# USE-IT Maps for Young Travellers
Impact Survey 2017
Report

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*part a*

# introduction

# 1. What is USE-IT?

USE-IT makes free city maps for young travellers. The info is no-nonsense, made by locals, non-commercial and up-to-date.

A USE-IT map shows about a hundred spots per city: museums, bars, affordable restaurants, clubs and places where you will meet locals instead of other tourists. The project is entirely non-commercial: nobody pays to be included. Maps are distributed for free in hostels, tourist infos, youth info centers, welcome packages for exchange students etc.

The initiative to start a new USE-IT always comes from young locals, who independently look for funding and who remain responsible for their own content and graphic design. Every USE-IT prints and distributes between 20.000 and 180.000 maps per year. Most of them also manage social media pages, some have a website and a few have their own information desks.

Every local USE-IT initiative is a member of the international not-for-profit organisation USE-IT Europe. The aim of USE-IT Europe is to help newcomers in the network and to protect the name as a quality label: local initiatives can only become a member if they conscientiously follow the non-commercial principles. USE-IT Europe also organises yearly meetings and catalyses overarching projects such as the development of an app (released for iOS in 2015) and this survey.

The name USE-IT originates in 1971 in Copenhagen, but the actual network of city maps only started in 2005 when the first map of Ghent (Belgium) was released. Since then, the number of cities in the network has grown every year, with more than 40 members at the end of 2016. Continuity of every map depends on local funding, but every member tries to publish a new map every year.

For an overview of the most recent maps: see www.use-it.travel

# 2. Previous research

In 2013, a research team from ASTOR (Association for Tourism Research at KU Leuven) and Expeditions (Applied Anthropology Research unit) charted the impact of USE-IT on the travel behaviour of its users. They assessed the maps' impact in three domains: the economic impact, the promotional impact and the network impact.[1]

Some of the main conclusions:

- USE-IT maps reach very high customer satisfaction by answering to the needs and requests of a specific target group (young travellers).

- The design is attractive and voices the enthusiasm of the USE-IT teams about their city. This is a feature that is noted and praised by most users.

- The USE-IT network is self-promoting in many ways. From the viewpoint of destination promotion it is a highly cost-effective instrument.

- Touristic stakeholders who are on the map often see it as an acknowledgement for the quality of their product or service and see it as a reminder why they love doing what they do.

- USE-IT provides an adequate and feasible promotion channel for smaller cities, who don't have big tourism influx, to promote themselves as a possible destination.

The current report follows up on that benchmark study, and adds a fourth domain: the sustainability impact of USE-IT maps.

[1] *See www.use-it.travel/survey_2013*

# 3. Overall aim

Young travellers can find USE-IT maps in hostels and tourist infos, print them at home or get them from a friend. Feedback rarely returns to the creative team, so of course this impact study aims to collect basic information about overall usage and quality.

The main aim however, is to find out about the project's impact. USE-IT is strictly non-commercial and runs on a combination of (mostly) voluntary work and public money. Young locals usually want to start up their local map after travelling with one themselves, but since they don't work for any city department or professional tourism office, they have to explain the concept and defend the public investment. With a grassroots project like USE-IT, the funding authorities want to know why they should invest.

That's what this study also aims to find out: does USE-IT give a return on investment?

# 4. Main research questions

The impact survey aimed at two distinct target groups: travellers who have used one or more maps, and the professionals and semi-professionals who distribute them, such as tourist info staff and hostel personnel.

## Question 1: Do USE-IT maps have a promotional impact?

All USE-IT maps refer to the other cities in the network on the back cover and include a link to www.use-it.travel, the portal site where all recent maps can be downloaded directly. But do people actually change travel plans or choose destinations on the basis of the network? Did they use maps for different cities and will USE-IT influence their choice of next destinations?

## Question 2: Do USE-IT maps have an economic impact?

The myth of the poor young traveller is a strong one, but has been refuted by The World Youth Student and Educational (WYSE) Travel Confederation. Basically, the idea of the scruffy backpacker travelling on a shoestring is a thing of the past. Young people increasingly stay in cool and centrally-located hostels, arrive with trolleys instead of backpacks and they instantly share pictures from their smartphones. Some say the "flashpacker" has now finally replaced the backpacker. Expenditure was already at a daily average of €50 per person in 2012, and young people tend to go on longer trips than older travellers. The youth market makes up for 20% of all travel arrivals, and is an ever-growing market which generated an estimated 250 billion dollars in 2014.[2]

This survey doesn't aim to repeat WYSE's research, which has already surveyed over 34,000 young travellers from 137 countries and repeats this benchmark study every five years. There would be too many questions to assess actual expenditure, and this survey needed to stay brief for maximum response. Still, are there other ways to measure a concrete effect of USE-IT maps on the local economy?

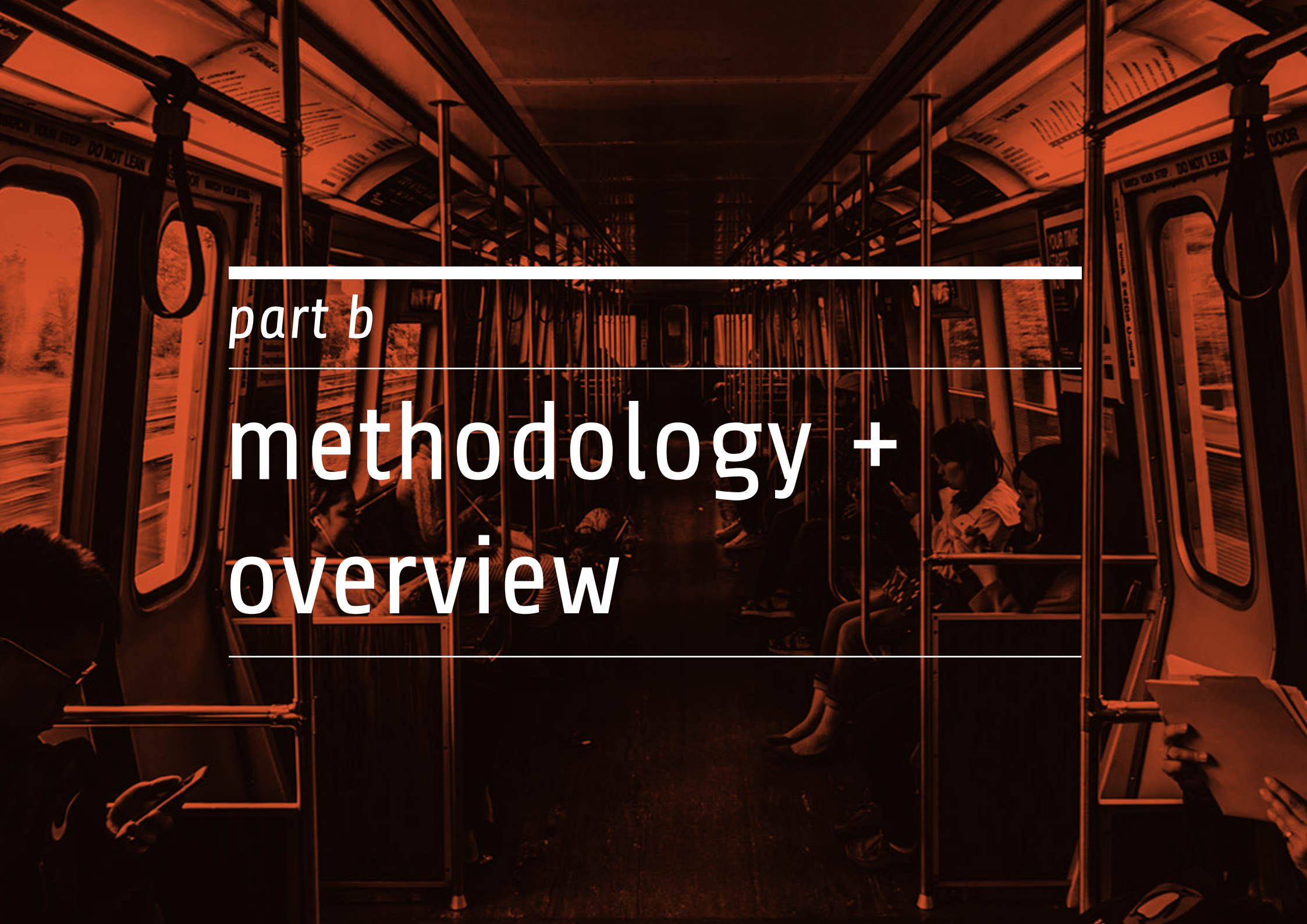
[2] *For more information and an executive of the summary New Horizons five-yearly report, see www.wysetc.org. The 2017 edition has not been published yet, but numbers will probably be higher now.*

## Question 3: Does USE-IT have a sustainability impact?

Both in the tourism industry and other domains, sustainability has been a hot topic for years. Apart from being a buzz word, it's a reality the sector will have to confront: in hyperpopular destinations such as Barcelona or Venice, locals increasingly protest against the massive influx of travellers, be it for the general congestion of tourist sites, the influence of Airbnb on the housing market, or disinvestment outside of the postcard areas. USE-IT maps claim to be more alternative than mass tourism products, and loudly advertise that they are more authentic because locals select and write them. But does this really have an effect on the users' activities? Do these maps actually pull people away from the centre and the mainstream to create a more sustainable kind of travel?

