Residential practices of middle classes in the field of parenthood

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2 Gentrifiers settling down?

Patterns and trends of residential location of middle-class families in Amsterdam

Introduction

Most middle-class households will one day have children, but for many (future) parents the city does not seem to be the most attractive environment in which to bring them up. The (perceived) inconveniences of urban living and lack of suitable and affordable family housing on the one hand, and on the other the idea of space, the quiet, and green of the suburbs make many parents decide to leave the city for suburban milieus.

Despite the predominance of this trend in the last few decades, some middle-class families have always remained in the city, and it seems that a new orientation of middle-class families towards the city is taking place. The scale of this process seems limited and it cannot compare to suburbanization. However, studies of middle-class families in the city have indicated that urban living may be on the rise as a way of coping with the opportunities and constraints of today's family life (Butler and Robson, 2001, 2003a; Karsten, 2003, 2007). Explanations for this phenomenon have been suggested from various perspectives: the rise of female employment (Bondi, 1991, 1999); increased commuting times for suburbanites; the increased importance of centrality in some sectors of the economy (Hamnett, 1994b); or a taste for urban life. Some aspects of this reorientation have been identified in several qualitative studies. Butler & Robson (2001, 2003) have provided a typological overview of different types of neighbourhood in London that are attractive residential milieus for different middle-class groups. However, not much is known about the scale, spatial patterns, or processes of middle-class family settlement in urban areas.

This paper fills some of the voids in this field of research by presenting recent data on the scale, patterns, and processes of urban middle-class families in Amsterdam over the last decade. The data and maps that are presented in this paper are used to formulate some new hypotheses on middle-class families in the city.

The main question addressed is: What spatial patterns and trends in middle-class family settlement can be identified in Amsterdam neighbourhoods in the period 1995-2007 and how can these patterns and trends be explained? This question

breaks down into three sub questions: 1) What are the patterns, the scale, and location of middle-class families in Amsterdam? 2) What are the trends in middle-class family settlement? And 3): How can these patterns and trends be explained?

In this paper we first review the existing body of literature on middle-class families in the city. Second, we provide descriptive data on family households in the period 1995-2007 in Amsterdam. This information serves as a context for further analysis of the changes in the settlement patterns of middle-class families in certain Amsterdam neighbourhoods. Third, we profile the middle-class neighbourhoods and tentatively explain the patterns and processes by comparing our findings with the literature on this topic.

Theoretical embedding

A residential reorientation of middle-class families to the city should be put into two perspectives: 1) a general tendency in many western cities of a reorientation of the middle classes towards the city, as exemplified and symbolized by gentrification and urban renewal projects aiming at building for an 'economically sustainable population' (Lund Hansen et al., 2001); and 2) the role of place in balancing work, family, leisure, and social obligations in the everyday lives of (middle-class) families (Droogleever Fortuijn 1993; De Meester et al. 2007). This reorientation should be linked to the meaning of place in the organization of everyday life for households with children, as well as to the meaning of place in the processes of the (re)production of class and, moreover, the way in which the everyday practices of families and the production of class are interrelated. In order to understand a (re-)orientation of some middle-class families to the city, we need to understand why for decades suburbs were the natural habitats for middle-class families and why we may be witnessing a shift in this supposedly 'natural' choice of the suburbs in favour of inner-city areas.

Wendell Bell explained the preference of most middle-class families for a suburban residential location by connecting it to lifestyle. He found that middle-class households who have a 'familist' lifestyle chose a suburban location. By *familism* he meant "a high valuation of family living, marriage at young age, childcentredness and other such characteristics." The suburbs offered a residential environment that could accommodate these preferences: more space, green areas, homogeneity, and safety for the children compared with the inner city. Furthermore, buying a house in the suburbs represented a long-term investment and an opportunity to create one's own private domain within a homogeneous community (Bell, 1968; Gans, 1968). He contrasted these familist groups with other middle-class groups who were more oriented to the city because of their 'careerist' or 'consumerist' lifestyles. He stressed, however, that most of these

careerists and consumerists would become familists as and when they became parents. Hence his clear link of lifestyle to life stage.

Bell's account connecting familism with the suburbs still holds for most middle-class families. For many, moving to a suburban area is still motivated by the advantages that Bell described: large dwellings on private grounds, lots of green and space; a homogeneous population consisting of other middle-class families; and an environment free from urban problems and dangers (Lupi and Musterd, 2006). For most families moving to the suburbs seems the most logical step to take once they have children.

Nevertheless, as Bell had already hinted, parts of the inner cities in many metropolitan areas in the western world have become popular among singles or couples with higher income and education levels. The return of both people and capital to the inner city, starting in global cities such as London and New York, has been described as *gentrification* (Gale, 1980; Glass, 1964; Ley, 1996; Smith, 1979). These middle-class households prefer the inner city for various reasons. The pull factors include: (cultural) consumption; the proximity of work; anonymity and tolerance (Lees, 1996; Rothenberg, 1995) (i.e. of gay and lesbian gentrification); and distinction (Caulfield, 1994; Ley, 2003). In fact, Bell had already identified some of these pull factors; he saw them as particularly relevant for careerist (work) and consumerist (consumption) lifestyles.

Much of Bell's lifestyle explanation is based on choice and does not take into account the structural conditions that may have enabled and constrained the emergence of these lifestyles in the first place. The renaissance of inner-city areas as exemplified by gentrification is, according to Lees and others "nothing more than the neighbourhood expression of class inequality"(Lees et al., 2008). Most scholars now agree that gentrification is the interplay of production and consumption. Gentrification can be explained as the logical consequence of disinvestment in inner cities (N.Smith, 1979, 1996b); changing demand (Ley, 1996) and the professionalization of the labour market (Hamnett, 1991, 1994a, b); and demographic changes such as the postponement of childbearing, the rise of single households, and female emancipation (Bondi, 1991). Although the gentrification literature continues to expand and encompass more themes, aspects, and geographical contexts, gentrification studies are typically associated with middle-class single or dual households in a life stage prior to having children. Little attention has been paid to what happens to gentrifiers when they have children or, more generally, when they age (D.Smith, 2002). Only a few studies have included the role of families in this process (Bridge, 2003; Brun and Fagnani, 1994; Butler et al., 2008; Butler and Robson, 2003a; Karsten, 2003, 2007).

It is important, however, to realize that gentrification is a practice that is often connected to a life stage before having children. The everyday practices and strategies middle-class families use for the intergenerational reproduction of class differ in some respects for middle-class people who do not (yet) have children.

Bridge (2001, 2003, 2006) has helped us understand gentrification from a lifecycle perspective. He argues that when gentrifiers have children their housing practices may diverge by following different time-space trajectories. Various fractions within the middle classes apply various housing strategies in reproducing their class position (Bridge, 2001a, 2003).

