life realities and values (Adriana, 6 June 2024; Johanna, 5 June 2024; Lisa, 5 June 2024).

Two of the newcomers have no personal experience with accessing concrete services or goods in third places, believing that it is not their primary function but theoretically possible (Dimitrios, 9 June 2024; Emma, 22 May 2024). Other newcomers believe they have no changed mindset through bridging since they are already open-minded (Jan, 13 June 2024; Pieter, 17 June 2024). Emma (22 May 2024) explained that she received no emotional support through her bridging connections due to their superficiality since she barely exchanged personal details. Dimitrios (9 June 2024) talks of 10-15 minutes of superficial interactions, needing to be more profound to have, for instance, a joined dinner. Barkeeper Lisa (5 June 2024) is always willing to help but has yet to personally experience access to resources during her weekend shifts. Previous owner Hendrik (25 June 2024) believes that people primarily seek emotional support and a sense of belonging, but he is skeptical about civic participation emerging from the Café.

4.5. Bridging challenges

Experts (Johanna, 5 June 2024; Adriana, 6 June 2024) see the danger of reducing diversity by organizing activities that attract people with certain identities or characteristics. The bridging between long-term residents and newcomers is perceived as very challenging by multiple experts given the big gap between the two and the strong bonding of long-term residents, which also goes for the Antillean and Moroccan communities (Elisabeth, 31 May 2024; Johanna, 5 June 2024). Newcomer Emma (22 May 2024) sees that economically inactive persons such as pensioners have more time to attend third places. Expert Adriana (6 June 2024) sees that women with children attend gathering places less, which can be explained by gendered roles and Care duties having an excluding impact. Both affect the attendants' diversity and suggest that third places are more important for specific groups while others are excluded.

When it comes to organizing and bridging, the need for more resources, know-how, and time from the social brokers and organizations are central challenges (Raul, 27 May 2024) related to the impact of any place being limited compared to the influx of newcomers (Adriana, 6 June 2024). Elisabeth (31 May 2024) highlights the need for a professionally managed and attractive community center targeting more than the Kapeneze to enable diverse encounters. Expert Adriana (6 June 2024) highlights that the language barrier can be challenging if attendants are not fluent in Dutch. Since Norge serves mostly the locals, the predominant language is Dutch. However, the barkeepers are all capable of speaking English; some of them are non-Dutch. At t'Steiger and Belvedere, segregation within the places into table groups occurs (Willem, 23 May 2024; Observation, 16, 31 May 2024). In Norge, interviewees did not explicitly mention this grouping. However, Newcomer Dimitrios (9 June 2024) primarily interacts with friends, hinting that despite a place having diverse attendants, it does not guarantee interaction between them. During observation (6 June 2024), the grouping of friends was noted, especially outside.

5. Conclusions

This research aimed to explore whether and how third places influence the creation of social bridging capital in the context of gentrifying Katendrecht. Thus, the research question aimed to explore how third places in Katendrecht offer the platform to enable diverse interaction in a manner that forms bridging social capital. A methodological triangulation consisting of literature analysis and a case study based mainly on interviews and participant observations was used to answer the question.

The first **sub-question** aimed to understand how state-led gentrification shaped the context for social interaction in Katendrecht's third places from 2008 to 2024. The research has proven how the (mainly local) state uses gentrification as a tool for urban renewal, implying social mixing. This resulted in the built environment transforming toward higher-income housing, though constructed mainly on brownfields, preventing direct displacement, which aligns with the Dutch 'mild' gentrification (Doucet & Koenders, 2018). The population almost doubled since 2008, becoming younger and having higher income and education levels. The literature-based dichotomy of young gentrifiers and homogenous original residents (Short, 1989) is questioned by the many elderly newcomers and two groups of long-term residents (Kapeneze and younger, ethnically diverse). Moreover, working-class residents who moved into Katendrecht's social housing in recent years fully identify with Kapeneze, suggesting that socioeconomic background is more important than years of residence. Findings indicate social tensions and separated worlds with little bridging connections between the contrasting groups, coinciding with literature (Dekker & Bolt, 2005; Goodchild & Cole, 2001) and contradicting policymakers' contact rationale. The local economy changed towards Horeca's dominance; third places adapted to the newcomers and became exclusive, displacing almost all affordable brown pubs. This aligns with Katendrecht's radically changed image, with newcomers being high-income and not artsy pioneers, indicating an embourgeoisement (Ley, 2001). The comprehensive exploration, starting from the neighborhood level, proved an outstandingly limited number of socially mixed third places. On the other hand, in recent years, Belvédère and Platform K, two non-commercial inclusive places, have emerged, though with limited success, as diverse neighborhood gathering places.