## Question 4: Is USE-IT a strong network?

The first USE-IT map was made by young people in Ghent, Belgium in 2005. Since then, the network of city maps has spread in more cities every year. By the end of 2016, there were more than 40 members in the European network. But does it actually function as a network? Has the brand become strong enough to make the project appealing to more cities? Is it a good return on investment and what should USE-IT do to become stronger?



*part b*

# methodology + overview

# 1. Data Collection

The questionnaire ran on the digital platform SurveyMonkey from the 7th of March 2016 to the 31st of January 2017.

It was aimed at two different target groups: travellers who have used one or more maps and professionals from tourist offices and hostels who distribute them.[3]

Respondents were sought:
- through the social media pages of the local USE-IT projects (mostly Facebook)
- via a flyer attached to the printed maps, including the weblink and QR-code
- via newsletters (mostly directed at intermediaries)
- at the USE-IT info desk
- on CouchSurfing meetings
- via direct contact in hostels, addressing both travellers and personnel

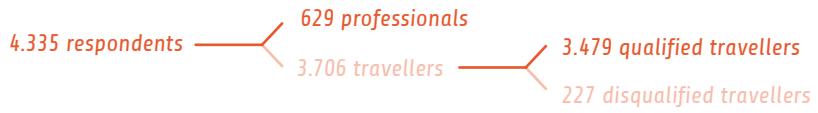
Most of the collected data is quantitative, although the survey included open questions that allowed for a more qualitative and evaluative input. Some relevant quotes will also be included in this analysis.

[3] *See www.use-it.travel/survey_questions*

# 2. Number of respondents

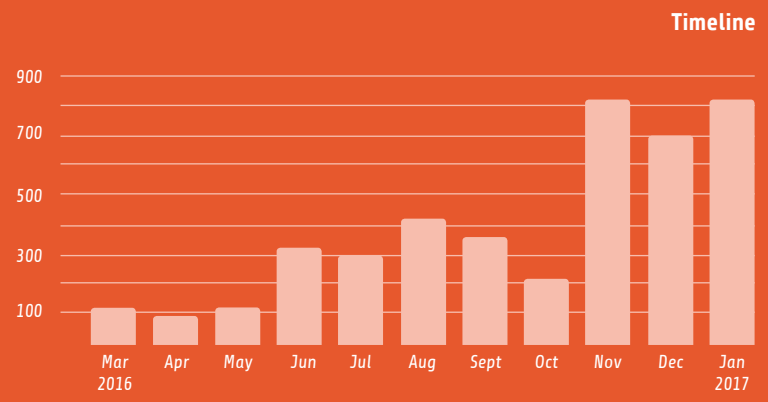
In total, 4.335 people entered the survey. After the first question "How do you know USE-IT maps best?", respondents were directed either to a set of questions for travellers or a different set of questions for professionals.[4]

Some travellers had never used a map, or had only used it in their own city. These 227 people were redirected to a disqualifying page and received no further questions. That leaves 4.108 qualified responses, consisting of 3.479 travellers and 629 professionals.




Some questions were obligatory, others were not. For the sake of accuracy, the number of responses for every individual question will always be included next to the corresponding graphic in this report.[5]

Most of the answers were collected in the final months, due to added efforts from the USE-IT network in that period and more extensive sharing on social media.




[4] See www.use-it.travel/survey_questions: Q2 to Q23 were only seen by travellers, Q24 to Q40 only by professionals

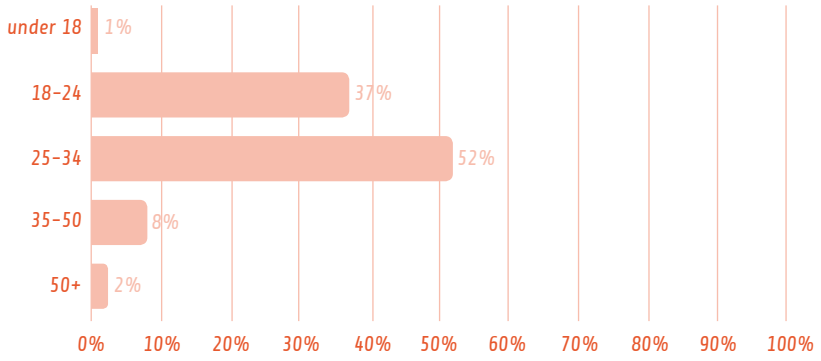
[5] Out of 3.479 qualified travellers, 2.402 still answered the questions on the final page, which indicates a completion rate of 69%. To a small or large extent, the drop-out respondents still answered other questions, so their answers are still included in the report. The same goes for the professionals, who also show a full completion rate of 69%.

# 3. Respondent profile

## a) Travellers

Although USE-IT aims at a target group of 18-25, travellers responding to the survey tended to be older. The overall age remains relatively "young" though, with a total of 90% under 35 years old.

*Q18: How old are you?*
*(answers: 2.404)*




In terms of nationalities, the travellers who responded were mostly European. The 10 countries in the box make up for 66% of all responses. The remaining 34% mostly come from European countries as well.

Many travellers were travelling with friends when they used the map. On average, these small groups of friends were made up of 2.5 people.[6]

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Germany** | 213 | (9%) | **Netherlands** | 155 | (6%) |
| **France** | 212 | (9%) | **Czech Republic** | 154 | (6%) |
| **Belgium** | 203 | (8%) | **United States** | 110 | (5%) |
| **Spain** | 196 | (8%) | **United Kingdom** | 93 | (4%) |
| **Italy** | 168 | (7%) | **Austria** | 82 | (3%) |

[6] *See Q21: "With how many people (including yourself) were you travelling when you were using this map?" USE-IT aims at individual travellers or small groups of friends, not schools or organized trips. For this reason, all groups over 10 persons were disregarded to calculate this average of 2.5 persons.*