The age of the children also influences these housing strategies (Silverman et al., 2005). Very young children can still be accommodated in a small apartment and they interact very little with public space. However, school choice and the birth of a second or third child may cause parents to reconsider where to live.

Butler and Robson (2003) have mapped London neighbourhoods that show various forms of middle-class settlement, including families. These authors connected residential location (the neighbourhood) with class position, indicated by the amount and orientation of cultural, social, and economic capital. They built on the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1984) by making use of his concepts of habitus, field, and capital. These authors connect place with lifestyle by constructing 'residential choice' as a practice that is informed by class position represented by the habitus (Butler & Robson 2003) rather than being a free choice. They identify four fields that play a role in determining what neighbourhoods fit with which middle-class groups: housing, employment, consumption, and education.

In addition, Karsten's work on 'family gentrifiers' (2003) points out that an urban lifestyle for middle-class families has three related aspects: first, an urban location offering time-budget advantages, which facilitate combining childcare and a career, particularly for women (De Meester et al., 2007; Droogleever Fortuijn, 1993). Second, large amounts of social capital accumulated through social networks enable certain middle-class families to remain urban. Third, living in the city plays an important part in a family's identity; they consider themselves real urbanites and many see the suburbs as a homogeneous, boring, and petit-bourgeois world where they simply would not fit in. (Karsten 2007).

We are induced to conceive of a place of residence as a site: the dwelling and its characteristics (field of housing); and its situation, the neighbourhood, which we understand as a field that is made accessible through various forms of capital, and at the same time offers a stage for the accumulation of capital. To access a neighbourhood, one needs either enough financial capital to buy a dwelling in a certain area or to know the right people who will rent one a dwelling. But taste could also be conceived as a form of cultural capital, which also determines the neighbourhoods that can be accessed (Bourdieu, 1984, 1999; Bridge, 2001b; Jager, 1986).

On the other hand, a neighbourhood is enabling in the sense that it offers time-space advantages, social networks, access to good schooling, and so forth. Buying a home in a particular neighbourhood should be understood as an investment: not only an economic investment (although this can very well be a motivation too), but also an investment of one form of capital in order to acquire another. A field is a stage where the exchange of capital takes place. To ascertain

which neighbourhoods middle-class families find attractive, we need to know not only what is required in terms of capital to access a certain dwelling in a certain neighbourhood, but also how it positions families in the fields of housing, education, consumption, and employment.

Methods

We analyse the case of Amsterdam in four steps. First we put it in perspective by comparing the historical trends in family households[1] in Amsterdam with data from the other three major cities in the Netherlands (Utrecht, The Hague, and Rotterdam). Second, we show the spatial patterns and trends of family households in Amsterdam neighbourhoods in the period 1996-2007 on the basis of municipal statistics. Our third step is to reveal the patterns and trends of middle-class families in Amsterdam neighbourhoods. In the Netherlands, however, there are no statistics for level of education at the level of individual households. We have based our analysis of middle-class families on a dataset from a sample of the Living in Amsterdam Survey (WIA), conducted every two years since 1995 by the Statistical Office Amsterdam. This sample is representative of the city as a whole, and for 2007 also at the neighbourhood level. However, the numbers in former editions are too low to allow significant conclusions to be drawn for developments at the neighbourhood level. Nevertheless, for the city as a whole it is possible to use the results of the WIA-survey to analyse trends in spatial patterns.
The WIA data have been recalculated to provide useful data for our analysis. Since we have used this sample to draw conclusions for the population as a whole, we encountered problems inherently associated with 'translation' from sample to population. We provided confidence intervals to give an indication of the margin of error. Eventually, we defined middle-class families as households with a net monthly income higher than 1611 Euro (modal income 2006[2]), with at least one adult that has completed education at Bachelor level or higher and at least one cohabiting child (below age 18).

   Our definition of *family* is hence quite broad, since it includes all households with cohabiting children, including single-parent households as well as other family configurations. Our definition of *middle class* depends on two classic variables: income and level of education. We are aware that this choice limits our analysis, particularly as we assume a Bourdieuvian perspective, in which various forms of capital other than income and education define various middle-class fractions. We are, however, constrained by the data and cannot include factors such as occupational type and status.

1 *Family households include single-parent families, married and unmarried couples with children (source CBS 2008).*
2 *1144 Euro (1995) and 1389 Euro (2001).*

Finally, we tentatively explain the patterns and processes by categorizing the main locations of middle-class families.

Trends in family households in the Netherlands

Looking at an overview of the number of family households, an upward trend can be seen since the end of the 1980s (Table 2.1). Data on households do not go back before 1987. However, data on the percentages of children in the four major cities in the Netherlands are available for the period 1972-2007 (Table 2.2). Here we see that, since the end of the 1980s, the percentage of children has been on the rise in all four cities, although recently it seems to be dropping again in Amsterdam and Rotterdam.

TABLE 2.1. PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN IN FOUR LARGEST DUTCH CITIES				
	1987	1997	2002	2007
Amsterdam	21.6	23.2	24.0	24.4
The Hague	-	26.7	28.1	29.1
Rotterdam	-	28.4	28.5	28.7
Utrecht	-	23.6	24.2	23.9

Source: CBS (2008)

TABLE 2.2. Children (0-15) percentage of total population in four largest Dutch cities								
	1972	1977	1982	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007
Amsterdam	19.0	16.6	14.6	13.7	14.7	15.7	16.1	15.9
The Hague	19.3	17.2	-	14.7	15.5	16.4	17.4	17.5
Rotterdam	20.6	18.2	16.2	15.4	16.5	17.3	17.4	16.8
Utrecht	22.9	19.1	16.1	13.8	14.2	14.9	15.8	16.2

Source: CBS (2008)

One explanation for the general increase in the numbers of both children and family households is that the four cities have been engaged in large-scale housing construction in the periphery of their territories, or have extended their municipal borders so as to encompass suburban neighbourhoods that formerly belonged to other municipalities. De Aker and IJburg in Amsterdam are large-scale housing development projects that have attracted many family households owing to their supply of large single-family dwellings. These areas are inhabited by many families with relatively high fertility rates and who are predominantly native Dutch.

An increase in children could also be explained by higher birth rates amongst non-western immigrant populations, who over the last few decades have become concentrated in the larger cities in the Netherlands. The majority of children are now of non-native Dutch descent (O&S, 2010). However, non-western immigrants' fertility rates are becoming more similar to the Dutch average (Garssen et al., 2005). Recently, the share has stabilized.

Since many immigrant households lack the means to buy a home, most non-western family households rely on social-rental accommodation, which is mainly clustered in the larger cities (Musterd and Deurloo, 1997). Nevertheless, suburbanization among non-western groups has recently started to become more significant. Initially, only immigrants of Surinam descent showed these trends (De Groot, 2004), but more recently immigrants of Turkish and Moroccan origins have also demonstrated similar patterns (Garssen et al., 2005).

