

Report Housing International Students RU & HAN - 18 May 2022

HOUSING for International Students



Report

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HAN

1. Foreword	1
2. Introduction	1
3. The Situation in Nijmegen and Arnhem	3
4. Problems for International Students in Nijmegen and Arnhem	6
<i>Shortage in the housing market</i>	
<i>Market forces in higher education</i>	
<i>Discrimination</i>	
5. Solutions	19

1. Foreword

The Nijmegen Housing Coalition started as an independent action group at the initiative of various organizations that want to tackle the housing crisis. The action group was formed during the organization of the Nijmegen housing protest and since then we have been active in organizing political actions in Nijmegen. This report was written by a work group of the Nijmegen Housing Coalition that is committed to helping students affected by the housing crisis. We would like to thank the people outside the housing coalition who contributed to the production of this report. In particular, we would like to thank the people who shared information and their insights about housing in Nijmegen with us and the diligent editors who provided feedback on this report.



2. Introduction

The Netherlands has been experiencing a housing crisis for a number of years, with a large part of the population being hit hard by rising rents and a dire shortage of affordable housing. Both the current generation of young adults and the future generations are left behind in the 'housing market'. The housing market is failing to fulfill its function and the need for stable public housing is becoming increasingly clear. The student population in the Netherlands also has a tough task in finding an apartment through a housing association or the private sector. The latter is often what students have to fall back on and there they also experience all the deregulation of this sector. There is also an acute shortage of student housing on the private free market. The prospect of finding a home only gets worse. That is why the Nijmegen Housing Coalition, a platform in which various political (youth) organizations unite to combat the housing crisis, has conducted research into the housing situation for international students. The people who wrote this report did so as volunteers, in addition to their usual study and work activities. That is why this report is far from complete, and an in-depth study in which subjects are explored in depth or are better described is therefore a possibility for the future.

Despite the magnitude of the problem, one group in the Netherlands is hit extra hard by the shortages and chaotic practices on the Dutch housing market: international students. For years, universities and colleges have been trying to persuade students abroad with attractive sales pitches, shiny brochures and roaring promises to start or continue their studies in the Netherlands. Successfully; Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek calculated that the share of international students in the Netherlands has grown enormously in the past sixteen years from 33,000 in 2005 to 115,000 in 2021.¹ These are not just exchange students, who only study in the Netherlands for a few months and then return to home. CBS calculated that no fewer than 115,000 foreign students studied in the Netherlands in the academic year 2021-2022: "Around 42,000 of them [first-year students] studied in the Netherlands for the

¹ CBS 18-3-2022, 40 procent eerstejaars universiteit is internationale student, <https://www.cbs.nl/nl-nl/nieuws/2022/11/40-procent-eerstejaars-universiteit-is-internationale-student> [Consulted 5-4-2022].

first time, that is 1 in 4 first-year students.”² These first-years come from abroad to study and build a life here. Good guidance and a social network is required for this and they have the right to shelter.

In recent years it has become apparent that the uncontrolled internationalization in Dutch higher education and the shortages on the housing market resulted in a deadly combination for international students. In 2017, many student cities could no longer cope with the influx of (international) students, so some students were forced to study from a hostel, AirBnB or even a tent on a campsite.³ Five years later, conditions have deteriorated according to Kences, the research center for student housing.⁴ The prognosis for the future is bleak: despite a clear shortage of student rooms, the number of students (both Dutch and international) will increase in the coming years.

By making this report, the Nijmegen Housing Coalition hopes to provide insight into the current situation on the housing market in Nijmegen (and to a lesser extent Arnhem) and where the current problems and bottlenecks for (international) students lie. A number of solutions are then proposed that, in the eyes of the Nijmegen Housing Coalition, can contribute to a situation where international and Dutch students can find stable and affordable housing.

² *Ibidem*.

³ *Dagblad van het Noorden* 8-9-2017, *Internationale studenten: Groningen is te klein*, <https://dvh.nl/groningen/Internationale-studenten-Groningen-is-te-klein-22478690.html> [Consulted 5-4-2022]; *RTV Utrecht* 4-8-2017, *Kampeertent uitkomst voor internationale studenten met kamernood*, <https://www.rtvutrecht.nl/nieuws/1647630/kampeertent-uitkomst-voor-internationale-studenten-met-kamernood> [Consulted 5-4-2022].

⁴ *RTL Nieuws* 7-10-2021, *Veel te weinig en veel te duur: groot tekort aan studentenwoningen*, <https://www.rtlnieuws.nl/nieuws/nederland/artikel/5258837/studenten-woningnood-kamers-kences-studie-universiteit-hbo> [Consulted 5-4-2022].

3. The Situation in Nijmegen and Arnhem

First, a sketch should be made of the current living situation for international students at RU and HAN. The universities in Nijmegen and Arnhem – namely Radboud University (RU) and Hogeschool van Arnhem en Nijmegen or HAN University of Applied Sciences (HAN) – have a large number of international students. Other Universities of Applied Sciences in Arnhem, such as Artez and Hall-Larenstein, have not been included in this report, as the housing coalition does not have a clear view of the situation at these institutions. ‘Rapport Huisvesting van Internationale Studenten Arnhem en Nijmegen’, which was drawn up in 2017 by the Nijmegen student union AKKU, offers a good starting point to see how the student population has developed in recent years.⁵

Number of international students RU and HAN

In 2017, Nijmegen had a population of about 3300 international students, while Arnhem was home to 1,390 internationals around that time. These figures include all international students, including Bachelor/Master students and exchange students.⁶ In October 2021, around 24,678 students were studying at the RU, with around 2,700 international students (bachelor/master and exchange students combined) studying at the institution.⁷ In the same year, 37,408 students were registered at HAN, of which about 1,507 were international students. Of this number, 1031 were attending faculties in Arnhem and 476 in Nijmegen. Due to the COVID crisis, only 60 exchange students studied in Nijmegen and 70 in Arnhem in September 2021. Normally this number is around 100 in Arnhem.⁸ It is striking that the decrease in international students (4690 in 2017 compared to 4207 in 2021) has not been accompanied by fewer problems regarding housing for international students. For the time being, the COVID pandemic seems to be responsible for this decline, but as will be shown later, the number of international students will only increase in the coming years.

Future of international students RU and HAN

In the future, according to Landelijke Studentenhuisvestingmonitor (LMS) by Kences, the Netherlands will see an increase in the number of students living away from their parental home. According to the monitor, that number of international students will also increase over the next eight years.⁹ Within this group, a shift has taken place in the past academic year (2020-2021) between the primary target group (living and studying in the same city) and secondary target group (residential city different from the city of the university). Due to the COVID crisis, more international students studied from their home country, as education was

⁵ AKKU 2017, *Rapport Huisvesting van Internationale Studenten Nijmegen en Arnhem*, <https://www.studentenvakbondakku.nl/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Rapport-Huisvesting-Internationale-Studenten-in-Nijmegen-en-Arnhem.pdf>

⁶ AKKU 2017, *Rapport Huisvesting van Internationale Studenten Nijmegen en Arnhem*, p. 7.