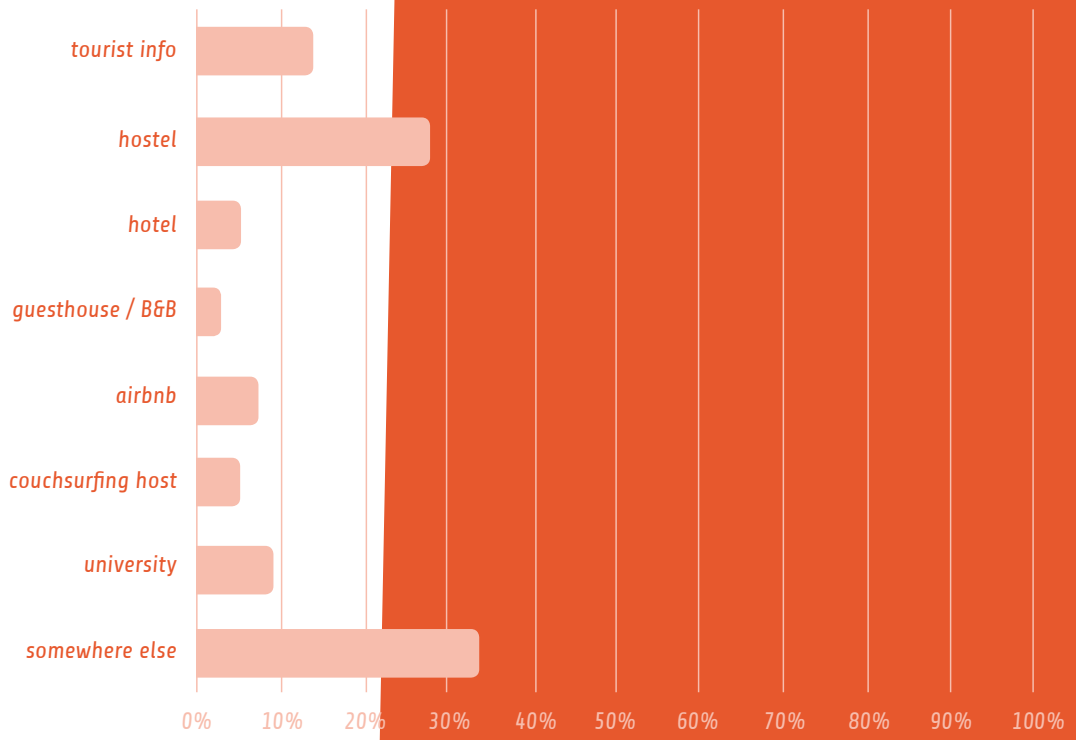
## b) Professionals

Apart from travellers, the survey also addressed tourism professionals and semi-professionals who hand out maps to the end users. In a sense, these intermediaries are stake-holders in the project, because the maps help them in their professional work. Hostel personnel made up for 27% of these responses, tourist infos for 13% and universities for 8%.[7]

33% of the professionals also came from a very diverse group of bar and restaurant owners, city guides (including those from the Greeters network) and people who work at cultural centres or youth info points.

Overall they were slightly older than the travellers, with 71% under 35 years old. Since USE-IT maps are mostly distributed locally and regionally, the professionals' nationalities overlap with those of the USE-IT cities.

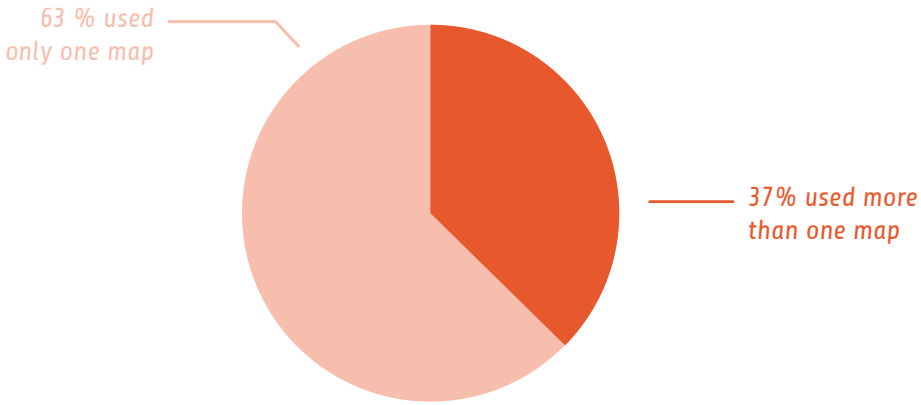
*Q24: Where do you work?*
*(answers: 533)*




[7] *USE-IT maps are often included in the welcome packages for exchange students*

# 4. City maps represented in the results

## a) Travellers




When the survey ran in 2016, there were 44 maps in distribution. 37% of the travellers replied that they had used more than one map already.[8] These maps were the most frequently used:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Map of Brussels | 1146 | Map of Cordoba | 155 |
| Map of Bruges | 710 | Map of Dresden | 153 |
| Map of Ghent | 637 | Map of Mechelen | 153 |
| Map of Antwerp | 629 | Map of Liège | 149 |
| Map of Prague | 599 | Map of Milan | 133 |
| Map of Budapest | 354 | Map of Nantes | 131 |
| Map of Leuven | 326 | Map of Utrecht | 124 |
| Map of Brno | 260 | Map of Graz | 122 |
| Map of Porto | 235 | Map of Bologna | 114 |
| Map of Ljubljana | 214 | Map of The Hague | 108 |
| Map of Oslo | 156 | | |

The high use of Belgian maps may be due to the longer history of the USE-IT maps there (the first USE-IT map was created in Ghent in 2005) and a tight cross-distribution network in all hostels and tourist infos of all cities concerned.

No matter which other maps they had also used, one out of three travellers was familiar with the map of Brussels.[9]

[8] *Travellers who had never used a map (5%) or had only used it in their own city (4%) were diverted towards a disqualification page in the survey. Since they did not have a real travelling experience with the map, their answers were not relevant to this impact study. Those who had used more than one map already were afterwards asked to select one map which they remembered best, so they could give feedback about that city specifically.*

[9] *Some bias in these numbers comes from the efforts made by the local teams. Volunteers who spread the survey most actively also got more responses, which does not necessarily overlap with the popularity of the map or destination. USE-IT Brussels has an info desk too, where more than 20.000 people visit per year. That made it easier for local volunteers to collect surveys.*

## b) Professionals

Professionals mostly came from these cities, and responded about the corresponding maps:[10]

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Brussels*** | 56 | ***Ljubljana*** | 32 |
| ***Graz*** | 46 | ***Porto*** | 32 |
| ***Nijmegen*** | 38 | ***Nicosia*** | 23 |
| ***Cordoba*** | 35 | ***Dresden*** | 20 |
| ***Ghent*** | 34 | ***Oslo*** | 20 |

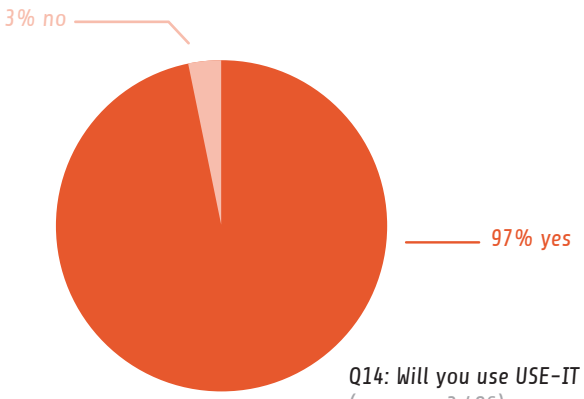
[10] *The same remark about bias counts here. Local USE-IT members who spread the message most actively via mail or newsletter to their stakeholders, got more responses. The numbers do not necessarily reflect the number of professionals or semi-professionals who distribute the maps.*

*part c*

# impact analysis

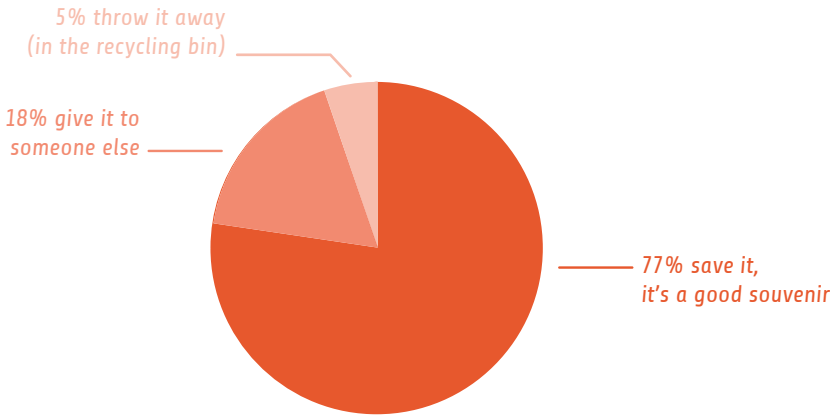
# 1. Promotional impact

As we have seen, 37% of the travellers used more than one USE-IT map. In addition, when asked about future plans, 97% intend to use the maps in other cities as well. Even if travel plans do not necessarily come true, the brand loyalty is high.




*Q14: Will you use USE-IT Maps in other cities as well?* (answers: 2.486)

In addition, the maps are not often discarded after the trip. 77% of travellers keep the map as a souvenir, 18% intend to give it to a friend, and only 5% throw it away.




*Q16: What did you do with the map when you left? Or what will you do?* (answers: 2.446)

The impact of previous users is confirmed elsewhere in the survey: 23% indicate that they indeed did not acquire the map from the tourist info or their hostel, but got it from a friend.[11] Even though street maps are usually considered as disposable objects for temporary use, the attachment to USE-IT maps is higher. They seem to be treated more like travel guides, saved for future use and are shared with friends.