With these explanations in mind we turn to patterns of family households in Amsterdam neighbourhoods.

Family households in Amsterdam neighbourhoods

In the municipality of Amsterdam[3] only 24.4 percent of households are a family (against one third in the Netherlands). The distribution of families in the city, however, is quite uneven. Neighbourhoods[4] have figures ranging from just 6 percent of the households in some central neighbourhoods (situated in the red-light district for example) to almost 50 percent in more peripheral neighbourhoods in the Southeast, Western, and Northern edges of the city.

Figure 2.1 shows the ten neighbourhoods with the highest percentages of households with children. Nine areas are situated in the periphery of the municipality; most of these are characterized by a relatively high share of larger, owner-occupied dwellings. Two neighbourhoods deviate in some respects. Kolenkit and Nieuwendam Noord are typical immigrant neighbourhoods and most of the housing consists of cheap social-rental apartments. The rest of the neighbourhoods in Figure 2.1 are dominated by owner-occupied housing.

In Amsterdam two types of area seem to be typically rich with children: low-income, cheap (social) rental housing areas that are mainly inhabited by non-western families with relatively many children; and owner-resident housing areas that are mainly inhabited by native-Dutch households.

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3   *Amsterdam municipality, 747,290 (2008) inhabitants, comprises the central city in the metropolitan area (2.1 million) and some of the suburban areas. Most of the suburbs, however, are municipalities in their own right.*

4   *Neighbourhoods are defined as buurtcombinaties. On average a buurtcombinatie in Amsterdam has 7784 inhabitants. Although these units are quite large, they are fairly homogeneous in terms of housing, ethnicity, and class.*

FIGURE 2.1.   **Amsterdam neighbourhoods with highest percentage of families**

Source: O&S (2009)

Trends in family households in Amsterdam neighbourhoods
Figure 2.2 shows that nearly all the neighbourhoods undergoing the strongest growth (in black) are located in a belt immediately around the city centre. The neighbourhoods that have the highest share in family households (from Figure 2.1) are shown in grey. Inner-city districts are showing stronger growth rates in the share of family households than peripheral neighbourhoods. Hence, it seems that in Amsterdam inner-city neighbourhoods are becoming more child rich.

As we can see in Table 2.3, most of the neighbourhoods that have witnessed strong growth in family households are characterized not only by a central location, but also by a relatively affluent and native-Dutch population. Apparently the growth in family households in most of these neighbourhoods cannot be explained more than marginally by an increase in immigrant groups. Nieuwendam Noord and Overtoomseveld (in the western part of the inner-city) are the exceptions.

FIGURE 2.2.   **Amsterdam neighbourhoods with strongest increase in share of family households (1996-2006)**
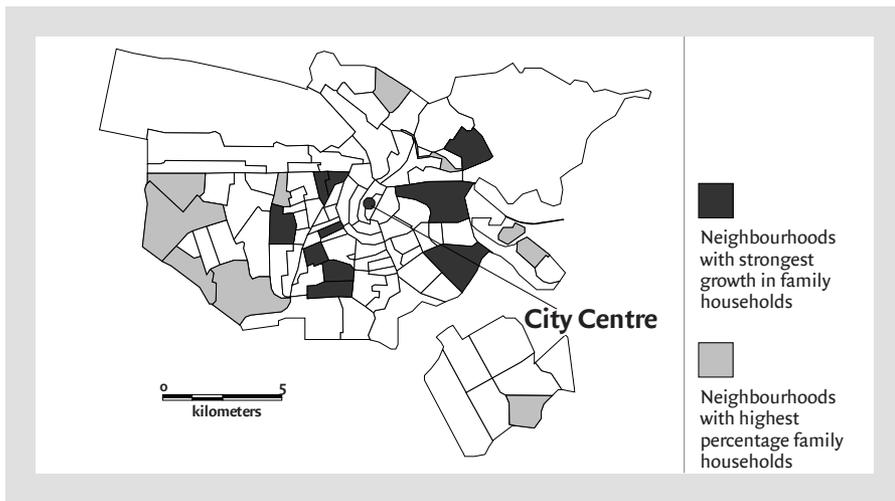
Source: O&S (2008)

Except for Overtoomseveld and Nieuwendam Noord, most of the fastest growing areas are either middle-class, or gentrification neighbourhoods (that are socially and physically upgrading). Furthermore, the growth in family households in most neighbourhoods cannot be ascribed to increasing shares of non-western immigrants. We are therefore tempted to conclude that the increase in family households in Amsterdam is associated with the (new) residential preferences of the middle classes. However, data at the neighbourhood level say little about the individual household level. We need to look at individual households to test the assumption that the increase in the share of family households is actually associated with *middle-class* families.

TABLE 2.3	Amsterdam neighbourhoods with the strongest increase (%) of households with children (1996-2006)					
Neighbourhood	Family house-holds 1996 (N)	Family house-holds 2006 (N)	Percentage of which are Moroccan and Turkish families 1996	Percentage of which are Moroccan and Turkish families 2006	Relative average income 2004 (Amsterdam =100)	Relative in-come growth 1994-2004 (Amsterdam =100)
Centrale markt (ecowijk)	24 (122)	36.5 (405)	9.0	10.9	97	100
Nieuwendam Noord	33.3 (1801)	39.3 (2138)	10.8	24.5	77	80
Oostelijk Havengebied	2.4 (835)	31.8 (2437)	6.7	7.1	125	115
Staatsliedenbuurt	12.3 (861)	17.4 (1232)	19.0	15.7	96	108
Apollobuurt	21.4 (737)	26.2 (917)	0.5	0.5	169	102
Middenmeer	26.3 (1249)	30.7 (1660)	1.9	3.8	120	100
Overtoomseveld	28.9 (1082)	33.1 (1188)	35.8	54.6	76	87
Station Zuid WTC	13.9 (90)	18 (114)	0.0	1.8	183	X
Helmersbuurt	15.1 (556)	19.1 (679)	4.9	3.4	122	111
Willemspark	22.9 (517)	26.6 (601)	1.9	1.7	159	113
Amsterdam	22.9 (80720)	24.1 (87868)	13.6	16.9	100	100

Source: O&S (2006), X =no data available

| TABLE 2.4.	Middle-class family households in Amsterdam 1995-2007 as percentage of total households		
	1995	2001	2007
Families	22.8 (79,978)	23.5 (85,203)	24.1 (88,405)
Middle-class households	16.1 (64,517)	20.9 (84,914)	25.4 (104,096)
Middle-class families	3.6 (12,386)	5.2 (18,820)	7.7 (28,345)

Source: O&S (1995,2001,2007); WIA (2007).