This leads to the **second sub-question**, which answers if and how the mapped third places in Katendrecht enable diverse interactions. Findings suggest that Oldenburg's (1989) third-place concept clashes with the complex reality since being inclusive does not guarantee diversity. Katendrecht's Community Center is accessible to all, but its run-down conditions, selective offers, and strong bonding repel newcomers and diverse, young residents. Café Norge is not a foundation, and consumption is costlier than other pre-selected places. Nevertheless, it hosts the most diverse clients, contradicting recent literature (Yuen & Johnson, 2017). An explanation might be that consumption is not required for interaction since Norge is perceived more as a community place than a bar. Secondly, Norge adapts to clients, satisfying newcomers' demands in contrast to the community center. However, this adaptation might threaten the tipping point Doucet and Ernst (2014) described for pubs, enabling positive interaction when limited newcomers attend, which can tip when newcomers dominate. Norge's attendants are diverse in age, ethnicity, and socio-economic backgrounds, including newcomers and both groups of long-term residents, the young diverse, and some Kapeneze. Interestingly, the attendants seem to share a progressive-liberal mindset across all groups. However, findings indicate that some people are missing, such as the lowest-income, conservative Kapeneze, and elderly Muslims. Missing people are excluded from social interaction and its beneficial outcomes, questioning assumptions of benefits for the poorest (Szreter & Woolcock 2004). Typical for bars (Oldenburg, 1989), there is a tendency toward males, which might have an

excluding effect. Norge meets Oldenburg's characteristics by providing a positive, welcoming, and talkative atmosphere, enabling hierarchy-free interactions. Regular attendants and the barkeepers provide familiar faces and facilitate low-key interaction by functioning as open persons. The results imply nuances about regulars. While all contribute to the sense of belonging, some less talkative regulars do not incentivize verbal interaction. In conflict with Oldenburg's third-place concept, the host is vital in Norge. The café strongly depends on the owner as a social broker and driver of activities; expert interviewees indicated a general dependence on specific individuals for bridging connections. Social brokers (Stovel & Shaw, 2012) were proven to be vital in bringing together contrasting groups through good personal contacts. Brokering is time-intensive, and results indicate different degrees of brokerage, superficial and spontaneous, at the bar that contribute mainly to bridging cohesion or more intentional-focused, like at Platform K, that can result in access to tangible resources.

The study contributes enriching insights to the limited knowledge of the inner dynamics of third place. Remarkable findings are the differing dynamics and attendants over the opening hours. This contributes to Norge serving a wider group; however, it also leads to temporal segregation, reducing interactions of certain people (e.g., young and elderly). Organized activities in Norge are critical to gathering diverse attendants and providing a low-barrier occasion to interact without being too dominant. This matches the literature (Peterson, 2017; Wise, 2009), but findings indicate nuances in the sense that having a drink or a common topic can be sufficient. Alcohol, not mentioned in the literature, seems important for the interaction of strangers in Norge, but its role is ambivalent, excluding others. Another insightful finding is the often-mentioned outstanding social character of people in Katendrecht in facilitating interaction and the differing willingness of individuals to engage with heterogeneous groups. In contrast to Wise (2009), shared characteristics are mostly perceived as irrelevant. Lastly, the research indicates the importance of proximity and Norge serving primarily its local surroundings while being only a side note in the literature.

The **third sub-question** goes one step further and answers whether and how interactions in these third places lead to the creation of bridging social capital. The results suggest that the boundaries between heterogeneous interactions, constituting factors of and benefits of bridging social capital are blurry. Despite an overall positive attitude between different groups in Norge, there is disagreement about the degree and profoundness of interaction. Most perceive superficial small talk, and only a few see deeper connections. However, there is consensus about bridging capital formation through increased social cohesion measured by trust, mutual respect, and tolerance across groups. This agreement extends to the feeling of belonging, with differences in the meaning expressed in the use pattern. Kapeneze attend Norge more frequently since it symbolizes old Katendrecht, and they rely more on the emotional support provided. Newcomers use it now and then for pleasure, perceiving diversity as exciting and to integrate via developing a sense of belonging. These compelling differences between newcomers and long-term residents enrich the academic debate of differences in the meaning (Hickman, 2012) and emotional support function (Littman, 2022) of third places.