The loyalty of users is further reinforced by the **quotes** from the open comments section at the end of the survey. Some examples:[12]

*"i love what you are doing in terms of giving a more local and alternative option to touristic information. And also that you don't pick some of the most common European places, because i actually would choose a city trip on a the options of use-it city maps."*

***traveller from Italy***

*"We love your maps, we actually pick destinations based on it! We wouldn't have gone to Leuven or Mechelen (or heard about them) if it wasn't for your map and we planned a 5 day trip there!"*

***traveller from Spain***

*"Every time i'm travelling to a city, I always go to the website of Use-it to look if there's a map. I just love the maps and hope there will be more soon. I'm travelling to Rome, Napoli and Florence this time, but none have a map"*

***traveller from Italy***

*"Keep the maps alive - i book my trips after checking if theres a use-it map! ;)"*

***traveller from Brazil***

*"Have been a fan and user since the early days. I promote use-it maps with everyone I know (family, interns at work, friends, strangers...) Keep up the goood work and thank you! My holiday destinations even are partly chosen on basis of use-it maps ;)*

***traveller from Czech Republic***

*"Guys! Those maps are just awesome. Everywhere I go i must have the map (in fact i think i dont go places where the map doesnt exist). Please continue. It is always the best souvenir i bring. Big up!"*

***traveller from Italy***

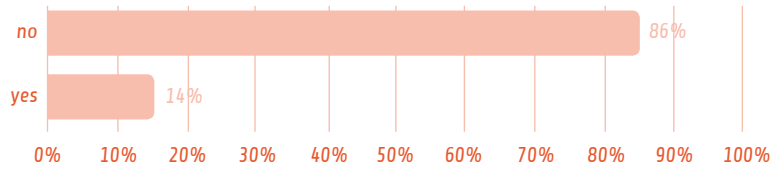
[11] *Taken from responses to Question 6: Where did you find the map?*
[12] *All answers in this report will be rendered unfiltered, including spelling mistakes*

# 2. Economic impact

## a) Travellers

From the current survey's results, it's not possible to put an exact number on how much money users actually spent on their trips. But even if this survey does not measure expenditure, one question does try to assess a concrete economic impact: "Did you stay longer (or are you planning to stay longer) because of the USE-IT Map?"

*Q8: Did you stay longer (or are you planning to stay longer) because of the USE-IT Map?* (answers: 2.887)




More than 14% claim to have extended their stay because of the map, which is a rise of 4% compared to 2013.[13] The average number of extra nights spent is two and a half.[14]

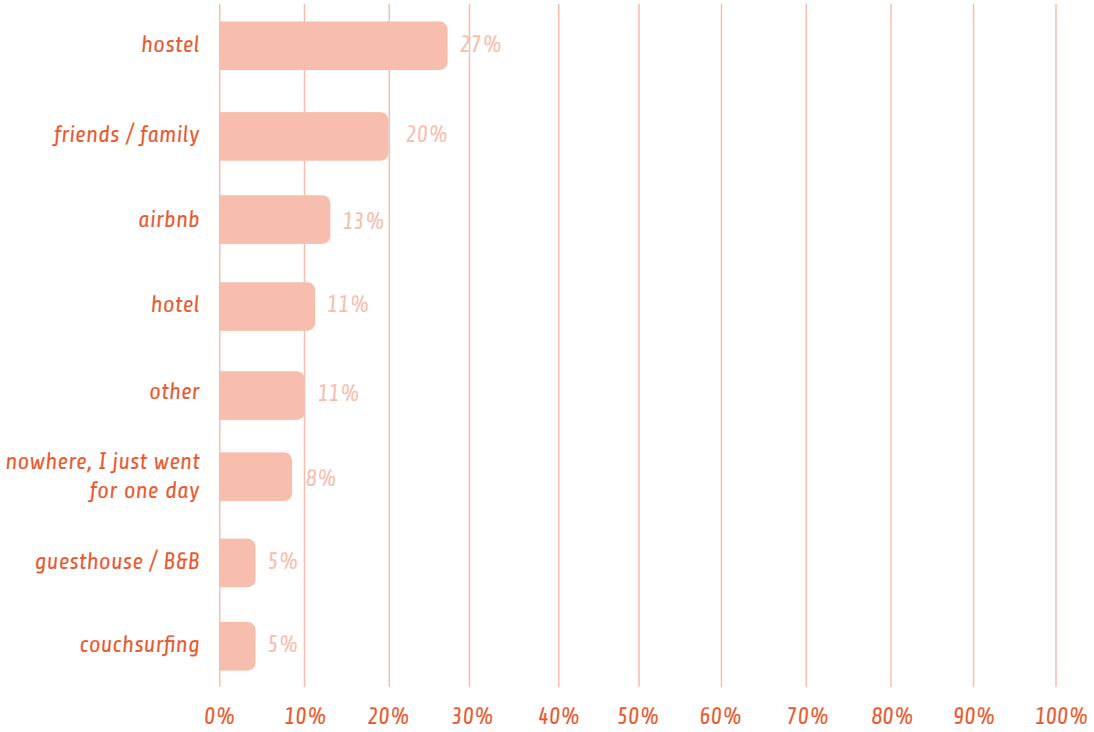
In addition, travellers often did not use the map alone. To the question "*With how many people (including yourself) were you travelling when you were using this map?*", the average response was 2.5 people.[15]

There is no reason to believe that USE-IT map users differ much from the extensive samples of young travellers studied by the WYSE Travel Confederation, which pointed to an expenditure of around €50 per day in 2012 already.[16]

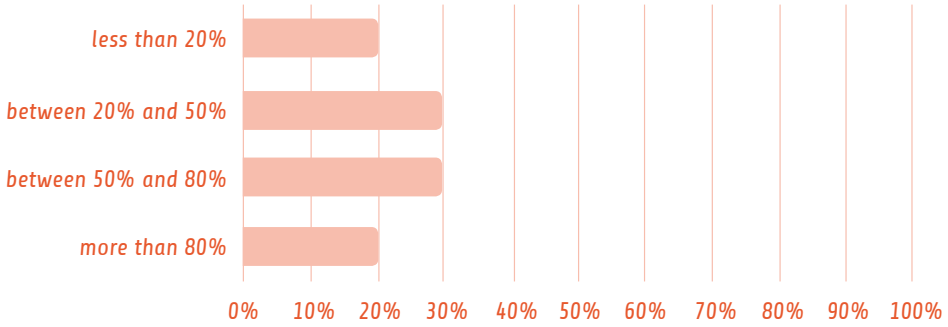
[13] *USE-IT Maps for Young Travellers – Impact Analysis (November 2013, Expeditions / ASTOR-University of Leuven)*
[14] *This average discards responses of people who entered a number higher than 10, since that seems to indicate that they either falsely answered the question or were choosing a new place to live rather than to travel.*
[15] *For this average, we also discarded groups bigger than 10 persons, firstly because USE-IT aims at individual independent travellers, secondly because groups tend to take less independent decisions such as deciding to stay longer on the spur of the moment.*
[16] *New Horizons III, World Youth Student and Educational Travel Confederation, 2012*

On a sidenote, it is interesting to mention here that an important percentage of respondents slept in informal accommodation, so these are people who would possibly stay invisible in the standard tourism statistics based on overnight stays in hotels and hostels alone. Only 43% was staying at hotels, hostels and guesthouses, the others would probably stay under the radar of many statistics.

*Q7: Where did you sleep during your trip?*
*(answers: 2.860)*



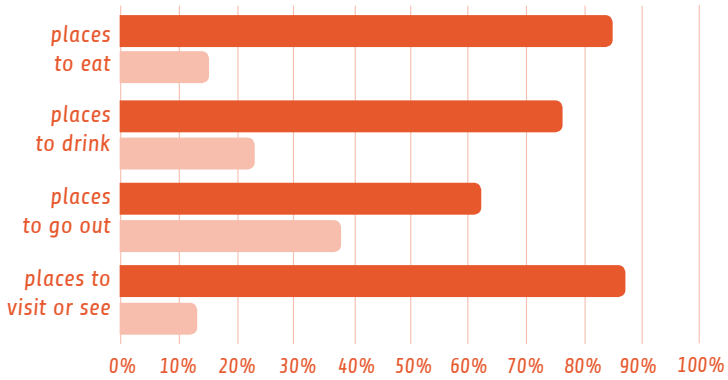
The fact that a significant percentage of people actually stay longer because of the maps, reinforces the idea that USE-IT publications do not serve as cartography, but as travel guides. Few people exclusively stick to activities from the map, but a majority bases a substantial part of their time on them.