Middle-Class Family households in Amsterdam neighbourhoods
Table 2.4 shows that middle-class families have more than doubled from 12,400 in 1995 (3.6 percent of all households) to 28,400 (7.7 percent) in 2007[5]. At the same time the number of middle-class families (defined as more highly educated and higher income) has increased by some 40,000 (from 16.1 percent to 25.4 percent). The number and share of family households also increased in general. These figures imply that part of the growth in middle-class families may come from immigration especially to new-build areas, but that most of the increase comes from middle-class households who decided to stay within the city when they had children.

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5 *Data are based on the WIA sample. 1995 N= 6,076; 2001 N= 12,148; 2007:14,019; 95% confidence intervals are: 1995: 3.1-4.1% ; 2001 4.8-5.6%; and 2007 7.3.-8.1%*

In Table 2.5 the top ten middle-class family neighbourhoods are summarized. On average 32 percent of the households in these areas are a family; 20 percent are a middle-class family. Together these neighbourhoods are home to 14,503 family households and approximately 9,300 middle-class families (33 percent of all middle-class families in the city). The proportion of middle-class families as part of all family households in these neighbourhoods is higher (0.62) than the Amsterdam average (0.32) (not shown in table).

FIGURE 2.3.   **Relative increase of middle-class family households 1995-2007 (1995=100), Source: WIA, 1995,2001,2007**
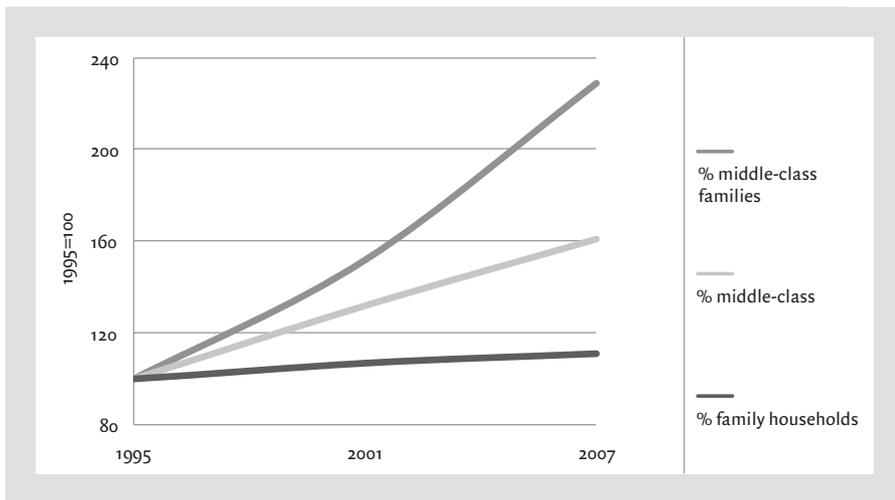

Four of these neighbourhoods are situated in relatively peripheral parts of the city (IJburg, De Aker, Waterland, Sloten) (see Figure 2.4). Apollobuurt, Museumkwartier, Willemspark, Middenmeer, Scheldebuurt and Oostelijk Havengebied are situated within the motor ringway.

TABLE 2.5. Amsterdam neighbourhoods with highest percentage middle-class families				
	Family households 2007 (O&S)		Middle-class family households 2007 (WIA)	
	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)
IJburg	49.2	1122	27.9	686
Waterland/Nieuwendammerdijk	40.2	587	23.5	342
Apollobuurt	27.1	949	22.2	778
Middenmeer	31.7	1717	21.8	1175
Oostelijk Havengebied	31.7	2514	20.0	1589
De Aker/Lutkemeer	45.9	2665	19.8	1149
Willemspark	26.9	624	19.4	450
Sloten en Riekerpolder	43.1	2246	18.3	952
Scheldebuurt	20.7	1411	15.2	1035
Museumkwartier/Duivelseiland	20.6	1253	15.7	935
The 10 neighbourhoods together	32.2	14,963	19.8	9280
Amsterdam	24.1	88,405	7.7	28,345

Source: O&S 2007; WIA 2007

FIGURE 2.4.   **Amsterdam neighbourhoods with highest percentage of middle-class families**
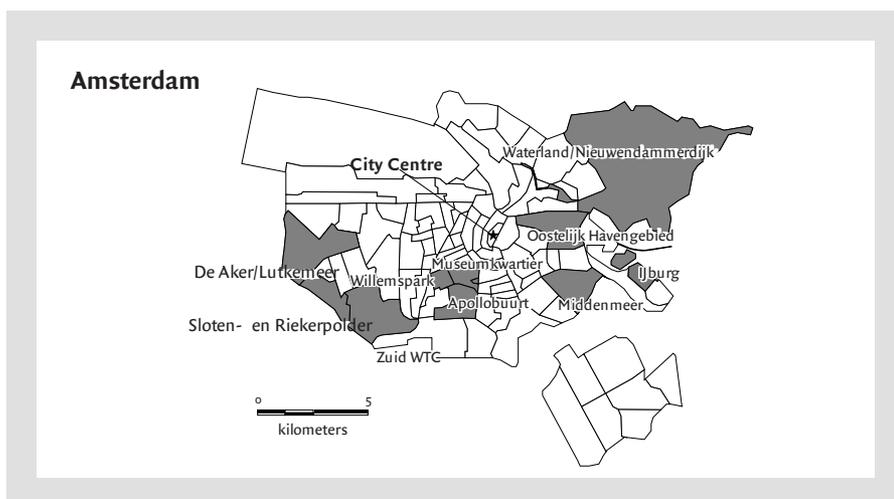
Trends in middle-class family neighbourhoods
Our data are based on a sample whit a size which does not allow for significant claims for the developments of the share of middle-class households in individual neighbourhoods. However, when aggregated, these neighbourhoods can be analysed for developments over the past twelve years. When we single out the central neighbourhoods and look at the development in these middle-class family

neighbourhoods, we see that they show a stronger growth than the peripheral neighbourhoods. This finding supports the theory that middle-class families are increasingly oriented towards inner-city living. Nevertheless, peripheral neighbourhoods still have higher concentrations of middle-class families. The average of the share of middle-class families for the ten middle-class family neighbourhoods increased less rapidly than for the city as whole (Table 2.6). This implies that other areas in the city show even stronger growth.

In Table 2.3 we also saw two areas (Helmersbuurt and Staatsliedenbuurt) that are not traditional middle-class areas, but are gentrifying in terms of both physical and social upgrading. They showed a strong increase in the share of families, and at the same time a faster growth in income than the city as a whole in the period 1996-2006. This type of neighbourhood, together with other centrally-situated areas, may be responsible for accommodating increasing shares of middle-class families.

Table 2.7 shows that, in 2007, the share of middle-class families with only young children (younger than five years) in the ten neighbourhoods with the highest share of middle-class families became lower than in 1995. Furthermore, in 2007 the share in central neighbourhoods was higher than in the peripheral neighbourhoods. This finding indicates that families with children also tend to stay in peripheral middle-class family neighbourhoods when their children get older. In contrast, in the city as a whole, the share of middle-class families with young children has increased, indicating that the growth in middle-class families in the city is stronger among families with young children.