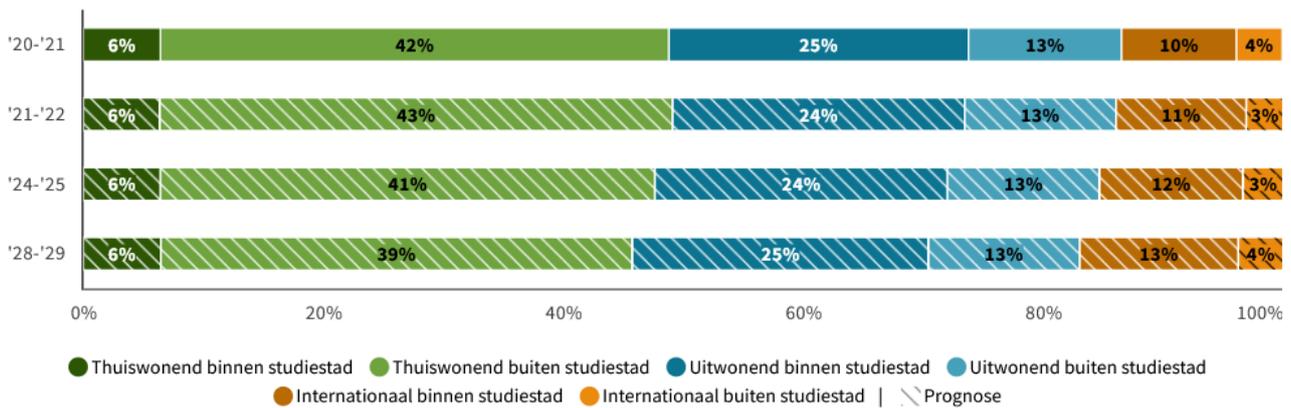
⁷ RU 2021, *Over de Radboud Universiteit: Feiten & Cijfers*, <https://www.ru.nl/over-ons/overradboud/feiten-cijfers/> [geraadpleegd 08-04-2022].

⁸ Cijfers verstrekt door de HAN.

⁹ Kences 2021, *Landelijke Monitor Studentenhuisvesting 2021: Kwantitatieve prognose*, <https://studentenhuisvesting.incijfers.nl/mosaic/lms2021/5-quantitatieve-prognose> [geraadpleegd 08-04-2022].

accessible online. Nevertheless, it is expected that the primary target group will grow again due to the return of physical education in 2022. The forecasts for the next eight years also show that more students, both Dutch and international students, are expected to no longer live with their parents when they start studying. The number of students living away from their parental home (whether in or outside the study city) is likely to increase significantly (Figure 1).¹⁰

Studenten naar woonsituatie



Apollo | '20-'21 - '28-'29

Figure 1: Students by living situation. Source: LMS 2021

Image translation: dark green: Living at home in city of university. Light green: Living at home, not in university city. Dark blue: Not living at home, in city of university. Light blue: Not living at home, not in city of university. Dark orange: International in city of university. Light orange: International, not in city of university.

Student apartments in Nijmegen: now and the future

A large and growing student population also requires an adequate supply of housing. The municipality of Nijmegen is also working on this, as can be read in a note that was intended to inform the Nijmegen city council about what is needed in the field of student housing between 2021 and 2030.¹¹ It states that students in Nijmegen are: 34% Renting from SSH&, 6% renting from other corporations, and 50% renting on the private market. The other 10% live with friends or in an owner-occupied home. Depending on the type of housing, 13% live in a one-room house, 16% in a multi-room house and 71% in rooms with shared facilities. In the Netherlands, the share of those who live in rooms with shared facilities is on average 55%. This means that this share in Nijmegen rises far above the Dutch average. With regard to housing costs, students in Nijmegen pay an average of €430 (net after deduction of rent benefit).¹² This means that they have lost 42% of their income to housing costs. Over the past 3 years, housing cost for students in Nijmegen has increased by an average of 0.5%.¹³ In

¹⁰ Kences 2021, *Landelijke Monitor Studentenhuisvesting 2021*, p. 48-50.

¹¹ Gemeente Nijmegen 2020, *Notitie studentenhuisvesting Nijmegen 2021-2030*, p. 1-2. <https://nijmegen.bestuurlijkeinformatie.nl/Document/View/eb82a00a-f93e-4fe9-bac2-a93b68237b66> [geraadpleegd 08-04-2022].

¹² Meer informatie over huurprijzen en het te veel betalen voor een studentenkamer is te vinden in dit rapport van de Landelijke Studenten Vakbond: <https://lsvb.nl/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Check-Je-Kamer-rapportage-2019-Landelijke-Studentenvakbond.pdf>

order to alleviate the pressure that has arisen on the housing market, the municipality wants to build around 1,200 additional homes by 2030, as can be seen in figure 2. This also increases the supply of homes offered by the SSH&. On the private market, the municipality mainly focuses on reducing the nuisance that neighbors experience from students. The other objective of the municipality is to keep homes in the low-cost owner-occupied segment for people with a low income. The note also states that further regulation is very difficult in the private market, and that it is legally difficult.

Image Translation:

<i>Net additions per 5-year period</i>		
<i>Period of 2021 to 2025</i>	-	722
<i>In progress</i>	-	312
<i>In planning</i>	-	430
<i>Of which temporary housing</i>	-	50 to 100
<i>Sales</i>	-	-20
<i>Period of 2026 to 2030</i>	-	500
<i>Indicative capacity</i>	-	500
<i>Total</i>	-	<i>Circa. 1.200</i>

The SSH& annual plan for 2022 lists about 606 homes in Arnhem.¹⁴ The desired growth in residential areas is set at approximately 200 homes for the next 10 years. It should be noted, however, that fewer students live in Arnhem, and that the pressure on the housing market in Arnhem in Landelijke Monitor Studentenhuisvesting 2021 is also lower than in Nijmegen. This explains the difference between the intended number of homes to be built, 1200 to 200. Nevertheless, housing pressure in Arnhem may increase in the future if students from Nijmegen have to move to Arnhem.