*Q9: Difficult question. How much of your activities do you think were based on the USE-IT map?* (answers: 2.511)

The extra expenditure naturally does not go to accommodation alone, but to all bars, museums, restaurants where travellers would visit due to the longer stay.

None of them pay to be on a map, as defined by the non-commercial principles in the USE-IT charter, but they definitely benefit. Indirectly, so will the city at large. As the chart below indicates, travellers explicitly indicate they chose other places than they would have normally done. They visited, ate, drank and danced elsewhere thanks to the map.




*Q10: Did you go to special places thanks to USE-IT? We really mean places that you would not have found without this map?* (answers: 2.527)

yes
no

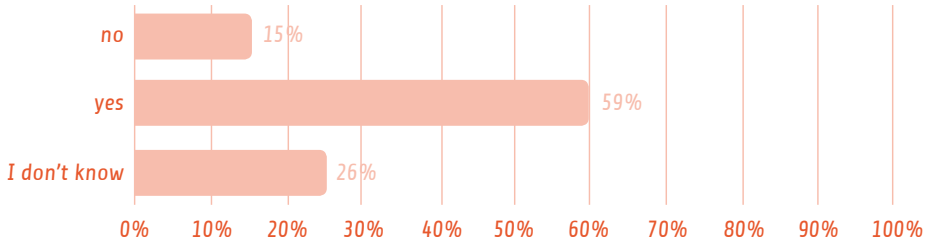
# 3. Sustainability impact

## a) Travellers

We saw that travellers discover many spots just because of USE-IT, but does this relieve pressure from regular tourist outlets? Since the maps are written by young people who live in the city, it seems self-evident that they don't mention many tourist traps. In a way, the "made by locals" philosophy guarantees an approach outside of the tourist bubble. One possible way to objectify, was to ask how far from the centre the users physically went.

The question isn't easy, because it's hard to imagine what you would have done without a map. Indeed 26% admit that they don't know. However, a majority of 59% thinks they did go further. Spreading travellers towards the edges of a city is one of the recipes of sustainable tourism. It dilutes the congestion in overcrowded spots, gets tourists in touch with local life, and makes them spend more in local economy.

*Q13: Thanks to the USE-IT map, did you go further from the city centre than you would normally have done?* (answers: 2.528)



When asked about concrete examples of things they would have missed without the USE-IT maps, the off-the-beaten-path argument often returns:

*"Stories about different parts of the city that otherwise I wouldn't even have visited!"*

*(about Map of Prague)*

*"shops at Onasagorou street as well as some other shops outside the central area"*

*(about Map of Nicosia)*

*"The tram nunber the locals use but that gives you a tour of more hidden and tucked away parts of the city."*

*(about Map of Ghent)*

*"Some of the bars/art galleries out of the centre. The recommend walks were also fantastic and gave a really good insight. Thank you!"*

*(about Map of Brussels)*

*"You explain where is the cultural center of Molenbeek so we went and it was wonderful!"*

*(about Map of Brussels)*

*"especially atmosphere of the places, and where locals really go, what they really do, how to escape from tourists areas."*

*(about Map of Nantes)*

*"We loved it! Loved finding a park with urban art, the smallest alley, the brief history bits were just right."*

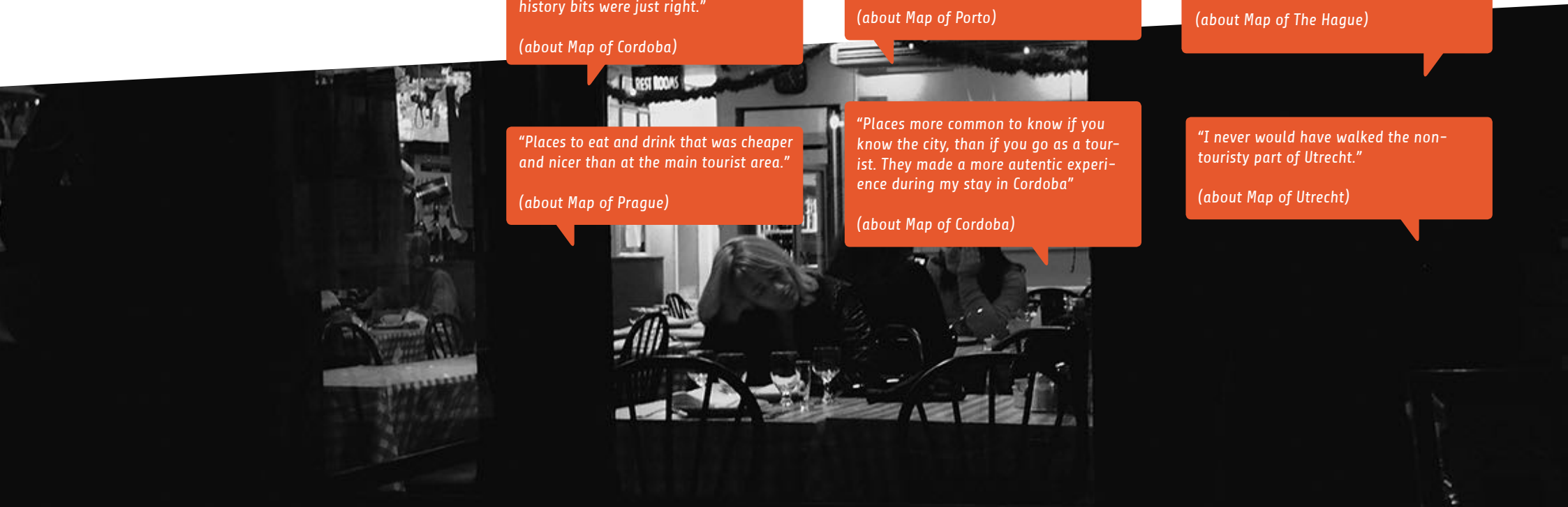
*(about Map of Cordoba)*

*"went to an amazing jazz jam night at the university that i never would have heard about!"*

*(about Map of Porto)*

*"The neighborhoods outside of the usual, the coast, the information from locals."*

*(about Map of The Hague)*




*"Places to eat and drink that was cheaper and nicer than at the main tourist area."*

*(about Map of Prague)*

*"Places more common to know if you know the city, than if you go as a tourist. They made a more autentic experience during my stay in Cordoba"*

*(about Map of Cordoba)*

*"I never would have walked the non-touristy part of Utrecht."*

*(about Map of Utrecht)*

One of the main distinctive features of youth travel compared to mainstream travel, is that young people tend to look for interactive experience rather than one-way consumption of a destination. Meeting locals, going where tourists don't, those are the things that make memories stick.[17]

This is epitomized by the "Act Like a Local" chapter on all USE-IT maps, which stands out as the most appreciated part of most maps . The word "local" itself returns 418 times in the open comments section. Unique experience outside of the tourist bubble is what matters, including the weird and the unexpected. Honesty is greatly appreciated, especially if it goes against previous misconceptions and tourist clichés. Conversation starters matter more than tourist classics.

*"A lot of history. Interesting stuff which Gentenaars self didn't know. Made me laugh my ass off. 'Act like local' section was brilliant. Earned me friends. Was a perfect guide for a perfect city. I still remember several punch lines from it."*

*(about Map of Ghent)*

*"That in Bologna pasta bolognese is not a thing and that the food of tagiatelle is popular!"*

*(about Map of Bologna)*

*"Some background info and colloquial Portuguese words that helped me put a smile on an old bartender's face"*

*(about Map of Porto)*

*"The organ. It was so weird, I've never felt so out of place in my whole life!"*

*(about Map of Mechelen)*

*"the fact that in nantes talking about brittany starts long conversations !"*

*(about Map of Nantes)*

*"that people from Ghent apparently are unhappy with their mobility schemes. I actually met a person who ranted for several minutes about the trams in the pedestrian zones."*

*(about Map of Ghent)*

*"Eye contact with Norwegians, egalitarianism, many similar things. I liked the cultural information a lot, and would love to see more of that."*

*(about Map of Oslo)*

*"How to (NOT) behave in the city in order not to be a huge annoyance to the locals. Also a few very helpful phrases."*

*(about Map of Prague)*

*"In Budapest the map actually prepared me for converstations with locals!"*

*(about Map of Budapest)*

*"There were a lot of history tidbits that I didn't find anywhere else, I felt like a local in a day"*