TABLE 2.6. Middle-class family households in Amsterdam 1995-2007 as percentage of total housolds		
	1995	**2007**
Central neighbourhoods	10.7	18.8
Peripheral neighbourhoods	14.4	21.2
Average for top 10 middle class family neighbourhoods	11.9	19.8
Amsterdam	3.6	7.7

Source: WIA 1995, 2007; N (2007)=14,019; N (1995)=6608

TABLE 2.7. Households with only young children (age <5) as % of all middle class families in middle class family neighbourhoods		
	1995	**2007**
Central neighbourhoods	0.37	0.34
Peripheral neighbourhoods	0.41	0.25
Average for top 10 middle class family neighbourhoods	0.4	0.31
Amsterdam	0.31	0.36

Source: WIA 1995, 2007

Tentative explanations

We have presented empirical evidence that new-build areas, typical immigrant neighbourhoods, but particularly centrally-located middle-class and gentrification areas show a strong growth of family households. We have demonstrated that middle-class families show a stronger growth than both families and middle-class groups in general. Our data suggest that, although many middle-class families also choose peripheral areas within the municipality, middle-class families increasingly prefer centrally-located middle-class areas. In this last section we offer tentative explanations for the patterns and processes in middle-class family settlement in Amsterdam.

We argue that, for families, the management of time has becomes much more acute, while the position in other fields is changing. In Bourdieuvian terms: time is more at stake for families; it is a rare and thus valuable form of capital. Choosing a residential location (that is, living in a certain neighbourhood) may be a strategy to optimize a household's time budget. This choice requires investment in terms of other forms of capital (financial, cultural, social). We therefore suggest that, to understand why specific families reside in specific areas, it is necessary to comprehend both the time-space consequences of that place as well as how it might position people in class terms. Although we recognize that the meaning of neighbourhood as a community is fading and becoming replaced by networked forms of community (Blokland and Savage, 2008), we maintain that every neighbourhood still offers specific conditions that structure everyday life in a functional sense (time-space) and in a symbolic sense by providing those who participate in that field with meaning (Van Engelsdorp Gastelaars, 2006).

Following Bourdieu (1990), we see neighbourhoods as fields that are characterized by local rules and that can be accessed by making use of specific forms of capital. The practice of living in a particular neighbourhood is therefore enabled by commanding certain forms of capital (for instance, money to buy a house in a particular area or having a certain taste for some area), but also offers a stage where capital can be accumulated (by building up a sense for the city social networks as well as being an expression of good taste: symbolic capital).

In addition to the four fields (housing, employment, consumption, and education) distinguished by Butler and Robson (2003), we therefore suggest that *place of residence* (neighbourhood) represents a structure for the commanding of time. We recognize that the fields of housing, employment, consumption, and education are integrated though both time and space and that time-space is a part of gentrification research. In fact, important aspects of classic gentrification theory were based on accounts of the advantages of proximity to work and leisure (Clay, 1979; Gale, 1980; Glass, 1964) and also on the symbolic meaning of centrality (Zukin, 1987, 1995). We do not claim that integrating time into gentrification literature is entirely new. However, we propose that time should be treated as another type of capital that plays an important part in the everyday life of middle-class families.

TABLE 2.8	**Typology of Amsterdam middle-class family neighbourhoods**	
Location Accessibility	**Central**	**Peripheral**
Relatively inaccessible (real estate value > €300,000)	Apollobuurt (€572,000)	
	Museumkwartier (€506,000)	
	Willemspark (€496,00)	
	Zuid WTC (€406,000)	Waterland /Nieuwendammerdijk (€347,000)
Relatively accessible (real estate value < €300,000)	Oostelijk Havengebied (€283,000)	IJburg (€296,000)
	Middenmeer (€272,000)	Osdorp de Aker (€256,000)
	Scheldebuurt (€271,000)	Sloten en Riekerpolder (€243,000)
	Helmersbuurt (€249,000)	
	Staatsliedenbuurt (€173,000)	

Source: O&S (2007)

A typology is presented that captures the trend towards centrally-located neighbourhoods and explores the implications of neighbourhood in terms of class to show how the neighbourhoods we identify may suit various types of middle-class families. The typology grasps the 'accessibility' aspect: what capital is required to access a neighbourhood; and the 'benefit' aspect: what capital the neighbourhood 'provides'.

The first dimension captures the amount of capital required to access a neighbourhood. We appreciate that various forms of capital are important in gaining access to the housing market of a particular neighbourhood. Nonetheless, we suggest that economic capital plays the most important part in gaining access to housing in a neighbourhood, particularly for middle-class households. In this typology, this dimension is measured by the average house value of owner-occupied dwellings.

The second dimension of the typology captures what the neighbourhood provides. We focus on the time-space consequences of residential location within the city for practices in various fields. Our descriptions of the types of neighbourhood show how location has time consequences in the fields of consumption, education, and employment (Butler & Robson, 2003). A central location within the city is treated as a proxy for what is called a *rich opportunity structure* (De Meester et. al. 2007), that is, a dense network of amenities and facilities, ranging from schools and childcare facilities to restaurants, concert halls, and sports facilities. Central areas are defined as being situated within the first motor ringway (see Figure 2.4).

We are aware that this typology is a simplistic method of classifying neighbourhoods. Apart from their internal differentiation, neighbourhoods represent a complex set of variables that play a role in the social and spatial organization of everyday life. Housing price and location defined as centrality only

cover part of this complexity. We therefore mainly use this typology to structure some broader descriptions of the various neighbourhoods in terms of the position they take in the fields of housing, consumption, education, and employment and how the location impacts the management of time, also taking transport into account.

The neighbourhoods classified in this typology are the top ten neighbourhoods in terms of share of middle-class families, plus three neighbourhoods that showed a strong growth in families and average income.

Central and inaccessible neighbourhoods

Willemspark, Apollobuurt, Museumkwartier, and Zuid WTC are situated in the southern borough, which for many decades has had an upper-middle-class population. The areas are characterized by quite high densities: many large dwellings from the end of the 19th century with multiple bedrooms, often with small back gardens, in relatively quiet streets. Partly because of status and partly because of size and quality, the housing prices of these dwellings are among the highest in the city. These prices make it difficult for outsiders to gain access, so that these neighbourhoods remain homogeneous. Investment in these areas is secure, both financially ('risk-averse' investment (Gale, 1980) and symbolically (because the status of the neighbourhood is high and stable). Hence living in these areas provides a 'safe' status.

The homogeneity of the population fosters reciprocal relationships between residents, for example, by taking care of each others' children. Like-mindedness amongst parents may also foster child-child relationships in these areas. Thanks to the number of children in these neighbourhoods, children can easily find peers to play with. For children, however, this area is not perfect. Parked cars, narrow pavements, and a lack of playground and green make these areas unsuitable for playing outdoors (Karsten, 2005; Matthews, 2003).

The neighbourhoods are within walking or cycling distance of the city centre, major train stations, opera house and concert hall, restaurants, daily grocery shops, and so forth. In addition, most of these neighbourhoods are also only a few minutes away from the motorway, and have relatively plenty of parking space. The international airport and other important business areas, especially for financial services and law firms, are within a short distance (15 minutes).

As Butler and Robson (2003) have shown in the London case, choosing a good school for one's children is considered a decision of utmost importance. In Amsterdam, parents have free school choice, which makes it less urgent to 'migrate along with good schooling'. Nevertheless, good schooling is one of the top priorities of middle-class parents. The primary schools considered to be the best are mainly situated in the central and expensive neighbourhoods. Often these schools are of a specific kind (Montessori; Free School; Dalton), making them prone to selection on the basis of taste, which is a mechanism for class distinction (Bourdieu, 1984).

Accessible central neighbourhoods
Middenmeer is situated four kilometres southeast of the city centre. The neighbourhood shares many of the advantages of the central expensive areas in terms of housing. A considerable share of the housing is purchasable on the free market and the supply consists of relatively spacious and generally good quality housing, often with private green space. Middenmeer resembles the central and expensive areas described above in building style and building period, but housing prices are lower. The share of families in the population is large and has increased considerably in recent years. Owing to the construction of new housing and the lower prices, access to this area has become easier for middle-class groups with slightly lower incomes.

The somewhat more peripheral location makes the area less diverse in terms of urban functions such as bars, clubs, and shops, which makes it less lively. The area is quite dormant: the focus is the residential function rather than shopping or other forms of consumption. Although Middenmeer has less of an urban feel and the city centre and its functions are further away, this area has most of the amenities required for everyday life, such as grocery shops, neighbourhood restaurants, and childcare facilities. The vicinity of sporting facilities is one of the major assets of this area, as well as the presence of a big central park and many primary schools. This area is quite suitable for children: streets have broad pavements and are not usually crowded; sporting facilities and playgrounds are available and also accessible for children on their own.

Oostelijk Havengebied is a new-development project in the former eastern docklands, situated three kilometres from the city centre. In the course of the last few decades this industrial district has been transformed into a varied and popular residential area. The area has achieved the status of a new district with character by using bold architecture and making subtle use of history. This carefully-planned identity has contributed to the status of the area and helped it stand out as a new-build area that has become acceptable in terms of 'good taste'.

As with all Amsterdam new-build areas, a considerable proportion of its housing stock has been reserved for social housing, which produced heterogeneity in terms of income and ethnic background. Despite this mixture, the Oostelijk Havengebied is predominantly a middle-class area, with high shares of larger apartments and single-family dwellings. Although its increasing popularity has pushed prices beyond the Amsterdam average, the area was quite accessible in terms of price and rent when first on the market. Initially, the city planning department designated this area as a residential quarter particularly for dual-earner households without children. Nevertheless, Oostelijk Havengebied has become inhabited by large numbers of family households. Despite the problems that arose in terms of lack of childcare, schooling, and play facilities (Karsten, 2003), this area offers advantages for families with children, too. The way in which the

building blocks have been placed creates a public space that is relatively child-friendly (low traffic) and enables social control. Oostelijk Havengebied is centrally located at 10 minutes by bicycle from the Central Station. The area is also well connected to the circular ringway. Two tramlines and several bus services open up the area. Although few jobs are located within the neighbourhood, access to both railway and motorway make this a strategic location in commuting terms. All kinds of opportunities for going out are also within reach of this location. In addition, the area itself is also witnessing an increase in restaurants, bars, and other opportunities for cultural consumption such as the new jazz club and chamber music building. Daily groceries are concentrated in the shopping centre at five minutes by bicycle from most homes in the area.

Scheldebuurt is situated three kilometres south of the central city. The neighbourhood forms part of the larger Plan-South development project designed in the early 20th century by the famous architect Berlage. The housing stock consists mainly of larger private-rental apartments (4 rooms or more). Housing prices are lower than in other parts of the southern borough, but are still much above the city average. The neighbourhood is located between the city centre and the business districts in the south. Several tramlines and quick access to the motorway gives this area good accessibility.

The neighbourhood is mainly a residential area, which is crossed by two arteries where most commercial functions are concentrated. Daily groceries, but also many bars and restaurants are within walking distance.

Scheldebuurt has some good schools in the area itself, but is also located within the southern borough where most of the good schools are concentrated.

Built in the late 19th century, Staatsliedenbuurt and Helmersbuurt are two neighbourhoods that used to be relatively poor. They are two kilometres from the city centre. Although Helmersbuurt is characterized by stylish larger apartments and was never as low in status as Staatsliedenbuurt was, both neighbourhoods may be seen as gentrification areas. Typically, these areas offer similar time-space advantages for parents as the other central neighbourhoods, but are more accessible in terms of housing price. In financial terms they serve as second-best options for people opting for a central-urban lifestyle, but cannot afford a dwelling in a more expensive area. These areas, however, have their own distinctive character and differ in various respects from the expensive middle-class areas.

The Helmersbuurt is situated at walking distance from the Leidseplein, the heart of Amsterdam nightlife, and other districts for going out. Staasliedenbuurt is also situated very close to one of the centres for highbrow consumption: the Jordaan quarter, which is dotted with small trendy restaurants and bars. Furthermore, the new cultural hotspot Westergasfabriek is within a five minute walk. Daily groceries and childcare facilities are available in both neighbourhoods.

Both quarters are mainly residential in character; for employment, most inhabitants have to leave their neighbourhood. The location of both neighbourhoods is, however, quite strategic relative to large clusters of jobs. In addition, small creative businesses have lately started to cluster in both neighbourhoods (O&S 2007).

Finally, schools are somewhat more problematic, especially in Staatsliedenbuurt. Few 'good' schools are located in the area. Nevertheless, the free choice of schools in Amsterdam makes it possible for parents to choose schools in adjacent (middle-class) areas, such as the nearby Jordaan.

Peripheral accessible neighbourhoods

In many respects the accessible peripheral neighbourhoods, De Aker, Sloten, and IJburg offer the classic advantages of suburban living. The neighbourhoods fit with the set of preferences Bell (1968) described as familism: widely-held ideas about what is good for a child (playing outdoors, living in a green, healthy, safe, and homogeneous environment, and so forth). However, what makes these areas different from 'real' suburbs is their relative proximity to the city centre compared with real suburbs and, perhaps more importantly, the claim that these neighbourhoods are still part of the city. The inhabitants of IJburg consider themselves real urbanites, and they often express their aversion to what they see as 'real' suburban areas (Lupi et al., 2007). Symbolically, these areas constitute an important residential milieu between city and suburb.