Civic participation by volunteering for a neighborhood purpose is common among the interviewees, mainly among newcomers, and is linked to an event in Norge. This contradicts the literature's skepticism (Kleinhans et al., 2007) about the assumed social mixing benefit of newcomers advocating for public resources. The access to tangible resources is more disputed. Access to information and advice happens in Norge; however, the type of information differs between newcomers and long-term residents. Newcomers receive information on integrating, while long-term residents receive tips and guidance. Access to concrete services and goods is perceived as possible but requires more organization and repetitive encounters over time, which aligns with the literature (Peterson, 2017; Wise, 2009). As principally being a bar, interactions

are less organized and remain superficial in Norge, also because brokering is spontaneous and less aimed, indicating that this is a critical constraint to more tangible resources.

Overall, this research has proven how gentrification shaped a context of a segregated population with little heterogeneous interaction, even expanding to third places, with the investigated Café Norge being one exception as it is socially mixed. Norge enables positive, diverse interactions and the formation of bridging capital, mainly in the form of bridging cohesion and intangible resources, but only limited tangible ones. It affirmed the requirement of physical heterogeneous interaction (Kleinhans et al., 2007) and the importance of settings for bridging capital creation but suggests differences in the form of capital accessed between newcomers and long-term residents and the fragility of the characteristics enabling heterogeneous interactions.

The study confirms previous literature in the field but adds important nuances to the discussion, suggesting its complexity. **Policymakers are recommended** to avoid simplistic conclusions. Generally, the alarming few heterogeneous interactions prove the critics of social mixing policies right. Given the lack of socially mixed third places in Katendrecht and their proven importance, policymakers should support inclusive third places through municipal funding. This reacts to the market aiming exclusively at higher income and reduces dependence on volunteering or individual willingness, like in Norge. Responding positively to requests for an attractive community center for all is vital. Urban design should facilitate everyday interaction by preventing gated blocks and incentivizing grocery shops and shared public spaces. For Norge specifically, prices must be kept low, especially for the goods long-term residents consume, to reduce economic barriers as much as possible. By organizing more events focused on exchange and systematizing them, interactions could be more guided and repetitive over a longer period. Another idea would be to incentivize reciprocity by opening communication channels, such as a board where questions and answers can be matched. **Further research** should explore in more detail the aspect of temporal segregation, the heterogeneity within the group of long-term residents and their respective third-place behavior, and how the increased bridging cohesion and intangible benefits can extend to more tangible benefits.

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Appendix 2: Resident Interview Guide

Personal & Research Explanation

Process and confidentiality

Introducing questions

- Please introduce yourself; tell me how old you are, where you come from, and what your profession is.
- How long have you been living in Katendrecht, and why did you move here?
- Do you rent or own property in Katendrecht?
- Do you think that the community gathering places have changed through the gentrification process? If yes, how?

Third-Place

- What role does Café Norge play in your life?
 - How often and for what reason do you come?
 - Are there other community places you go?
- How do you perceive the inclusiveness and accessibility in Café Norge?
 - Economic and physical barriers?
 - No exclusion signs & entrance control; Consumption is not dominant
 - The ability of individuals from diverse backgrounds to feel comfortable and welcomed
 - Place is flexible and matches the users' needs
- Who are the users of Café Norge?
- How would you describe the level of diversity among the users of Café Norge, particularly in terms of socioeconomic background, ethnicity, gender, and age?
 - Long-term residents and newcomers with higher income present?

I want to understand your interactions with other people in this place.
- Can you tell me about your interactions in this place?
- Who do you interact with?
- What is the nature of these interactions?
- What is the role of the place in facilitating these interactions?
 - Does Café Norge enable a sense of **hierarchy-free interaction**, independent of status and class?
 - What role does Café Norge play in promoting a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere for all participants?
- **What could be improved**, is there anything you miss to bring diverse people together?

Bridging Social Capital

Research mentions some factors that facilitate heterogeneous interaction and, through that, enable bridging connections across socioeconomic or ethnical differences

- Does Café Norge provide a common subject or object that gives an occasion and incentive for people who do not know each other well to interact?
 - Follow-up: Is conversation the main activity?
- How do you experience the role of shared interests or activities in Café Norge in the interaction with different people?
 - Do they facilitate bridging connections according to your experience?
- How do shared characteristics such as ethnicity, age or gender facilitate bridging connections?
- What role do time and regular interaction play in constituting bridging connections within Café Norge?
 - repetitive, physical encounters over a longer period of time

Research tells us that specific persons could be important in facilitating interaction between strangers, sometimes they are referred to as 'brokers'

- Can you share your experiences regarding the presence and role of specific persons in facilitating interaction within Café Norge?
 - How do you see the role of the place's host or organizer?
 - What about familiar faces, people who visit the place regularly?
- How common are 'bridging' connections within your social networks, meaning that you have contact with people of a different than your own socioeconomic status or ethnicity?
 - Do you have connections with newcomer higher income/long-term residents?
- To what extent are those 'bridging' connections formed and maintained within the Café Norge?
 - Do you have bridging connections reaching outside of the neighborhood that were formed in this place?