*(about Map of Antwerp)*

*"hugging the ugly tree and taking a picture with it, and seeing the strange medical museum (which we really enjoyed but found quite creepy)"*

*(about Map of Leuven)*

*"no one uses busses except tourists, teens and old people drinking a coffee last at least 3h"*

*(about Map of Nicosia)*

*"A story about a bunny statue which the inhabitants laugh about."*

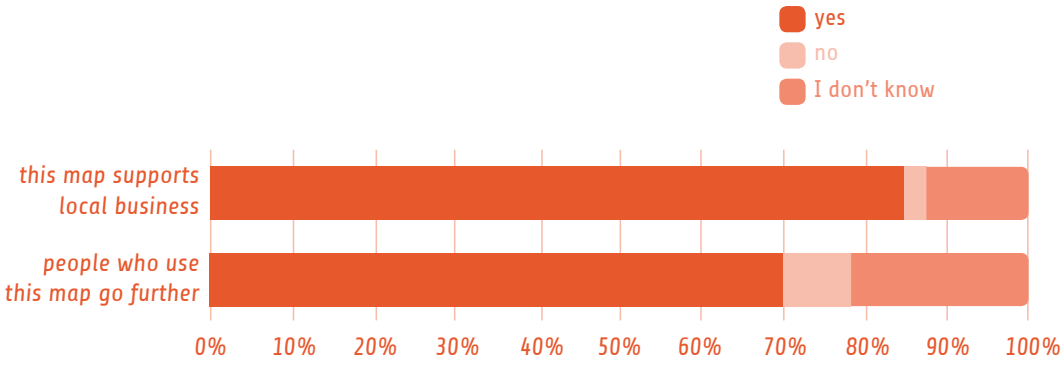
*(about Map of Utrecht)*

[17] *"The last decade has seen a shift towards cultural tourism, creative tourism and now towards 'relational tourism' as people want to connect to the places they visit. Hostels are becoming social hubs for travellers and locals, and new 'Live like a Local' products are springing up in cities across the globe." (WYSE Travel Confederation, New Horizons III, Executive Summary)*

## b) Professionals

Tourist info staff, hostel personnel, Airbnb hosts, tour guides and other (semi-) professionals who distribute the USE-IT maps confirm for 70%: "People who use this map go further outside of the tourist centre."

Most of them them additionally agree that this must benefit a larger part of the local economy: 86% estimate that "This map supports local business outside of the standard tourist places."




Quotes from the open questions confirm:

*"IT's definitely a great way to make feel like they are part of the city they are currently visiting. Getting in and actually get to know the "heart" of the place, instead of the just solely the touristic site."*

*(hostel receptionist in Porto)*

*"Most travellers are young people, new to the city.they want to experience 'local' stuff (that s why they choose airbnb)"*

*(Airbnb owner in Brussels)*

*"We are not a "tourist" bar, but of course they hop in as they walk around, and as we are proud of our city, we love to show them "the good stuff", and they love it too."*

*(bar owner in Ghent)*

It gives people something else instead of the standard overpriced tourist traps."

*(hotel receptionist in Nijmegen)*

*"It is a perfect tool for guests visiting our city. And for me it is not only turist stuff but also bars and resto's where the locals go."*

*(hostel owner in Ghent)*

# 4. Network impact

## a) Travellers

The pillars of the USE-IT concept are that its maps are “made by locals”, “non-commercial”, “for young travellers” and “up-to-date”. Do travellers also know what the project stands for? Four true-or-false statements aimed to assess this in the survey:

- “Bars probably have to pay to be on the USE-IT map.” (false statement)
- “The map was created recently, it’s less than one year old.” (true statement)
- “The map is published by the official tourist info” (false statement)
- “The writers were young locals” (true statement)

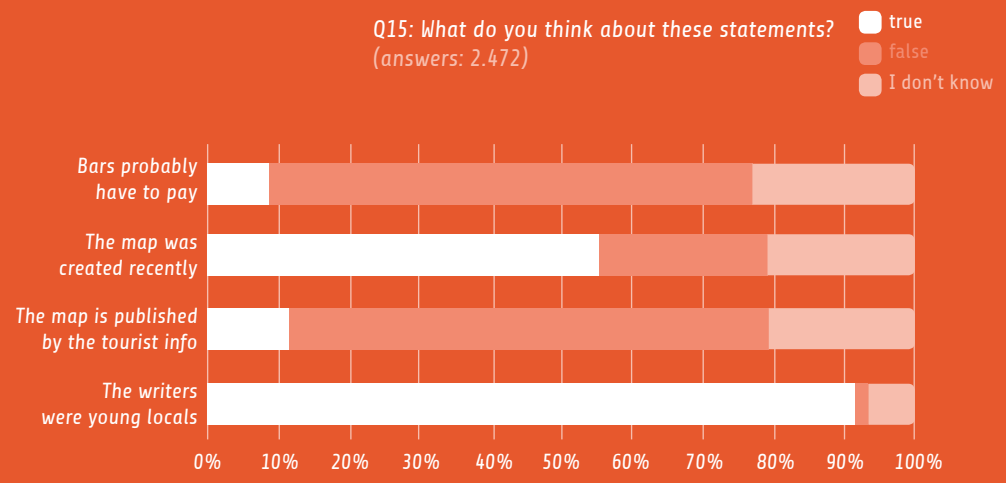
The majority evaluated all statements correctly.

- Only 9% thought that USE-IT was a typical commercial map where bars had to pay to be included.

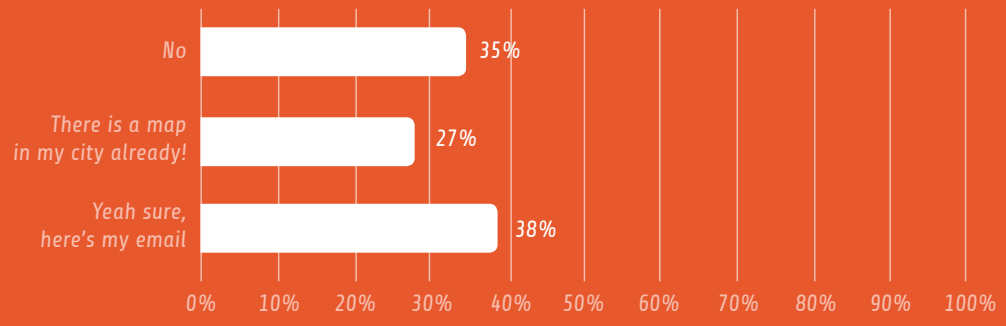
- More people doubted about the up-to-dateness, but they were not necessarily mistaken. Indeed, not all USE-IT initiatives manage to create a new edition every year, even if they want to.

- Some doubts also arose about the official publisher of the maps, which is always an independent cultural or youth organisation, and never the official tourist info. Still, 68% derived correctly from the map’s content –or possibly from its look-and-feel– that USE-IT is indeed an independent project.

- 92% understood USE-IT’s unique selling point: the maps are made by young locals.



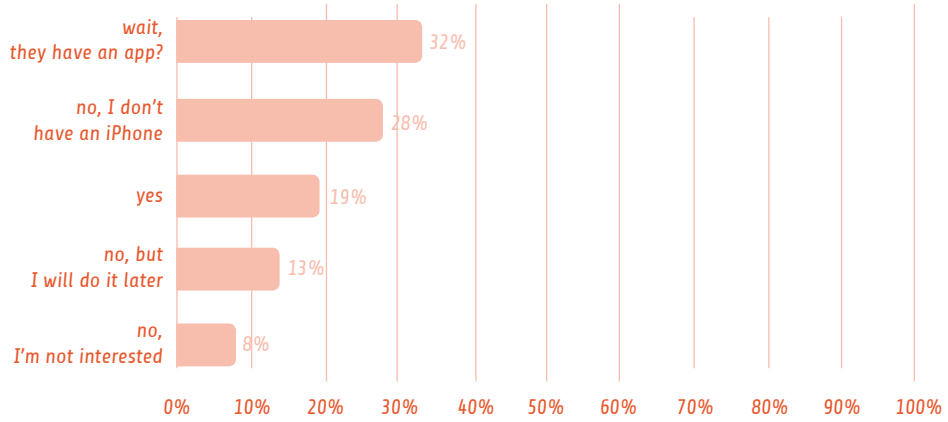
To the statement "It would be good if my city had a map like this," 95% replied yes. Additionally, 38% of all travellers even gave their email address because they would like to help in creating it for their own city – if it didn't have a map already. These are not marketeers or tourism professionals, just people who used the map. This kind of dedication proves that USE-IT maps have become a brand trusted by its users to the extent that they basically want to be part of the story.