In terms of accessibility, these areas are an important milieu for many family households, including middle-class families. A considerable share of the dwellings in these areas is owner-occupied, and because they are newly constructed, often with a fixed price, they are relatively affordable. Although these neighbourhoods are closer to the city and are also characterized by higher densities than real suburbs, the opportunity structure of these areas is quite suburban. For daily groceries and other day-to-day activities, these areas suffice. For more urban forms of consumption, the residents of these areas need to travel.

There are few jobs within these areas, but they are quite strategically located for those who depend on cars for their work. There is enough parking space; roads are rarely jammed and the motorway is easily accessed. Public transport is quite good, but is relatively time-consuming. Primary schools in the areas are nearby and generally considered good, although on IJburg, some class-related and ethnic struggles are taking place, which may affect parents' future residential choice.

Peripheral inaccessible neighbourhoods

The dykes Nieuwendammerdijk and Buiksloterdijk offer a truly rural residential milieu within the city, at a cycling distance of 15 minutes from the city centre. The combination of country life and urban living has made these areas extremely popular residential milieus that are inhabited by a very affluent population.

This milieu does not have much to do with urban living in terms of atmosphere and functionality. However, its location enables residents to access many of the advantages of inner-city living in terms of consumption. For daily groceries, childcare, and other amenities residents rely mainly on adjacent neighbourhoods. Since most jobs in the area are of a different type and status, middle-class families in the neighbourhood are not usually employed there. They need to commute for their work by bicycle to the city centre, or take the car to the readily-accessible motorway. Since the neighbourhood is embedded in the Amsterdam Noord borough, which in terms of population contrasts starkly with the upper-middle-class of the dykes, finding a good school may be problematic.

While the dykes are physically embedded in the urban fabric, the adjacent district of Waterland is a nature- and landscape reserve. Densities are very low and housing is concentrated in a few small old village cores. This residential milieu is unique in the sense that it enables the realization of the pastoral idyll of country life within reach of urban life. Waterland offers a milieu that supersedes the presumed petit-bourgeois image that sticks to suburban family living and avoids many of the disadvantages of urban living. Furthermore, building restrictions on the one hand and the high demand for this milieu on the other guarantee a stable and safe financial investment and a stable community with strong social cohesion. Distances and poor public transport, however, make the inhabitants of these areas dependent on cars, which particularly constrains youngsters in their spatial mobility. For daily groceries and childcare most residents need to travel by car. The city is just 15 minutes drive, but by bicycle it takes much longer. Almost all residents need to commute quite long hours for work. Coming from the northern part of the metropolitan region, morning and evening traffic jams are also among the disadvantages. There are primary schools in only two of the six villages; secondary schools are located in Amsterdam or in neighbouring municipalities, all to be reached by bus or car.

Conclusion and discussion

We have addressed the question, what patterns and trends in middle-class family settlement can be identified in Amsterdam neighbourhoods in the period 1995-2007 and how can they plausibly be explained. Before answering this question we first summarize our findings for the first two sub questions: 1) what are the patterns of middle-class families in Amsterdam? 2) What are the trends in middle-class settlement?

Patterns

Despite the fact that many families suburbanized in the 1960s and 1970s, a considerable share of all Amsterdam households is still a family (24.4 percent). In 2007 the strongest concentrations of families within the municipality were in the peripheral neighbourhoods, which are characterized by relatively high shares of larger, often owner-occupied housing situated in quiet, green areas. Other strong concentrations are found in typical immigrant neighbourhoods, which are characterized by high shares of social-rental accommodation.

As far as we know, our paper has provided the first empirical data of the scale of middle-class families in Amsterdam. Based on the WIA survey, we have shown that approximately 28,300 households (7.7 percent) qualify as middle-class families. This share corresponds to approximately one third of all family households in the city. In contrast with families generally, middle-class families are mainly concentrated in inner-city districts, although many middle-class families also live in new-build areas on the city's fringes. Only 36 percent of all middle-class families have children younger than five years old.

Trends

Since the mid 1980s the number and share of family households have increased in all four large cities in the Netherlands. The Amsterdam neighbourhoods in which the share of families increased most strongly in the period 1996-2006 are mainly situated in inner-city districts. We found that growth in the number and share of families is mainly taking place in central traditional middle-class neighbourhoods (Middenmeer) and gentrification areas (Staatsliedenbuurt), but also in new-build areas (Oostelijk Havengebied, De Aker) and immigrant neighbourhoods with high shares of social-rental dwellings (Overtoomseveld).

We have provided evidence that, in the period 1995-2007, middle-class families strongly increased in numbers in both relative and absolute terms. We have shown that the share of middle-class families increased from 3.6 percent in 1995 to 7.7 percent in 2007. We have provided evidence that the central parts of the city are increasingly becoming inhabited by middle-class groups, including middle-class families. Our data suggest that the largest numbers of middle-class families tend to cluster in the central areas that were already mainly inhabited by middle-class families such as Middenmeer and Museumkwartier. Nevertheless, relative change is most rapid in central gentrification areas such as Staatsliedenbuurt and Helmersbuurt.

In the city as a whole, the share of families with young children is increasing, but in the typical middle-class family neighbourhoods that share is getting smaller, particularly in the peripheral areas. This finding suggests that these areas are becoming less accessible for young families, and that more families with older children are residing there.

Tentative Explanations

We presented a typology based on our analysis on the neighbourhood level in Amsterdam that connects the requirements to access a neighbourhood with what it provides. We suggested four types of neighbourhood that represent different sectors of middle-class habitus: (in)accessible central, and (in)accessible peripheral areas.

Some middle-class families with very high incomes are congregating in a few stable middle-class central areas that offer not only good housing, a sound financial investment, and access to good schooling, but also time-budget advantages. These areas have a lower share of young children, which might indicate that families are there to stay. The continuing pressure on the market makes these areas almost exclusively accessible to households with (two) high incomes.

Families who also seek the advantages of a central location, but cannot afford to live in these increasingly expensive areas, either stay in their current neighbourhood or move into second-best central areas. Fractions of the middle class with less economic capital (but who also seek other types of distinction) may be expected to populate those spill-over areas, which are often at the gentrification frontier. The success of peripheral new-build areas within reasonable distance of the city centre, and with the advantages of suburban single-family homes, suggests that some middle-class families seek residential locations that constitute a residential environment between city and suburb. These areas are relatively accessible, but offer less clear time-advantages.

The inaccessible peripheral neighbourhoods offer a residential environment that has the advantages of the suburbs. The relatively short distance to the city centre and other business districts makes these areas more tightly knit within the urban system than real suburbs are. These neighbourhoods have, however, become much more expensive and are therefore not very accessible to most families. The fact that the share of young children has decreased in these peripheral areas tells us that these areas have become inhabited by middle-class families in earlier stages and that those families have probably decided to stay and become true middle-class urban-oriented family households.