We conclude that the need for adequate housing is significantly higher in Nijmegen than in Arnhem. That is why this report will focus more on the situation in Nijmegen. In the following chapters, the problems in the housing market that are specific to international students are discussed in more detail. The policy of the four most important actors in the field of student housing in Nijmegen is examined: RU, HAN, the municipality of Nijmegen and SSH&. After an analysis of the housing policy and activities, bottlenecks and problems are identified and explained. This report concludes with an explanation of short- and long-term solutions, both at the local and national level. We see these solutions as the demands that the Nijmegen Housing Coalition makes for the actors in the Nijmegen housing market, to ensure that both Dutch and international students can enjoy a worry-free student life, so that they can receive education with concentration and dedication and contribute to Nijmegen as a city.

Netto toevoeging per 5-jaarsperiode

periode 2021 tm 2025	722
in uitvoering	312
planvorming	430
waarvan tijdelijke woningen	50 tot 100
verkoop	-20
periode 2026 tm 2030	500
indicatieve capaciteit	500
totaal	circa 1.200

Figure 2 Source: Nijmegen Municipality 2020, Notitie studentenhuisvesting Nijmegen 2021-2030, p. 4.

¹³ Ibidem.

¹⁴ SSH& 2021, Jaarplan 2022, p. 8, https://www.sshn.nl/fileadmin/user_upload/Documenten_Over_SSH_/Jaarplan_2022_def.pdf [geraadpleegd 08-04-2022].

4. Problems for International Students in Nijmegen and Arnhem

Now that a clear picture has been painted of the numbers of international students studying at the RU and HAN and how housing is arranged for them, it is time to turn our attention to the problems that internationals experience in the search for housing. In the previous chapter, it became clear that the majority of first-year international students can rent a room from the SSH& for one year, after which the contract cannot be renewed after its expiration, even if the renting student has no replacement accommodation. This arrangement forces them to seek housing in the private rental market. Although this group can register for social housing, which are offered through Entree, these apartments are actually not intended for people who are still studying, but rather those who have graduated. Moreover, the waiting times (ten years or more are no exception) are extremely long, so there is no direct housing.¹⁵ In short, international students are forced to enter the private rental market after their short-stay contract. And it is precisely in this situation that the biggest problems arise.

Based on interviews with stakeholders and students, information from annual reports, notes, and other documents on student housing, we identify three overarching problems that make it difficult for international students to find housing that is not arranged through SSH&. In the interviews and documents, we asked and searched for what the current situation is like, and where there are bottlenecks regarding housing. First of all, the general tightness of the housing market, the housing crisis that the Netherlands is currently in, is a major bottleneck which makes the flow of international students from SSH& rooms to elsewhere more difficult. Second, we see that there is a lot of discrimination in the housing market towards international students, which only makes finding housing more difficult, and also creates extremely painful situations. Thirdly, the current design of the education system is at the mercy of market forces, which causes an unrestrained growth of international students, while it is clear that the facilities for housing are not adequate. For each category, the causes and consequences of the problem are addressed, as well as how major actors such as the HAN, RU, Nijmegen municipality and SSH& deal with it.

Shortage in the housing market

The shortage of the housing market means that it is increasingly difficult for people to find affordable housing. Policies that used to have public housing as their goal are now facilitating the housing market, creating scarcity and increasing prices. At the national level, laws have been passed that promote market forces in buying and renting real estate. As a result, a small group of investors and companies are buying up properties with the goal of renting them out for their own private gain. As a result, more and more people are finding it harder to pay the rising house and rent prices because a large part of their income goes to housing.¹⁶ This also makes it harder for graduating students to move out of their old dorms,

¹⁵ EenVandaag 16-7-2021, *Jong en op zoek naar een betaalbare huurwoning: 'Ik heb 9 jaar op een wachtlijst gestaan'*, <https://eenvandaag.avrotros.nl/item/jong-en-op-zoek-naar-een-betaalbare-huurwoning-ik-heb-9-jaar-op-een-wachtlijst-gestaan/> [Consulted 29-04-2022].

¹⁶ Woonmanifest, <https://woonmanifest.nl/> [Consulted 08-04-2022].

leaving some of the student rooms occupied for the current generation of students.¹⁷

Speculation

Speculation in the housing market is one of the biggest causes of high rents. This speculation is done by funds and wealthy individuals. Ton Hendriks is the best-known landlord and says he has more than 1,000 tenants.¹⁸ It is difficult to find out the exact figures because the names and numbers of landlords are hidden in nv's, bv's, companies and foundations that in turn own the real estate. Ben Mandemakers, for example, is a large landlord in Arnhem with 600 homes, many of which are social rental homes previously owned by Vivare.¹⁹ "For the whole of the eastern Netherlands, the Land Registry counts 1125 owners with more than ten homes in ownership. In total, they own just under half a million homes in the eastern part of the country."²⁰ Buying up properties en masse gives private investors and companies a lot of control over housing, resulting in rising prices.

Vacancy

In addition to speculation, there are many empty office buildings, homes and stores in Nijmegen (Figure 3).

Tabel 1a

Vastgoedvoorraad en leegstand naar gebruiksfunctie, oppervlakte en regio, 1 januari 2021 o.b.v. LV WOZ

Selectie	Gebruiksfunctie	Eenheid	Totale voorraad	Populatie	Leegstand (absoluut)	Leegstand (relatief)	Leegstand, jaar eerder ook al leeg (absoluut)	Leegstand, jaar eerder ook al leeg (relatief t.o.v. totale leegstand)
Nijmegen	Kantoren	Aantal verblijfsobjecten	960	910	50	5	30	65
Nijmegen	Kantoren	Oppervlakte (m2)	667 910	655 160	15 450	2	12 500	81
Nijmegen	Winkels	Aantal verblijfsobjecten	1 540	1 530	80	5	60	75
Nijmegen	Winkels	Oppervlakte (m2)	540 440	535 150	28 020	5	13 860	49
Nijmegen	Woningen	Aantal verblijfsobjecten	82 320	82 100	1 340	2	480	36
Nijmegen	Woningen	Oppervlakte (m2)	9 597 170	9 581 260	146 060	2	53 590	37

Figure 3: Vacancy rate in Nijmegen in 2021. Source: CBS 2021, <https://www.cbs.nl/nl-nl/maatwerk/2021/47/landelijke-monitor-leegstand-2021> [accessed 30-04-2022].

Taken together, this amounts to 189,530 m² of vacancy in 2021, of which 79,950 m² were also vacant a year earlier. The municipality of Nijmegen states that part of this vacancy is "friction vacancy" which is necessary "to allow the market to function". The vacancy rate in Nijmegen is comparable to the rest of Gelderland (average 2%). Nevertheless, the percentage of premises that was also vacant a year earlier in Nijmegen is higher than other parts of the province. For example, in Arnhem 30% of the premises were vacant, while in Nijmegen this was 42%. Here are therefore opportunities for the municipality of Nijmegen to tackle this vacancy, for example by investigating whether these buildings are on a demolition

¹⁷ Omroep West 10-09-2021, *Afgestudeerden wonen nog in Leids studentenhuus: 'Met modaal inkomen is niks te vinden'*, <https://www.omroepwest.nl/nieuws/4458885/afgestudeerden-wonen-nog-in-leids-studenten-huis-met-modaal-inkomen-is-niks-te-vinden> [Consulted 29-04-2022].