*Q23: Do you want to help out for creating a USE-IT map in your city?* (answers: 2.328)

USE-IT may be popular when it comes to printed maps, but the app (released for iOS in April 2015) remains much less known. 32% of travellers did not know there actually is an app, 28% cannot use it because they don't have an iPhone. 19% did download it, 13% intend to do it later. It's only a minority 8% of all travellers who would not be interested in a mobile version of USE-IT maps.

*Q17: Did you download the USE-IT app?* (answers: 2.472)



Those who did download it, are not always satisfied either. 63 travellers commented about the app in the open remarks section at the end of the survey.

They are disappointed that not all cities are part of the app or complain about the lack of an Android version.

*"Include more cities we loved the map and wish we had one for each of our stops.it was like having a mini personal walking tour in Bruges. Also create and android app. We had to share our friends iPhone because I couldn't download it on my phone"*

*(traveller from Russia)*

*"Add all of the maps to your app! Then, I can use the GPS in my iPhone to guide me around the cities. I am recently traveling to Budapest, and I really want to use the app there. You guys are awesome. Keep up the great work."*

*(traveller from Belgium)*

*"Please make an Android app (or a better mobile web experience) -- I don't pay for many apps, but I would happily for this!"*

*(traveller from the United States)*

*Guys, thank you so much for saving my life and making me fall in love with cities. I have only one concern. It'd be great if you could somehow make the print maps available someplace in the city. In Porto, I couldn't find it anywhere. Android doesn't have an app. And chugging my phone for a lopsided PDF was troublesome."*

*(traveller from the Czech Republic)*

Continuity is also clearly a major issue for the USE-IT network. Users complain that not every map is published every year, which also means that they are taken offline. The comment returns 85 times.

Additionally, some users complain that the maps are not well-distributed in every city.

*"Please keep up the great work, I always figure out before travelling somewhere if there's a Use-It map available. I have recommended and given maps to various friends. :) The thing that I miss is an archive of old maps. It's always unfortunate when a map has been removed just before I'm travelling somewhere. Would it be possible to keep those (with a disclaimer 'not up to date')? Would be great!"*

*(traveller from Portugal)*

*"Would it be possible to have the archive of the old Use-It maps, for cities with no new version? e.g., Vienna, Copenhagen, etc..."*

*(traveller from Argentina)*

*"Don't delete old maps! I always gave away my old maps to other people so they can make use of it. I'm really missing some old maps because my friends handed them to other people too. And now i want to visit some places the second time an i'm missing the infos e.g. for vienna :-(*

*" (traveller from Ireland)*

*"I personally don't like the fact that it is not possible to download also old maps. There are cities that in the past released their own Use-it but today they stopped. It's a pity to have lost definitively these efforts."*

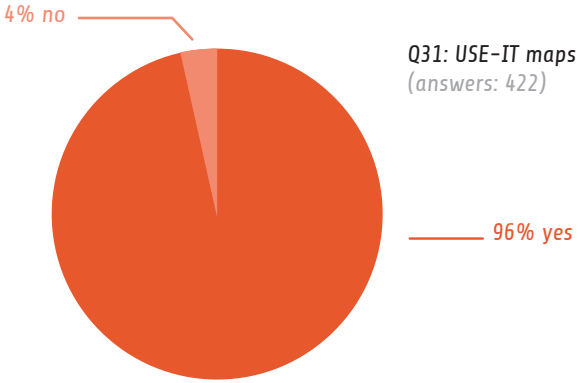
*(traveller from Belgium)*

## b) Professionals

96% of professionals consider the USE-IT maps as complimentary to their own services, not as a competition.

The reasons are diverse. 78% indicate that "the map shows more spots for young people than I know about", 65% say "the map saves time, because I have to answer less questions then".

The fact that USE-IT makes the daily routine work lighter often returns in the comments' section.




*Q31: USE-IT maps are a welcome addition to our offer*
(answers: 422)

*"Guests ask almost always for local tips and some alternative places to visit, so a use-it map is therefore ideal."*

*hostel manager in Antwerp*

*"It's absolutely welcome and it's the only offer we have concerning maps. Because USE-IT is simply the best! Lots of information inside, funny, up-to-date, and no disturbing advertisement."*

*hostel receptionist in Dresden*

*"It's great for my type of guests and price range. 20-40s, indie type."*

*Airbnb host in Porto*

*"When I don´t have a time to babysit my couchsurfung guests, use-it map is a good alternative to provide them advice of where to go."*

*Couchsurfing host in Brno*

*"It makes the work lighter for us as we have to give less explanation on what to do in the city."*

*hostel receptionist in Ghent*

*"It corresponds with the ideology of our clientele"*

*bartender in Nijmegen*

*"After a walking tour the experience does not stop, it continues with the information given in the map. People really appreciate it."*

*tour guide in Brno*

*"cause it's written in English and has alternative offers for visiting the city, further it looks modern and cool - so it's perfect to give it to our target group which are between 12 and 26"*

*(youth information worker in Graz)*

*"Advises i would give myself as a 22 year old person"*

*guide at the Parliament in The Hague*

*"Being able to have a use it map to give to guests is extremely useful. When guests ask me to recommend a restaurant or a bar or an activity I can just use the map for guidance and to point out its location. Everyone loves the maps, I get comments about how useful they are every day."*

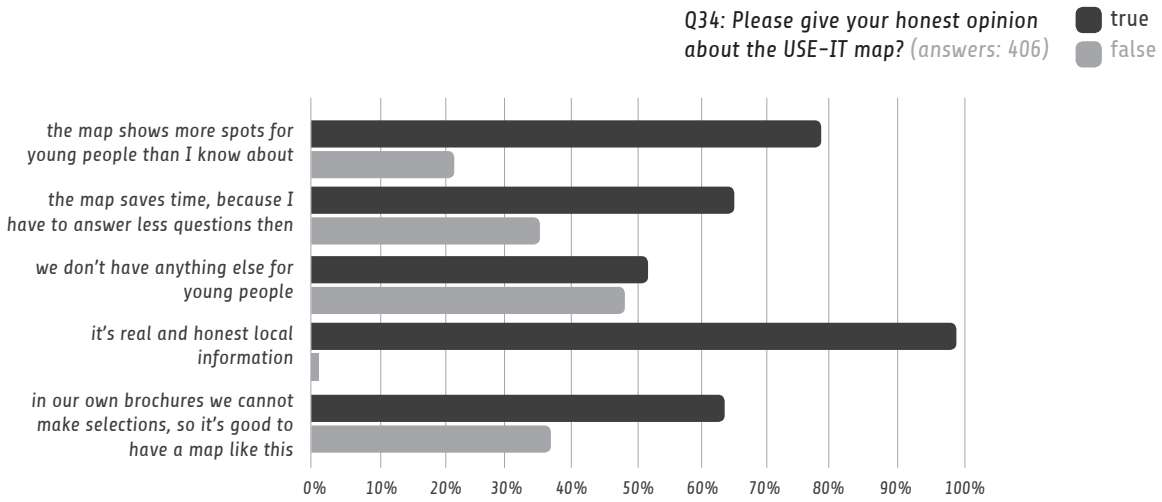
*hostel receptionist in Leuven*

*"Because it has a lot of humor, it's in English, it's free and since i am a graphic designer, it's a delight for the eyes too. To me, it's the best kind of map i discovered"*

*couchsurfing host in Nantes*

More surprisingly, almost half of the professionals (48%) also spread other publications or brochures for young people. Hence, USE-IT's unique selling point is not so much that it's the only information available for young people, but that it's different. "It's real and honest local information" is confirmed by a near-total of 99% of all professionals.

Since USE-IT maps are published by independent organisations instead of the official tourist info, they are able to make subjective choices. 63% say "in our own brochures we cannot make selections, so it's good to have a map like this."




*"you are better at making maps for young/alternative people because you are more in tune with the audience"*

*tourism professional from Ghent*

*"straight forward, gems one working for a tourism office isn't allowed to say"*

*former tourist info worker in Antwerp*

*Our self produced maps are free of charge too but they give information about sights. The use-it map is a totally different kind of information. The user gets the oppurtunity to experience the city, to live it like a local.*

*staff at tourist info in Graz*

*"because you are a lot better at making the right map, and we don't target young travelers because we know you do"*

*marketing manager from Ghent*

*part d*

# conclusion + recommendations

# Question 1

Do USE-IT maps have a promotional impact?