We have linked the reorientation of middle-class families to the city with two interrelated processes: a reorientation of middle-class groups to the city; and the role of place in balancing work, family, leisure, and social obligations in the everyday lives of middle-class families. In Amsterdam changes in employment and a rise in higher education has created a larger group of middle-class people who live in the city for a considerable part of their lives. We have argued that these people have accumulated experiences and could be claimed to have built up an urban habitus. They have established social networks, may have various work experiences, and may derive parts of their identity from living in the city. They have accumulated a feel for the city, both metaphorically and practically. Consequently

there are more people with an urban lifestyle when they come to the stage of having children. When members of the middle class have children most of them still suburbanize, but our data suggest that centrally-located areas are becoming increasingly popular among middle-class families, while peripheral (particularly new-build areas) are also growing in favour. These findings support the idea that the gentrification of the city also spreads into subsequent stages of the life course.

Our data suggest that, in line with the findings of Butler and Robson (2003), we can identify various middle-class fractions, with a different habitus, who prefer different residential environments, depending on the amount and forms of capital they command, as well as how their residential location offers positions in the fields of employment, housing, consumption, and education. We have suggested that, in addition to these fields, the neighbourhood should also be analysed for what advantages it might give in terms of time-budget and qualities of space. Bell's (1968) distinction between familist and careerist has become blurred. Compared with earlier research (Karsten, 2003), we now suggest that there are various types of 'family gentrifiers' with different habituses who are attracted to various areas. As our data on the age of children suggest, the share of young children among middle-class families in the city is increasing. This increase may indeed indicate that middle-class households are settling down in the city, if only in the first stage of parenthood.

The residential practices of middle-class families in Amsterdam suggest that different residential environments are related to various middle-class habituses. In our future research we will further explore the relationship between place and habitus for middle-class families and how urban environments are part of larger time-space trajectories.
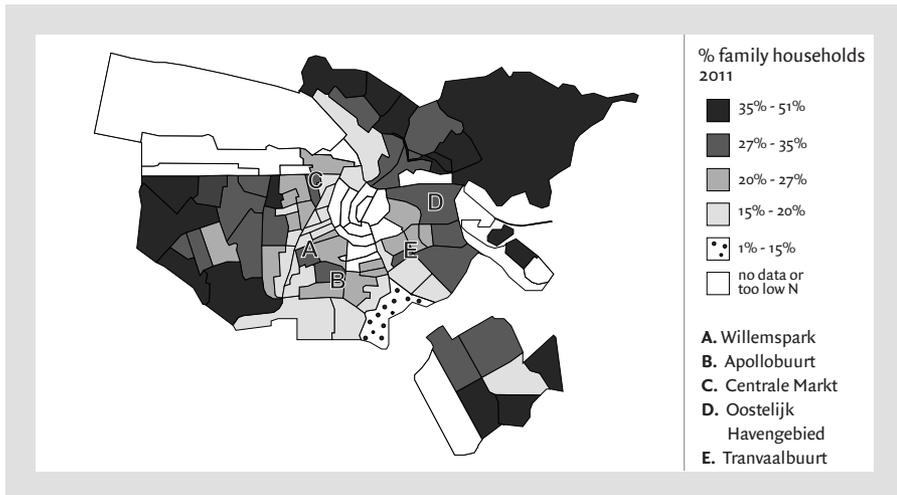
2b. Box 1: Family Households in Amsterdam

The previous chapter has given an overview of the patterns and trends of middle class families in Amsterdam based on data from the period 1995-2007. This box provides a brief update of the latest patterns and trends for the period up till 2011.

In the period 2008-2011 the share of family households in Amsterdam has slightly increased. Figure 2b.1 shows the share of family households in the neighbourhoods municipality of Amsterdam in 2011. As appears from the map, the concentration of families tend to show a relatively concentric pattern, where the lowest shares inhabit the historical centre, and the suburban fringes have the highest shares. Yet, some relatively centrally located neighbourhoods deviate from this general pattern. Willemspark, Apollobuurt, Centrale Markt, Oostelijk Havengebied and Transvaal have higher shares of families than their adjacent neighbourhoods.

Figure 2b.2 shows a very different spatial pattern. Although on average the share of family households has increased in the whole city throughout the period 1996-2011, the neighbourhoods with the strongest increase in family households are Centrale Markt, Slotermeer, Willemspark, Middenmeer, and Nieuwendam Noord . From this figure it appears that typically two types of neighbourhoods have the strongest growth in families: relatively central affluent neighbourhoods such as Willemspark and Middenmeer; and neighbourhoods with high shares of non-western immigrants, mainly in Nieuw West, such as Slotermeer

FIGURE 2B.1: **% family households in Amsterdam in 2011**

Source: O&S, 2011

FIGURE 2B.2: **Increase % family households in Amsterdam in 1996-2011**
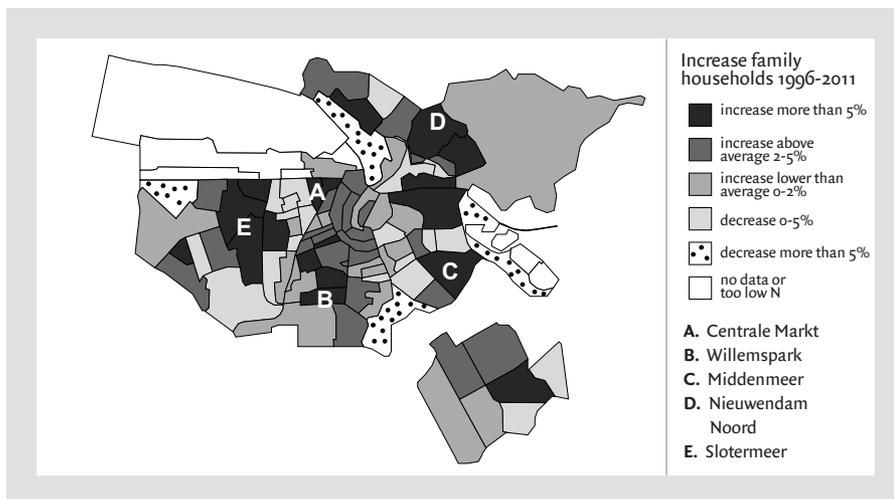
Source: O&S, 2011

The results from this extra analysis show that also in the period after the publication of Chapter 2 the main patterns and trends are still visible. The increase of family households in Amsterdam is generally related to the gentrification of the central boroughs. Yet, the increasing shares of family households in neighbourhoods in the borough of Nieuw West, which was less evident in Chapter 2, may point to the fact that various processes are taking place simultaneously. The scope of this mini-analysis, however, does not allow for any definite conclusions.