¹⁸ *De Gelderlander* 27-11-2021, *Wil de grootste huisbaas van Oost-Nederland opstaan? Dit is de vastgoedbaron van de regio*, https://www.gelderlander.nl/nijmegen/wil-de-grootste-huisbaas-van-oost-nederland-opstaan-dit-is-de-vastgoedbaron-van-de-regio~af7a265f/?cb=ea3226d4703ebc5bb7206040aff7d979&auth_rd=1 [Consulted 28-04-2022].

¹⁹ *Ibidem*.

²⁰ *Ibidem*.

list, or are deliberately kept empty to create scarcity in the housing market, leading to higher purchase and rental prices.

Future student housing

According to the 20-21 LMS, the supply of student housing is much lower than the number of students who want to move into of Nijmegen. As a result, the city receives a “very tight” rating on the LMS’s so-called pressure indicator.²¹ The prognosis is that this pressure will increase further despite the planned construction plans for student housing recently explained in the RU’s Campus Plan. The university wants to commit to student housing in the Erasmus building.²² This will involve approximately 200 housing units. At the time of writing this report, the plan has yet to be discussed with the participation council. It may be a long time before it is realized. First, a new location must be found for the Faculty of Arts and Philosophy. Koen Fleuren, the campus & facilities manager estimates that these will be approximately ready in 2029. In addition, the RU and the SSH& have indicated that they would like to build temporary housing on the campus, to combat the room shortage.²³ These houses would be able to house students for ten to fifteen years. The housing will be located at Tournoy Field between Mercator 2 (north side) and Transitorium (south side), see Figure 4. We emphasize that even temporary housing must be of good quality to ensure that students can live safely while studying.

The Nijmegen campus is shared by the RU and the HAN. The HAN has a total of 450 rooms in Arnhem and Nijmegen, according to conversations with HAN Housing. The majority of these are in Arnhem. These are too few rooms to provide for all international students: there are plans to move more international students to Arnhem, so that the pressure in Nijmegen decreases, but we have been able to find little concrete information about this. Thus, we conclude that the accretion of the aforementioned 1,200 housing units by 2030 is still pending for the time being. Now that the concrete plans for building student housing have been listed, the counter remains stuck at around 200 houses in the Erasmus building in the RU’s Campus Plan, and around 100 temporary houses on campus according to the SSH&.

²¹ Kences 2021, *Landelijke Monitor Studentenhuisvesting 2021: Kwantitatieve prognose*, <https://studentenhuisvesting.incijfers.nl/mosaic/lms2021/5-kwantitatieve-prognose> [Consulted 27-04-2022].

²² VOX, *De campus in 2030: studentenwoningen in het Erasmus, nieuwbouw voor Spinoza en Collegezalencentrum*, <https://www.voxweb.nl/nieuws/de-campus-in-2030-studentenwoningen-in-het-erasmus-nieuwbouw-voor-spinoza-en-collegezalencentrum> [Consulted 27-04-2022].

²³ VOX, *SSH& ziet kansen voor ‘meer dan honderd’ tijdelijke woningen op de campus*, <https://www.voxweb.nl/nieuws/ssh-ziet-kansen-voor-meer-dan-honderd-tijdelijke-woningen-op-de-campus> [Consulted 27-04-2022].



Figure 4: Campus map showing location of temporary housing. Image adopted from https://www.ru.nl/publish/pages/921353/20211124_campusplattegrond_eng-1.png

Short-stay contracts SSH&

The RU and HAN offer incoming students assistance in finding housing in Nijmegen. The RU has an International Office, which informs incoming and outgoing students and helps them with their stay in the Netherlands or abroad. The International Office offers basically all incoming students help in finding a room. This does not include students who live less than 350 kilometers from Nijmegen. This is because they are expected to be able to travel to Nijmegen several times for viewings and the like. At Radboud University Nijmegen, incoming students are asked whether they would like a service package upon registration. This includes the introduction week and help with visa applications and a furnished room. Since 2015-2016, the allocation procedure for the rooms goes according to the Book Your Room system. Book Your Room is a system developed by the SSH&, which allows students to choose their own room from the available short-stay offer. Students receive a voucher, with which they have one week to choose a room themselves from the then available supply. Recently, they can also see which nationalities have already booked a room in that corridor, and what the male/female ratio is.²⁴ The students who find a room via the HAN and RU end up in SSH& short-stay housing for the most part. A short-stay contract means that the tenant enters into a rental agreement for a fixed period of time, in this case one or two

²⁴ AKKU 2017, *Rapport Huisvesting van Internationale Studenten Nijmegen en Arnhem*, <https://www.studentenvakbondakku.nl/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Rapport-Huisvesting-Internationale-Studenten-in-Nijmegen-en-Arnhem.pdf>.

semesters. This form of contract does not allow the tenant to terminate in the interim. The students who find a room outside the educational institutions end up in the regular offer of the SSH& or find housing with a private landlord. There is little visibility of the students who are housed outside the educational institutions. The rooms allocated to international students by the International Office and the HAN housing office are for a fixed period of 1 or 2 semesters. A so-called Short-stay contract is used, where students are stuck to this period and are not allowed to cancel the room earlier or later.²⁵ By using these contracts, the SSH& can guarantee that new international students will have a room during the first year of their studies.

Because students do not have the option to terminate the contract mid-term, they are forced to look for a room on the private market only in July/August. Precisely these months are very busy, and many Dutch students are also trying to get a room on the overcrowded private rental market. The alternative is to bear double rent for several months. Even though the SSH& recently stated that students renting according to the short-stay contract are allowed to sublet the room, this is only a false solution. Since many students can only start looking for alternative housing after they have built up a network in Nijmegen, the houses can only be sublet for a few months. This means that the subletting student, who is also in a difficult position, only has a home for a few months.

Because the contracts are not terminable in the interim, students must then make way for a new cohort of house seekers, and students receive no further assistance from educational institutions or the SSH& in finding a new room, we can argue that the short-stay product encourages homelessness. Guaranteeing housing for first-year international students is a noble and good endeavor and ensures that students can become grounded in Nijmegen. But this is at the expense of the international students already studying in Nijmegen. The often-heard argument that the educational institutions cannot house every student is entirely valid. But because of the policy choices currently being made, this is at the expense of the current generation of international students. We heard from several international students in interviews that they had not found a room several months after their short-stay product ended, which meant they were sleeping on the couch with friends or were homeless. They indicated that not being able to terminate the short-stay product in the interim and the summer peak in the rental market were major bottlenecks in the process.

Communication about housing problem

Since the housing crisis is a national problem, educational institutions would be wise to communicate to students in a timely manner that finding a room is particularly difficult. Both HAN and RU do this, albeit to a minimal degree. The RU Housing team website states the following: "Unfortunately due to a country-wide housing crisis, we cannot guarantee that we can find a room for all students. We are limited to the number of rooms we have on offer. Due to this housing crisis it is also hard to find a room after the first year for the rest of your stay. We therefore strongly urge students to start looking for that second room early and use the full potential of their network while doing so."²⁶ Here we immediately see the

²⁵ *Ibidem*.

²⁶ RU, Housing, <https://www.ru.nl/english/working-at/working-at-radboud-university/personal/vm-coming/coming/vm-before/housing-0/> [Consulted 30-04-2022].

warped policy of the RU, as international students are encouraged to start looking for a room in their own network. Thus, because of the non-cancellable short-stay contracts, this advice is worthless and the responsibility of adequate housing is placed on students themselves, rather than the educational institutions.

Subdivision ban

On February 2, 2022, the Nijmegen City Council passed a motion calling for curbs on the subdivision of homes. This would be a measure against the buying up of homes by property managers who then divide the properties into individual living spaces. In addition, the municipality has instituted a self-occupancy obligation for homes up to €355,000 that took effect in March 2022. The self-occupancy obligation means that a buyer of a newly built house is obliged to occupy the house himself for a certain period of time. In Nijmegen, the owner-occupation obligation applies for a period of 5 years after delivery of the house.²⁷ The municipality of Nijmegen also wants to introduce buy-out protection for existing homes with a WOZ value of up to € 350,000. In this way, the cheap and medium-priced homes will remain available to buyers who will live in the home themselves and these homes will not be available to investors who buy a home to rent out.²⁸

In particular, the anti-subdivision measure will directly cause the pressure on the Nijmegen housing market to increase even further. In practice, for the time being the only structural ways to realize more student rooms are through the SSH& or the private housing market. Because it is becoming more difficult to apply for a permit for the subdivision of a building, in practice there are hardly any student rooms left on the private market. Although it is a good thing that houses are no longer being bought up, students have exactly nothing to gain from this. As fewer rooms are added, and the number of students continues to grow, more people will be unable to find housing. While the council still voted against an election stop in 2019, the measure was later implemented.²⁹ One of the main reasons for this was to counteract nuisance from student houses for local residents.³⁰ Funnily enough, the municipality's own figures show that the nuisance from student houses was already decreasing before the pandemic, so this argument makes little sense.³¹ Clearly, as long as there are not enough social housing units available via municipalities or housing corporations such as the SSH&, compacting will remain a necessary evil.

²⁷ Gemeente Nijmegen 22-03-2022, Gemeente Nijmegen voert zelfbewoningsplicht in, <https://www.nijmegen.nl/nieuws/gemeente-nijmegen-voert-zelfbewoningsplicht-in/#:~:text=De%20zelfbewoningsplicht%20geldt%20in%20Nijmegen,afspraken%20gemaakt%20bij%20nieuwe%20woningbouwprojecten> [Consulted 30-04-2022].

²⁸ Ibidem.

²⁹ ANS 28-11-2019, Motie verkamer-stop met ruime meerderheid afgewezen, <https://ans-online.nl/nieuws/nijmegen/motie-verkamer-stop-met-ruime-meerderheid-afgewezen/> [Consulted 27-04-2022].

³⁰ ANS 02-03-2022, Gemeente Nijmegen verbiedt verkamering, <https://ans-online.nl/artikelen/gemeente-nijmegen-verbiedt-verkamering/> [Consulted 27-04-2022].

³¹ De Gelderlander, Student houdt meer rekening met de buurt, zet geluid zachter en dumpst minder afval: minder klachten, <https://www.gelderlander.nl/nijmegen/student-houdt-meer-rekening-met-de-buurt-zet-geluid-zachter-en-dumpst-minder-afval-minder-klachten~a14633f9/> [Consulted 30-04-2022].

Market forces in higher education

Since the 1980s, the education budget for higher education has been divided among universities and colleges based on market share in total students and degrees.⁶ This policy was partly inspired by the European Union, to make education and the economy in Europe more competitive.³² This makes the quality of education and conditions for students dependent on the whims of the market. Therefore, universities have been working for several years to attract international students. This is succeeding very well since Dutch universities, including the RU, are highly regarded internationally and therefore attract foreign students. It is an almost inexhaustible source of students that can increase the market share of these universities. However, the national education budget is not growing along with it, creating a competition between universities and colleges for their funding right to exist. If you do not grow your numbers of students, your competitor grows and you yourself lose out because you receive less government funding. A strange measure in our view, since education actually benefits from cooperation. Research and education actually benefit from looking beyond the borders of your department/educational institution, but if institutions are forced to compete, this tendency to cooperate is reduced. Universities therefore run into problems, and because of current legislation it is currently difficult to refuse students. Institutions have already sounded the alarm because they cannot handle the growth.³³ In the coming academic year, a national growth of 14% in international students is expected, and they all need to be housed.³⁴

RU also expects to receive more students in the coming years, according to their own calculations. Figure 5 shows the RU expected, while their annual plan for 2022 states: "The decrease in tuition fees in 2021 and 2022 can be explained by the halving of the statutory tuition fees for the academic year 2021-2022. This was compensated by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science in the government grant. The increase in 2023-2026 is based on the estimated increase in the number of enrolled students, as calculated by the faculties."³⁵

(x 1,000 EUR)

	Realised 2020	Budgeted 2021	Projected 2021	Budgeted 2022	Estimated 2023	Estimated 2024	Estimated 2025	Estimated 2026
Income								
Government funding (incl. workplace funding)	399.199	349.284	391.259	399.000	379.957	384.575	392.015	397.609
Tuition, course, lecture and examination fee	45.077	47.133	39.293	30.790	48.840	50.010	50.620	51.080

Figure 5: Forecast tuition fees RU 2020-2026. Source: RU Annual Plan 2022

This showed that the RU is counting on the growth in income due to the increasing number of students. An important part of that growth is due to increasing international students. In the annual report 2022 under risk management; demographic factors states: "The expected regional contraction is a demographic factor for the university. CBS (2020)

³² Europese Commissie, 2021, *Higher Education Initiatives*.

²⁸ *Ibidem*.

³³ AD, *Universiteiten willen rem op toestroom buitenlandse studenten*, https://www.ad.nl/amsterdam/universiteiten-willen-rem-op-toestroom-buitenlandse-studenten~ac86e494/?referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.co.uk%2F&cb=6d864473890315a58a90db613fae8f5a&auth_rd=1 [Consulted 05-05-2022].

³⁴ *Ibidem*.

³⁵ RU, *Jaarplan 2022*, https://www.ru.nl/publish/pages/816354/universitaire_begroting_en_jaarplan_2022_radboud_universiteit.pdf.

estimates that the total population of the Netherlands will exceed 19 million in 2038 and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (2021) expects that the total number of university students will increase by 15% in the coming 15 years. In the primary recruitment areas of Radboud University (Gelderland, Noord-Brabant, Limburg), the number of secondary school students will decrease until 2035 (and with it the number of potential students) according to the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency. On the other hand, Radboud University will see an influx of international students."³⁶ At the moment, students from the region can still live with their parents, which is far from ideal for student development, but if this demographic change takes place, the demand for rooms will only increase.

	Realised 2020	Budgeted 2021	Realised 2021	Budgeted 2022	Estimated 2023	Estimated 2024	Estimated 2025	Estimated 2026
Number of students (as of 1 Oct)								
Bachelor	13.731	13.581	13.965	14.233	14.392	14.512	14.512	14.512
Pre-Master's programmes	1.542	1.485	1.527	1.556	1.574	1.587	1.587	1.587
Master	8.831	8.934	9.186	9.362	9.467	9.546	9.546	9.546
Total	24.104	24.000	24.678	25.151	25.433	25.644	25.644	25.644
FTEs (average balance)								
Academic staff	2.992	3.253	3.315	3.511	3.529	3.511	3.476	3.434
Support staff	2.429	2.458	2.523	2.578	2.553	2.548	2.541	2.528
Total	5.421	5.712	5.838	6.089	6.082	6.060	6.017	5.961

Figure 6: Projected number of RU students. Source: RU Annual Plan 2022

As can be seen in figure 6, the number of students has increased over the past 2 years. Radboud aims for a peak in the number of students from 2024 on (forecast until 2026). This will be at the expense of their market share in the number of students and loss of government subsidies, also included in the RU forecast.³⁷

Advertising and recruitment

There are currently 2,665 international students at RU. LMS 20-21 forecasts that the number of international students (excluding exchange students) will increase in the coming years.³⁸ The increase in the number of students does not come out of the blue. The RU tries to attract students through various activities such as open days and advertisements. There is also a website called 'why Radboud University'.³⁹ On the website there is nothing about the housing problems.

Moreover, actively recruiting international students is an important point in the RU Annual Plan 2022 (figure 7). Inclusiveness is mentioned as an important point, but there is no further discussion about the problems currently affecting international students regarding housing. By continuing to focus on active recruitment of international students, without ensuring adequate housing, they are strengthening the housing crisis.

³⁶ *Ibidem*.

³⁷ *Ibidem*.

³⁸ Kences 2021, *Landelijke Monitor Studentenhuisvesting: Kwantitatieve prognose + Internationale Studenten*, <https://studentenhuisvesting.incijfers.nl/mosaic/lms2021/5-kwantitatieve-prognose> [Consulted 30-04-2022].

Concretisering doelstellingen (strategies)	Meetbaar maken (measures)	Acties en activiteiten om doelstellingen te realiseren	Benodigde middelen
internationaal gericht en regionaal geworteld	collaborative online international learning projecten (COIL) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toename van aantal studenten met internationale leerervaring" 	Universiteit van Maastricht) en strategische internationale partners (o.a. University of Glasgow, Western University, en NeurotechEU) worden nieuwe onderwijsinitiatieven ontwikkeld. Vanuit deze partnerschappen worden nieuwe vakken gezamenlijk opgezet en aangeboden, studenten worden gezamenlijk begeleid bij scripties, studentenuitwisseling neemt in dit verband toe. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Om te waarborgen dat iedere student een internationale leerervaring kan opdoen, wordt sterker ingezet op zogenoemde "internationalisation at home" projecten. We zetten daarbij in op twee onderwijsaspecten: (1) Waarborgen van inclusive classroom, (2) inzetten op collaborative online international learning (COIL). We faciliteren naast reguliere student exchange programma's (van >3 maanden) ook kortere en andere vormen van buitenlandverblijf, waarbij we oog houden voor duurzaamheidsaspecten. We verstevigen de vakinhoudelijke netwerken van vo- en wo-docenten en breiden programma's aan vwo-scholieren uit, met het accent op academische en studievaardigheden. We bieden studenten een rijke leerervaring door hun te laten werken aan concrete maatschappelijke projecten in de regio zoals bijvoorbeeld de City deal, ieder talent telt, de samenwerking met het Valkhof museum, de Bastei en de Hortus, de Honourslabs in opdracht van regionale partners. 	

Figure 7: RUs strategy, measure, objectives and resources for advertising. Source: RU Annual Plan 2022

Furthermore, the Vox series "Limits to Growth" shows a good picture of the problems surrounding the advertising of the RU and educational institutions in general.⁴⁰ In it, Jolanda van den Broek, head of the department of educational marketing, which takes care of the recruitment and selection of new students, says that her department takes little account of the danger of the university attracting too many students. External factors are simply hard to predict, she reasons. 'Just a few years ago, a decline in the number of entrants to bachelor's programs was predicted in parts of the Netherlands, including here in Nijmegen.' That didn't come true. The room shortage is also addressed in recruitment activities, says van den Broek. 'Dutch students can often stay with parents a little longer. For international students this does not apply.' This is taken into account in the information and recruitment activities aimed at the latter group. 'We adjust our efforts accordingly. Of course we want students to be able to live up to their expectations here.' At this moment there is no reason to recruit in fewer countries, for example, she thinks, despite the fact that international students sleep in hotels or on the couch of a fellow student. Van den Broek doesn't think stopping recruiting altogether would do much for the growing numbers. 'It's not like we can turn a knob and get more or less students to come to the university.'⁴¹ Despite the counterarguments, recruitment does contribute to the growth of international students, while facilities lag behind. So here, as shown earlier, is an example of warped reasoning. By guaranteeing first-year international students a room, the RU fulfills its promises and the recruitment talk can continue. But once the second year of study begins, the focus is mainly on the next cohort of first-year international students out of necessity, at the expense of the previous generation.

³⁹ RU, *Why Radboud University*, <https://www.ru.nl/english/education/study-radboud/why-radboud-university/> [Consulted 30-04-2022].

⁴⁰ Vox, *Grenzen aan de groei*, <https://www.voxweb.nl/nieuws/grenzen-aan-de-groei-slot-de-universiteit-blijft-groeien-maar-ook-studenten-werven> [Consulted 30-04-2022].

⁴¹ *Ibidem*.

Discrimination

International students also search for rooms in the private rental market. 47% of international students and 27% of exchange students rent in the private housing market as shown in Figure 8.