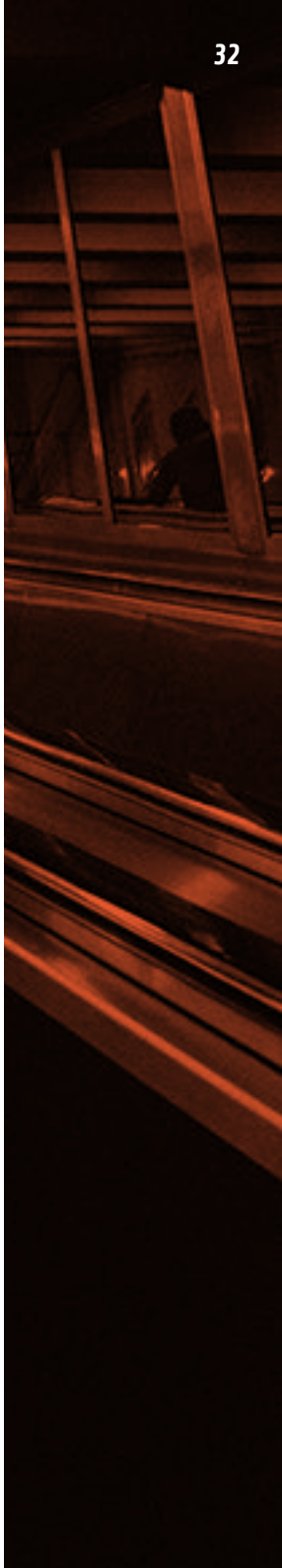
# Answer: Yes

• USE-IT maps are considered to be travel guides rather than just street maps. People hardly ever throw them away: they keep them as souvenirs or give them to friends.

• 37% of travellers have used more than one map, and nearly all of them (97%) intend to look for USE-IT on future trips. Some people even change travel plans on the spur of the moment.

# Recommendation

Municipalities of unknown destinations should invest in USE-IT. Cities that are off-the-beaten track will benefit most. USE-IT can literally help to put a destination on the map of Europe with a relatively small investment.



# Question 2

Do USE-IT maps have an economic impact?

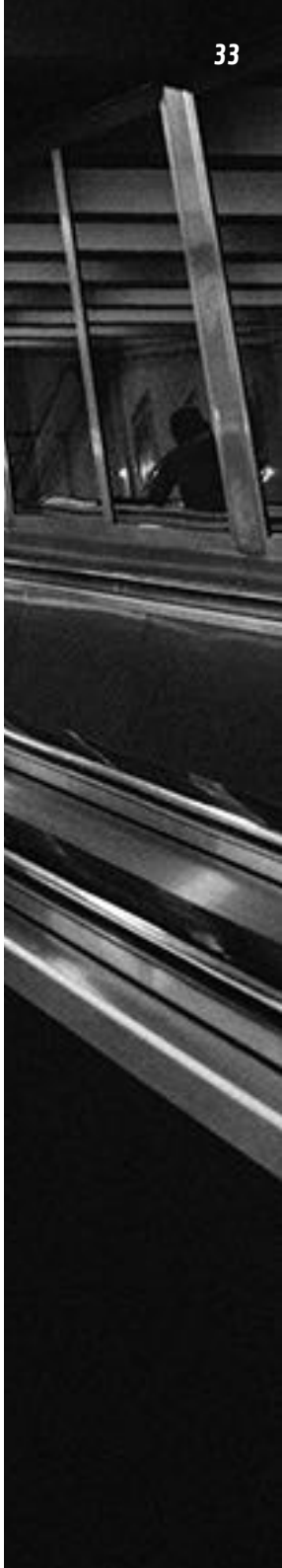
# Answer: Yes

- 14% of travellers explicitly say they stayed longer because of the USE-IT map.

- The majority of users visited bars, museums, clubs and restaurants only because they were on the map. USE-IT is a not-for-profit project which generates a lot of profit. The USE-IT charter prohibits commercial deals with bars or restaurants, but there is no doubt that the city at large benefits.

# Recommendation

Local authorities who want to support tourist information projects with a good return on investment, should at least consider USE-IT.



# Question 3

Do USE-IT maps have a sustainability impact?

# Answer: Probably

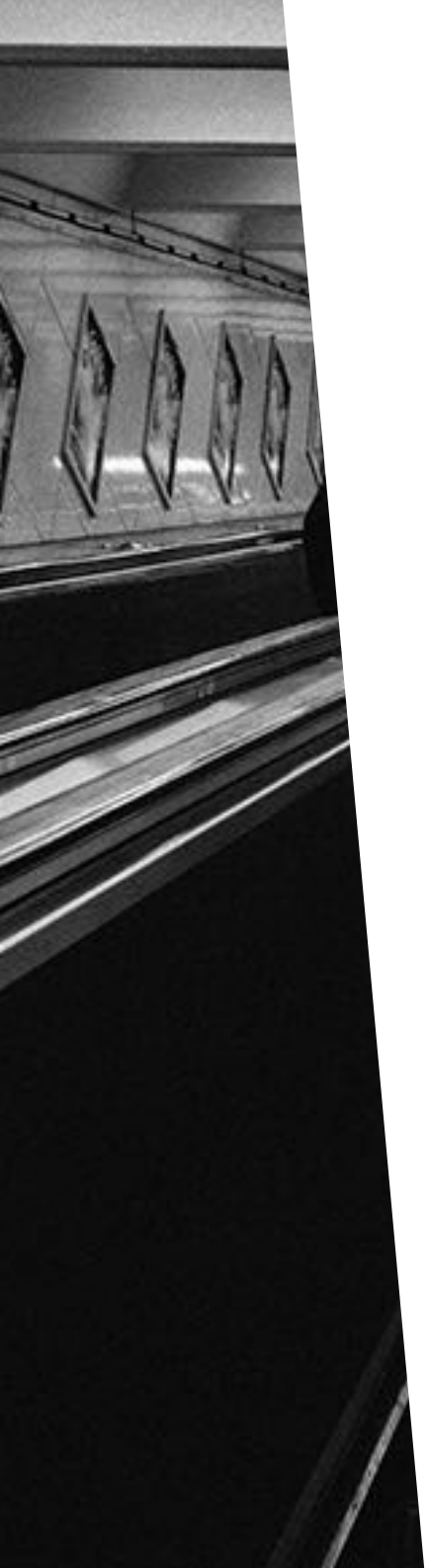
- Travellers go further from the city centre because of the map.

- Professionals agree that USE-IT supports local economy outside of the standard tourist hotspots.

- It remains difficult to assess sustainability in a scientific way. Respondents might be unable to compare to the trip they would have had without the map.

# Recommendation

Municipalities of popular tourist destinations may benefit most from this aspect.
USE-IT spreads travellers to the local economy rather than the commercial tourist industry and could relieve the pressure on the city centre.



# Question 4

Is USE-IT a strong network?

## Answer: Yes and no

USE-IT's strength is also its weakness. Both travellers and tourism professionals appreciate the honest content. At the same time, a business model where every local team has to look for public money is difficult. There may be a variety of reasons why local USE-IT projects cease to exist, but young travellers don't care. They want more maps, and they want them all the time.

• 38% want to help out in creating a USE-IT map for their own city. The project not only generates happy travellers, but fans who want to become part of a community.

• USE-IT has become a household name when it comes to printed maps. The iOS app remains lesser-known however, and travellers demand it for Android as well.

• Continuity is a major issue for the USE-IT network. Not every local USE-IT is able to publish a map every year, and this goes well-noticed by its fans. They are disappointed when maps go out of circulation, and would like to see a digital archive, even if the maps would be out-of-date.

## Recommendation

Local authorities who start to support the USE-IT project should aim to finance yearly editions, because up-to-dateness is what travellers appreciate most. The USE-IT network itself should continue to invest in the app and a stronger online presence, such as a platform-based website. That way, USE-IT will speak more directly to the users who also want to be creators.

*part e*

# executive summary

*download here: www.use-it.travel/survey_2017_summary*

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USE IT EUROPE TOURIST INFO FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

EXPEDITIONS RESEARCH IN APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY