

Neighborhood battle in the Netherlands: restaurant opportunities in Utrecht.

Floor Wijnen

December 10, 2019

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The beautiful city of Utrecht is based in the Netherlands in Europe.

It is currently filling up with expats due to multiple factors such as the steep housing prices in Amsterdam, the close proximity to Amsterdam (25 mins by train) and Brexit. As a result, spend on eating/drinking out is rising and so is awareness of animal welfare and environmental impact of food. This offers opportunities for opening a vegetarian restaurant in Utrecht. In order to determine the best neighborhood to settle, the proximity of restaurants overall and presence of vegetarian restaurants is researched for the neighborhoods of Utrecht. It is assumed that close proximity of other restaurants is favorable, as it will decrease the need for marketing to attract people to a quiet location.

1.2 Research question

Which neighborhood is most promising for opening a vegetarian restaurant?

In order to solve this question multiple underlying questions will be researched:

- What is the density of restaurants for each neighborhood?
- How many vegetarian restaurants have already settled in each neighborhood?

2. Data

The data used for this project will come from different sources:

- The neighborhoods in Utrecht. ([Utrecht](#))
- The postal codes belonging to the neighborhoods. ([Postcode](#))
- The venues in each neighborhood. ([FourSquare API](#))
- Coordinates for the postal codes. ([Geocoder](#))

The data will be merged so that each postal code is a row containing the neighbourhood, number of restaurants and average rating.

3. Methodology

This research is exploratory so the goal will be to create a visual representation of the restaurants per neighbourhood with additional focus on vegetarian restaurants. The rating of establishments will give insight into further opportunities or threats for setting up a restaurant.

4. Results & Discussion

The analysis gives insight in the current situation of restaurant density per neighbourhood in Utrecht. It shows the few existing vegetarian restaurants plotted on the map, so infrastructure and overlap of neighbourhoods can be taken into account.

Unfortunately it cost a lot of effort to retrieve the coordinates and a manual solution was necessary. This shows the lack of availability of reverse geocoding tools in the Netherlands

and took away a lot of time for this project. In addition, the original approach to include data on restaurant ratings was not feasible as Foursquare does not openly share this via their API. Therefore the eventual project ended up more limited than originally planned.

This research is limited in the sense that it leaves out important factors for choosing a place to set up a new restaurant such as investment costs and saturation.

5. Conclusion

Based on the research, Utrecht Oost (East) is an attractive location to start a new vegetarian restaurant. Only one vegetarian restaurant is already settled there and as it is not the city center (binnenstad) finding a good location will be much easier. Additionally it is close to the central station and other central attractions.