To get a room, you often have to be interviewed, for which you have to be invited. This is due to the right of co-option, in which tenants have the right to choose their own roommate. This is an important right because it allows students to choose someone who fits the house. Unfortunately, this often leaves international students out because of their, for Dutch students, different culture or because Dutch students prefer to speak only Dutch at home. Unfortunately, it often happens that on sites like Kamernet or Facebook, in the description of the student house, it says something like 'no internationals'. Even if it is not there, international students are often not invited to hospiteeravond. As a result, International students have less choice and as a result they end up living in more expensive housing which increases their housing costs as shown in Figure 9. This, while they have a lower average disposable budget compared to Dutch students, as shown in figure 10. This causes inequality between Dutch and international students.

Uitwonende studenten naar type verhuurder

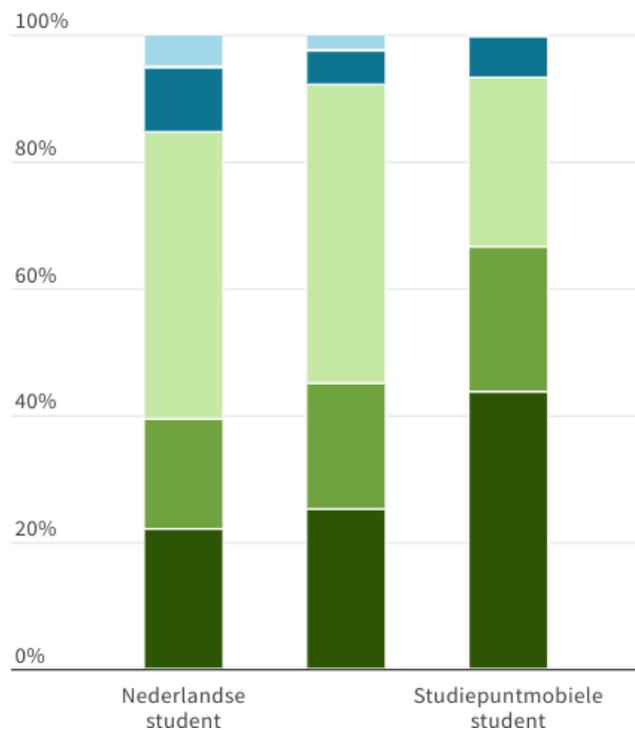
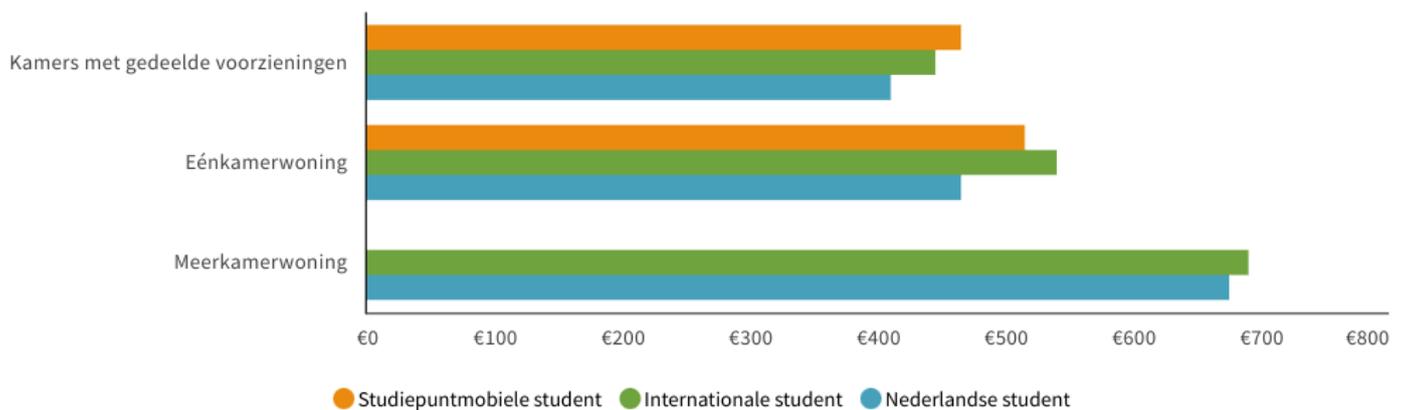


Figure 8: Outgoing students by type of landlord. The middle column represents the percentages of international students by type of landlord. Source: <https://studentenhuisvesting.incijfers.nl/mosaic/lms2021/6-internationale-studenten>

Woonlasten naar type woonruimte



Enquête | '20-'21

Figure 9: Housing costs by type of housing. Source: <https://studentenhuisvesting.incijfers.nl/mosaic/lms2021/6-internationale-studenten>

Besteedbaar budget naar type woonruimte

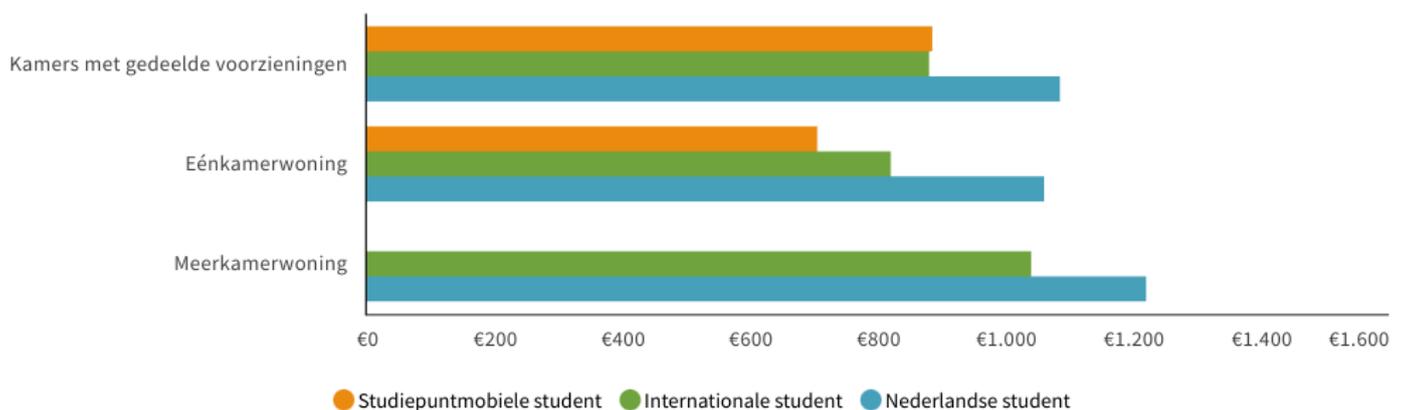


Figure 10: Spendable budget by type of housing. Source: <https://studentenhuisvesting.incijfers.nl/mosaic/lms2021/6-internationale-studenten>

The high cost of living in the Netherlands may also cause (or perhaps already does cause) international students from a lower economic class to forego studying in the Netherlands, while wealthy students do have that opportunity. This reinforces the inequality between different groups of international students and the opportunities they have for the rest of their lives because they did or did not study at a prestigious Dutch educational institution. Dutch universities are in fact highly regarded internationally: 14 listings in 4 top hundred lists of best universities in the world in 2021.⁴² In the opinion of the Nijmegen Housing Coalition, the size of someone's wallet should not determine whether or not someone can study somewhere.

