

# The taxi *problématique*: new needs, new responses

Richard Darbéra  
CNRS, Latts



# The taxi: new needs, new responses

- Half way between private car and mass transit
- New needs, new demands
- Regulation, supply diversity & availability
- New technologies and cost reduction
- New technologies and the trade
- Conclusion

# Half way between private car and mass transit

- The private car's advantages
  - More comfortable
  - Door to door service
  - Carrying parcels or luggage
  - Environmentally efficient when or where demand is low
- Without its drawbacks
  - Parking
  - Ability to drive
  - Need of a car
- IVM-GfK

# New needs

- Backgrounds
  - Aging population
  - Smaller and dispersed households
  - Urban sprawl
- The Inrets' cohort study
- Access to jobs and shopping centres
- à la carte schedules

# The two major obstacles to larger taxi use:

- According to the GfK-IVM survey
  - Cost
  - Availability
- The impact of regulation
- The impact of technology

# Regulation, supply diversity & availability

- A swarm of spontaneous responses in developing countries
  - Tailored services in Algeria
  - Moped-taxis Cameroon, Rio de Janeiro
  - Rickshaws in India
- And in some developed countries
  - Green tomatoes, Pink Ladies
- And even in other developed countries...



# Two distinct markets for taxi services

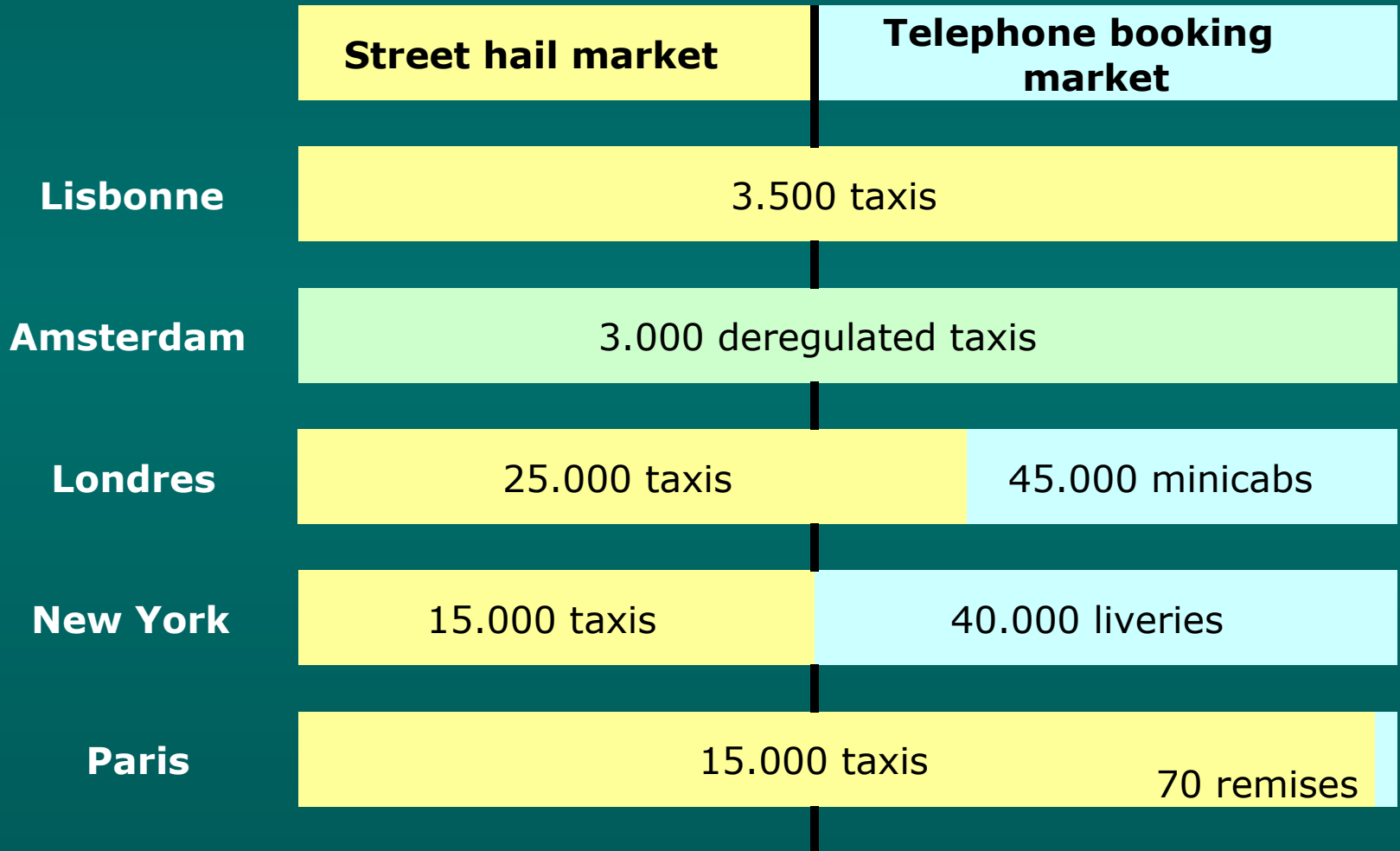
- Street hail market = “voitures de place”
  - Need for regulated fares (taximeter)
  - Need for some entry control
- Booked rides market = “voitures de remise”
  - Unregulated fares
  - No entry restrictions

# Two distinct markets for taxi services

- Paris
  - Taxis = “voitures de place”
  - “Voitures de petite ou grande remise”
- Buenos Aires
  - Taxis
  - Remises
- New York
  - Taxis = Yellow Cabs
  - Liveries = Car Services + Black Cars + Limousines
- London
  - Taxis = Black cabs = Hackneys
  - Minicabs = PHVs (personal hire vehicles)



# Two distinct markets for taxi services



# Impacts of regulation

- On taxi use
  - Modal share from 1 to 4
  - Some uses are specific to some cities
- On the opinion of users and non-users
  - All ask for better availability and lower prices...
  - ... complaints are more frequent about ...
    - ... poor service quality in Amsterdam
    - ... low availability in Paris
    - ... the high prices of the black cabs in London
    - ... safety in Lisbon
    - ... and New York?
- Limited impact on costs

# New technologies and costs

- New technologies
  - GPS
  - GPRS telephones
  - Internet
  - Calculus algorithms
- Potential productivity gains

# New technologies and the trade

- A difficult trade, dangerous sometimes
- satellite navigation
- Electronic payment
- Drivers safety
- ... But less freedom

# Conclusion

- Confronting new and growing demands
- ... a wide variety of situations and experiences from one city to the other
- ... shows the opportunities for new responses brought about by:
  - Private initiatives
  - Regulatory reforms
  - Technology