Research highlights the benefits of bridging social capital, such as improved social cohesion across diverse groups.

- To what extent do you see that bridging connections increase **trust** between neighbors of different backgrounds?
- To what extent do you see that bridging connections increase **respect and tolerance** between neighbors of different backgrounds?
- How do your bridging connections affect your **sense of belonging** to the neighborhood?
- How do your bridging connections affect your **willingness to participate in the civic society** of Katendrecht?
 - Do you participate in or even organize community events?

Research tells us that bridging connections can enable access to tangible and intangible resources through reciprocal acts.

- Do you experience acts of **kindness and cooperation** with your bridging connections?
- Have you experienced **emotional support** through your **bridging connections**, and what does it mean to you?
- Have you experienced **access to information & advice**?
- Did your bridging connections ever help you to **access goods & services** such as better education or healthcare?
- Has your heterogeneous network ever helped you find **a job**?
- Have you experienced **any other benefits** through the heterogeneous network that helped you or your family?
- **Concluding remarks:** Do you have any concluding remarks?

Appendix 3: Expert Interview Guide

Personal & Research Explanation

Process and confidentiality

Introducing questions

- Please introduce yourself; tell me how old you are, where you come from, and what your profession is.
 - What is your relation with [respective third place]?
- Are you living in Katendrecht, and if yes, for how long?
- How does gentrification influence community gathering places?
 - Change of users, physical changes, economic barriers

Third-Place

I ask you to share first of all the perspective of the [respective third place], but also to share your general knowledge of social interaction in the other community spaces.

- Why are there community places in Katendrecht that explicitly want to bring different groups together?
- What activities do they provide, and why those?
- Who are they targeting with the offered activities?
- Who actually attends the activities?
 - Who is missing and why?
- Are they successful in bringing different groups together?
 - Why not? What would be needed to make it happen?
 - Are Long-term residents and higher-income newcomers present?
- How do you see the role of your organization in the context of bringing different people together?

Let us speak in more detail about the inner dynamics of these places.

- How would you describe the interactions and attitudes between persons of different backgrounds in these community places?
 - Are there specific attitudes of certain groups towards others?

Bridging Social Capital

Let us talk now about the production of bridging connections between people of different backgrounds.

- From your expertise, what are the key factors that influence the production of these bridging connections?
 - Common subject or object
 - Shared interests, activities
 - Shared characteristics (ethnicity, gender)
 - Time, repetitive, physical
- How common are 'bridging' connections in general within the social networks of residents, particularly concerning contacts across diverse ethnicities, ages, and socioeconomic statuses?
 - Follow-up: To what extent do you see bridging ties between gentrifiers and long-term residents?
- What is the role of community places in producing these bridging connections?
- What places in the neighborhood do you consider the most relevant in producing these bridging connections?

Research tells us that specific persons could be important in facilitating interaction between strangers, sometimes they are referred to as 'brokers'

- Can you share your experiences regarding the presence and role of such ‘brokers’ in facilitating interaction within community places?
 - How do you see the role of the place’s host or organizer?
 - What about familiar faces, people who visit the place regularly?

Benefits: *Research highlights the benefits of bridging social capital, such as improved social cohesion across diverse groups.*

- To what extent do you see that bridging networks increase trust, respect, and tolerance between neighbors of different backgrounds?
- How do bridging networks affect the neighbors’ sense of belonging and willingness to participate in the civic society of Katendrecht?
 - Do you see increasing Civil participation as a result of bridging connections?

Research tells us that bridging connections can enable access to tangible and intangible resources through reciprocal acts. I will ask you about some benefits frequently mentioned, please reply with your experience and expertise.

- What **role does reciprocity of kindness and cooperation** play in residents bridging connections?
- Do participants benefit from their bridging networks in the form of **emotional support**?
- Do participants benefit from their bridging networks in the form of **access to useful information or advice**?
- Do participants benefit from their bridging networks in the form of **improved access to goods or services**?
 - For instance, job opportunities, accessing better educational or healthcare facilities,
 - Do you see **any other benefits** resulting from heterogeneous bridging networks?
- Are **resource-poor residents benefiting especially** from the bridging connections?
- **Concluding remarks:** Do you have any concluding remarks?

Appendix 4: Third Place Mapping

This Appendix provides more details on the third places explored in the pre-selection. Figure 3 provides an overview of the first mapping, creating a database of all potentially relevant third places in Katendrecht. Table 2 compares the four places according to relevant criteria derived from operationalization based on the academic discourse. Together with Table 3, which contains more details about the three preliminary explored places and a brief written description of each, it complements the brief description in the methodology chapter (see 3.1.1. The selection of the unit of analysis to clarify why Café Norge was chosen for an in-depth investigation.



Figure 6. Spatial mapping of relevant third places and belonging database

Source: Expert interviews; complemented by participant observation and resident interviews

		Norge	t'Steiger	Belvé- dère	Plat- form K
Accessible & Inclusive	No exclusion signs & entrance control	Green	Green	Green	Green
	Consumption not dominant & low profile	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green
	Neutral ground (comfortable for all, flexible come and go)	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Orange
	Place adapts to the users' needs	Green	Green	Yellow	Green
Diversity of attendants	Genders	Green	Green	Green	Orange
	(Socio-economic) Classes	Green	Orange	Yellow	Green
	Ethnicity	Green	Red	Yellow	Green
	Ages	Green	Red	Orange	Yellow
Positive encounters	Leveling – no hierarchy	Green	Green	Green	Green
	A home away from home & Playful mood	Green	Green	Green	Green
People facilitating interaction	Presence of ‘open persons’, ‘regulars’ or brokers	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow
Incentives to interact	Triangulation – a common subject or object	Green	Green	Green	Green
	Conversation as the main activity	Green	Green	Yellow	Green
Legend		Green	Yellow	Orange	Red
		Met	Mostly met	Mostly unmet	Unmet

Table 3. Comparing pre-selected third places along relevant criteria for positive, diverse interaction

Source: Expert interviews; complemented by participant observation and resident interviews

Place	t'Steiger	Verhalenhuis Belvédère	Platform K
Description	Traditional community center run by SOL foundation on behalf of the municipality, focuses on elderly and children	Serving K. since 1894 in different functions, bought 2008 by OCW foundation to make it a cultural hub for exchanging stories and art	Small foundation founded in 2019, based on two volunteers to enhance social cohesion and enable everyone to profit from gentrification
Bridging objective	Few events (Bingo, Pub Quiz) aim to bring together old and new	'Kaapse Tafel' event to bring together old and new residents	Explicit aims to bring old and new residents together through activities.
Accessibility, Inclusiveness	Very (also physically) accessible, outstanding cheap, welcoming everyone, also the poorest	Low barriers & profile, Consumption not dominant & cheap, NGO-character, leftist-progressive; barriers for long-term residents higher than Norge + t'Steiger	no economic barrier, efforts made by host and attendants to include and welcome everyone, good location, though very limited opening hours
Positive Encounters	No hierarchy; positive atmosphere; but deprived building	No hierarchy, positive atmosphere; aesthetic building	No hierarchy, positive atmosphere, small group and repetition build trust
Open persons	SOL staff and volunteers, many regulars	Big Staff functioning as open persons & familiar faces	Host, some participants
Offers & Activities	Diverse activities, with specific age & target groups, Tutoring and Dutch class for children, Free dinner for elderly → Social offers	Diverse & numerous; daily Café and events, exhibitions, not limited to Katendrecht	Music- and art classes for children to bring together their parents, Sewing workshop for adults
Diversity of attendants	Very low, almost exclusively elderly, white long-term residents, little to no newcomers & ethnic diversity	Mostly elderly, many outsiders, and tourists, events determine specific attendant groups	long-term and newcomers and ethnic diversity, age group and gender are less diverse
Diverse interaction?	No, low diversity + fixed table groups. Strong bonding between regulars. Few newcomers sit far off and separated.	Limited; retreat space Kaapse Tafel for long-term with fixed tables, bridging & acts of reciprocity within the diverse staff, including many outsiders	Partially, the mixing of parents is not achieved. However, textile workshops with diverse interaction lead to bridging benefits and civic action
Challenges	Operating foundation changes lead to a lack of stability & trust; SOL is unproductive	Specific offers attract specific groups, fixed tables during events prevent mixing	Very limited resources and impact, experiment, ongoing activity not well-known.
Conclusion	So accessible that it only attracts low-income residents, enhanced through the program No social mixing	No community place for the neighborhood but a city-wide cultural place	Promising approach in the sewing workshop but limited impact, in-depth research challenged by little activity

Table 4. Exploration results in the pre-selected places, excluding Norge.

Brief written description

The **Verhalenhuis Belvédère**, founded in 1894, has a long history of serving the neighborhood in different functions. In 2008, it was supposed to be converted into luxury apartments (Velez, 2016), but resistance formed. A foundation bought the building through fundraising and has been running it ever since. Their mission is to make people and communities in the changing city visible to each other and connect them through art, culture, and stories (Verhalenhuis Belvédère, 2012).

The interviewees perceive Belvédère as inviting, inclusive, and accessible (Emma, newcomer, 22 May 2024; Dimitrios, newcomer, 9 June 2024), with a low economic barrier, and welcoming everyone (Emma, newcomer, 22 May 2024). The organization claims to be politically neutral except for welcoming everyone (Johanna, co-founder & expert, 5 June 2024; Sophie, floor manager & expert, 5 June 2024); however, it has an NGO character (Dimitrios, newcomer, 9 June 2024) and is perceived as leftist-progressive (Jan, newcomer, 13 June 2024), hosting Pro-Palestine and LGBTQ+ events (Emma, newcomer, 22 May 2024; Johanna, co-founder & expert, 5 June 2024). For newcomer Dimitrios (9 June 2024), the place has a vibe and welcoming people that make it feel like home, and the flexible schedules allow you to go at any time. Sophie (floor manager & expert, 5 June 2024) shares this low-barrier impression. Interestingly, Kapeneze Willem (23 May 2024) perceives the barriers of Belvédère as higher than those of t'Steiger due to the organized character of the activities. This aligns with his and Anna's (Kapeneze, 23 May 2024) perception of Belvédère as a cultural place, expressed by her stating that she prefers to watch Football in Steiger or Norge instead of Belvédère because there she can unabashedly cheer and drink beer. The aesthetic of the historic building, one of few in Katendrecht, is important for interviewed newcomers (Emma, newcomer, 22 May 2024; Dimitrios, newcomer, 9 June 2024), also because people link personal memories with it since it served the community in various forms (Johanna, co-founder & expert, 5 June 2024).

Belvédère offers diverse and numerous activities (Adriana, expert & newcomer, 6 June 2024), from daily operations and regular events to punctual activities, hosting guest cooks from all over the world who share their stories (Johanna, co-founder & expert, 5 June 2024; Emma, newcomer, 22 May 2024; Willem, Kapeneze, 23 May 2024). The daily operation consists of self-service coffee (Sophie, floor manager & expert, 5 June 2024), offers the possibility to work and have free meals (Dimitrios, newcomer, 9 June 2024), and on the 2nd floor, there is always a permanent exposition, currently about a former football club of Katendrecht (Johanna, co-founder & expert, 5 June 2024). The monthly 'Kaapse Tafel' aims to bring together long-term neighborhood residents with newcomers for lunch, which is free for Kapeneze (Verhalenhuis Belvédère, 2022).

Despite the variety of activities, interviewees perceive the attendants at Belvédère as mostly old (Dimitrios, newcomer, 9 June 2024; Emma, newcomer, 22 May 2024; Sophie, floor manager & expert, 5 June 2024). Sophie points out that some activities target specific groups that then form the majority, like the KaapseTafel, which functions as a retreat space to be among each other for the remaining elderly long-term residents. This corresponds with my observation, and Willem (Kapeneze, 23 May 2024) mentioned fixed tables for certain friend groups, which contradicts the mixing ideational of the event. Similarly, Johanna (co-founder & expert, 5 June 2024) shares a story of one table talking in Arabic and thus excluding non-Arabic speakers. Moreover, Belvédère attracts many people outside the neighborhood (Emma, newcomer, 22 May 2024; Adriana, expert & newcomer, 6 June 2024; Johanna, co-founder & expert, 5 June 2024; Sophie, floor manager & expert, 5 June 2024; Elisabeth, independent expert, 31 May 2024). For instance, the neighborhood tour KaapieMakeen is attended mainly by people from outside; also, during my observation of daily operations, mostly tourists entered (Sophie, floor manager & expert, 5 June 2024; Observation, 5 & 7 June 2024). While Johanna

(co-founder & expert, 5 June 2024) claims that most activities are related to or about Katendrecht, Raul (expert, 27 May 2024) believes the opposite. He negates that Belvédère provides a common ground for the neighbors. Similarly, Elisabeth (independent expert, 31 May 2024) sees no neighbors mingling daily.

Instead, the staff, consisting of professionals and volunteers, is perceived as highly diverse (Dimitrios, newcomer, 9 June 2024; Johanna, co-founder & expert, 5 June 2024; Sophie, floor manager & expert, 5 June 2024), coming from different bubbles and different backgrounds regarding age, ethnicity, and educational background. According to Dimitrios (newcomer, 9 June 2024), most of them live outside Katendrecht, while the hosts Johanna and Sophie (5 June 2024) see a mix of locals and outsiders. When asked about bridging, Sophie (5 June 2024) sees it happening, especially within the staff, and provides an example of how the son of a guest cook was prevented from getting kicked out of school due to the intervention of another staff member. Another group of volunteers organized to care for a decrepit Chinese man who used to attend regularly (Johanna, co-founder & expert, 5 June 2024).

The **community center t'Steiger** is a big building in the core of old Katendrecht and is operated by the SOL foundation. It offers plenty of activities with specific target groups (Stichting SOL, 2024; Jan, newcomer, June 13, 2024), like Dutch or computer classes for children or dinners for the elderly (Willem, Kapeneze, 23 May 2024; Anna, Kapeneze, 23 May 2024). It is perceived as a traditional community center (Willem, Kapeneze, 23 May 2024; Johanna, expert, 5 June 2024) and as very accessible and inclusive by its users in the sense of being always open, having no hierarchy, and having good physical accessibility for the elderly with constrained mobility (Willem, Kapeneze, 23 May 2024; Anna, Kapeneze, 23 May 2024). The economic barrier is perceived as very low (Emma, newcomer, May 22, 2024), welcoming even the poorest (Anna, Kapeneze, 23 May 2024). The actual attendants are perceived as exclusively Kapeneze, elderly, white long-term residents (Jan, newcomer, 13 June 2024; Raul, expert, 27 May 2024). The attendants are very regular and have fixed groups on the tables, and there are barely any newcomers (Willem, Kapeneze, 23 May 2024; Anna, Kapeneze, 23 May 2024; Adriana, expert, 6 June 2024). Newcomer Emma (22 May 2024) describes the activities and time schedule as targeted exclusively for the elderly. Moreover, residents and experts have mentioned the unaesthetic building conditions (Willem, Kapeneze, 23 May 2024; Adriana, expert, 6 June 2024, 2024), for Emma (newcomer, 22 May 2024) repealing newcomers that instead seek more exclusivity at Deliplein. Expert Raul (27 May 2024) criticizes the change of the Community Center's responsible foundation, causing a lack of stability and trust. Multiple experts criticize the currently responsible SOL for lacking professional staff, not acting proactive enough despite receiving many municipal resources, and being unproductive (Adriana; 6 June 2024; Elisabeth, 31 May 2024; Raul, 27 May 2024).

The **foundation Platform Katendrecht** was established in 2019 with the explicit aim of bringing old and new residents of Katendrecht together through activities to encourage exchange and strengthen social cohesion and to enable everyone to profit from the gentrification process by incentivizing and supporting civic action (Raul, co-founder, 27 May 2024; Adriana, volunteer & expert, 6 June 2024; Adewale, expert & long-term resident, 5 June 2024). The foundation aims mainly at the youth and offers continuous art and music classes for children and a sewing workshop for adults (Raul, co-founder, 27 May 2024; Adriana, volunteer & expert, 6 June 2024). Additionally, there are ad hoc activities, for instance, entertainment during COVID or cooperation with the local newspaper to make young people and their dreams familiar to local residents, which in one case resulted in bridging help (Raul, co-founder, 27 May 2024; Adriana, volunteer & expert, 6 June 2024).

Raul (27 May 2024) claims to welcome everyone and have children from different social backgrounds attend. Adriana also describes her sewing class as welcoming for everyone, including its attendants coming from different ethnic backgrounds, newcomers, and long-term residents. She describes the efforts made to include everyone, independent of language barriers or sewing capabilities. The participation and use of equipment are free; in return, the attendants will participate in a monthly repair café for the neighborhood. Despite being theoretically inclusive, Adriana sees that most attendants are women without or with grown-up children, while youth attendants dropped out quickly, and only one man participated (Adriana, volunteer & expert, 6 June 2024).

Platform K aims to connect parents of different backgrounds by bringing their children together (Raul, co-founder, 27 May 2024; Adriana, volunteer & expert, 6 June 2024). However, Adriana believes that this objective is not fulfilled because the parents do not come; therefore, it functions as a school for children but does not contribute to social cohesion. The foundation is challenged by its limited resources and is based on volunteering. Several residents and even experts shared in informal talks that they were not aware of the ongoing activity of Platform K, especially of Raul (Johanna, expert, 5 June 2024). Consequently, despite observing social mixing and bridging between attendants at the sewing workshop, Adriana (volunteer & expert, 6 June 2024) perceives it as an experiment with limited impact because of the small scale.

Appendix 5: List of Interviewees

Expert Interviews**

Name	Length	Date	Location	Double-role?	Occupation	Ethnicity	Age
Raul	59:00	27.05.24	Platform K	Former inhabitant	Social entrepreneur	Surinamese	36
Adriana	01:00:51	06.06.24	Platform K	Higher-income Newcomer, 10 years	Volunteer	Dutch	60
Elisabeth	55:54	31.05.24	Private flat (Neutral expert)	Higher-income Newcomer, 5 years	Pensioner	Dutch	75
Adewale	46:10	5 June 2024	Norge	Long-term inhabitant, Ownership	Bar owner	Nigerian	41
Lisa	24:48	5 June 2024	Norge	Former inhabitant	Art student, barkeeper	Dutch	22
Johanna, Sophie	01:02:54	5 June 2024	Belvédère	None	Social Geograph; Floor manager Belvédère	Dutch	40s* & 23

*Estimations

**All names have been changed

Table 5. Overview of Expert interviewees

*Estimations

**All names have been changed

Table 6. Overview of Resident Interviewees

Name	Length	Date	Location	Years Resi.	Ownership	Ethnicity	Occupation	Age
Willem, Anna	51:00	23.05.24	Private flat	1, 6	No, SH	Dutch	Pensioner	60/70s*
Emma	1:18:00	22.05.24	Private flat	3	Yes; NB	Dutch	Pensioner	69
Dimitrios	32:37	09.06.24	Norge	3,5	Yes, former SH	Greek	Higher-incomer	39
Jan	36:32	13.06.24	Private flat	4	Yes; NB	Dutch	Pensioner	68
Hendrik	13:12	25.06.24	Norge		No, SH	Dutch	Pensioner	70s*
Pieter	25:42	17.06.24	Norge	1	Yes; NB	Dutch	Pensioner	69
I.	informal	02.06.24	Norge	45	No; renting NB	Nigerian	Working-class	45
H.	informal	07.06.24	Norge	38	No, SH	Dutch	Working-class	59
A.	informal	24.05.24	Norge	33	No, SH	Dutch	Working-class	50s*
B.	informal	07.06.24	Norge	Lifelong	No, SH	Dutch	Pensioner	79
W.	informal	10.06.24	Norge	10	Yes; NB	Dutch	Higher-incomer	40s*

Resident Interviews**

Appendix 6: Codebooks

Name	Grounded
Accessibility & Inclusiveness	30
Norge	6
Adapting to the wishes of everybody	3
Bridging made in Norge	6
Buurt Borrel in Norge	6
Conversation is the main activity in Norge	4
Different dynamics and attendants at different times	5
Diverse attendants in Norge	49
Age	12
Ethnicity	9
General	19
Newcomer & Long-term	23
People of other ethnicities are mostly younger	2
Political Mindset	1
Economic barrier	15
E. barrier exist everywhere	5
E. barrier is not relevant	1
Economic barrier excludes the poorest	2
Interaction without consumption	7
Factors facilitating interaction	76
Feeling welcomed & home - Norge	8
Future perspective of Norge	5
Interaction between newcomers and long-term residents at Norge	12
Kind of Talk & Interaction	15
Meaning & Importance of Café Norge varies between attendants	10
Missing people	14
Children are more open	2
Islamic community difficult to reach	3
Many elderly long-term are suspicious about newcomers & dislike changes	6
Mix of people though not so many young people	1
Poor people missing in Norge	1
Norge - Offers & Activities	9
Norge as the last old pub	6
Norge feels more like a community place than a Café	7
Norge serves mostly local market	5
Objective of Café Norge	7
Role of barkeepers & hosts in Norge	15
Uchee as a broker	29

Figure 7. Codebook: Group Café Norge

Name	Grounded
○ ▷ Benefits - Access to Ressources	39
○ ▷ Benefits - Increased Social cohesion	63
○ Benefits -Reciprocal acts	6
○ Benefits of bridging are difficult to measure	6
○ ▷ Bridging benefits are not exclusively for any group	15
○ ◀ Civic participation	13
○ Examples of Civic participation	5
○ Important to Support civic participation	3
○ Importance of Community places to prevent segregation	3
○ ▷ no benefits	6
○ Positive perception of diversity	2
○ Reciprocal acts more within homogenous groups	2

Figure 8. Codebook: Group Bridging Capital Benefits

Name	Grounded
○ ▷ Accessibility & Inclusiveness	32
○ ▷ Broker	26
○ ▷ Challenges for bridging	33
○ Diversity depends on the activities	4
○ ▷ Factors facilitating interaction	76
○ Flexibility	5
○ Harmony, Trust, Respect & Interest as a base to bridge	6
○ Importance of being proactive	6
○ Importance of location	4
○ Importance of stability & consistency for community building	3
○ Inviting and welcoming atmosphere	4
○ Need for meeting places that enable neighbors exchange	7
○ Organization enables diversity through common interest, the rest develops	4
○ React to the needs & demands of the neighborhood	5
○ Role of the host	6
○ Shared characteristics are irrelevant	5

Figure 9. Codebook: Group Bridging Facilitators