⁴² Rathenau Instituut 15-12-2021, Rankings <https://www.rathenau.nl/nl/wetenschap-cijfers/werking-van-de-wetenschap/excellentie/ranglijsten-rankings#:~:text=In%202021%20staat%20deze%20wederom,Delft%20in%20de%20top%20100> [Consulted 07-05-2022].

Recognition problem

Last year, the problems surrounding the housing situation of international students in Nijmegen were already raised with the alderman for housing. Also, following the evaluation of the room rental policy in the Nijmegen City Council on November 3, 2021, the Board of Mayor and Aldermen concluded that “discrimination of international students on the housing market occurs, but that at this time no clear picture can be sketched of the extent to which that happens. What is clear is that discrimination occurs both by landlords and by tenants and/or NL students.”⁴³ Here the Board expresses its desire to tackle this, by means of a “further investigation, setting up a hotline, better information, forms of sanctioning, etc.” We therefore strongly recommend that the municipality initiate an investigation to at least identify the problem. A hotline is a start and can be used as input for an investigation but it does not work towards a solution. A municipal investigation into the causes of the discrimination can be a start for policy proposals that can combat this problem and is therefore encouraged by the Nijmegen Housing Coalition.

Personal stories

The Nijmegen Housing Coalition keeps in touch with a number of international students. Their stories show that they experience discrimination because they come from a different culture or because they do not speak Dutch. Below are quotes from mails of a number of international students, their names have been omitted to ensure privacy. Their stories show that the situation they are in causes stress and alienation, which get in the way of a fun and successful student life.

“(...) get rejected because we are internationals and students.”

“In total, I wrote 48 (I counted) applications. Most people on Facebook did not want internationals, which is their free choice, so that was a big issue. Eventually I found a room on kamernet and was really happy. Fast forward to now, I am currently living on 7 square meters, while in lockdown and trying to manage university work. I have been trying to apply with the SSH& lottery for about 5 months now (unsuccessfully). Every week, I would say there is an average of 100 applications for a single room. But it does not really end at this point. Two of my housemates are severe addicts and it is almost unbearable to live here. I am in a very lucky position to be able to go back to my parents every other week, but these are expenses I cannot maintain for much longer (gas prices etc.). At this point I have already considered to start looking for rooms in either Germany or Arnhem, but I love Nijmegen and this is what keeps me in this situation.”

“I have severe problems with finding housing in Nijmegen for over a year now. Out of my perspective it is not a problem of price range, but a problem of me being an international student and more importantly the housing market in Nijmegen.”

⁴³ Gemeente Nijmegen 18-01-2022, *Discriminatie van internationale studenten*.

“However when it came to the Facebook groups, which were mainly for students, almost none of the people posting about room vacancies would even consider international students. From the period between March and June 2021, I sent around 5 emails a day applying for rooms, but I only got an invitation on two occasions. Funny enough, the second invitation I got was the one time I decided to try translating my email to Dutch, just to see if that would make a difference.”

5. Solutions

The fourth and final section of this report contains an overview of a number of solutions that could contribute to improving the position of international students on the housing market in Nijmegen. The solutions are based on the problems that emerged from the research of the Nijmegen Housing Coalition. The housing crisis is a complex issue and cannot be solved with one new law, measure or hotline, and the Wooncoalitie is very aware of that fact. Therefore it's more important that the proposed solutions are not seen as separate ideas, but as parts of a larger whole.

Nevertheless, some ideas are easier and faster to implement than others. Therefore, the solutions below are divided into two categories; short term and long term solutions. While it is important to provide prospective international students with quality housing, the current generation of international students should not be forgotten: all the problems discussed in the previous chapters are an everyday reality for them. In addition, many measures also contribute to solving the housing crisis in general, both locally and nationally.

Short-term solutions

Free emergency shelter for homeless international students for the upcoming introduction week

While SSH& tries their best to house all incoming international students upon arrival in Nijmegen, there is still a group of internationals that will effectively be homeless in Nijmegen when the academic year begins. To accommodate this group, the educational institutions must provide adequate and free emergency accommodation for these students to at least bridge the first period in Nijmegen. Emergency shelter, as they have arranged in Groningen through Shelter our students, is not only a direct remedy against homelessness, but gives students space to land in the Netherlands and find suitable housing from there.⁴⁴ In addition, it would be very wise for educational institutions to keep 200 places/houses for emergency shelter behind them as standard. The number of students is expected to continue to grow in the coming years, which means that emergency accommodation will probably have to be used in the coming years.

Stop actively recruiting international students

More and more international students are finding their way to the Netherlands, and not without reason. In fact, Dutch educational institutions are actively recruiting abroad to persuade students to pursue their education in the Netherlands. With the recent expansion of international and English-language study programs, the aim is to lure as many students as possible to an educational institution. Under the guise of 'accessibility' and 'globalization', students are brought to the Netherlands with roaring promises and shiny brochures, as

⁴⁴ RTV Noord 6-10-2021, *Noodopvang voor studenten in Groningen blijft historisch lang open*, <https://www.rtvnoord.nl/nieuws/857991/noodopvang-voor-studenten-in-groningen-blijft-historisch-lang-open> [Consulted 16-04-2022].

educational institutions benefit financially from the arrival of international students. The institutions must distribute an annual subsidy amount from the government based on the number of students and the number of diplomas issued. By now it's clear that the basic infrastructure to manage the arrival of these new students is insufficient.

Provide good and honest information about the housing situation in the Netherlands

Both the RU and the HAN have a page about housing for new students. However, these pages pay little attention to the housing crisis in the Netherlands and the problems on the housing market. Although the RU mentions that many students find a room through their connections, and not through SSH&, for new international students who often have no network at all in Nijmegen this is not an option. Good, honest and timely information for international students about the housing market in the Netherlands is therefore a good short term solution. By giving students information about the problems on the housing market, making it clear what their rights are as tenants, and giving addresses where to go in case of problems (e.g. municipal offices or rent commissions), international students will be able to better assess what to expect when they come to study in Nijmegen.

Expand local rental teams

By expanding the capacity of the rental teams, they can also play a larger role for internationals. Huurteams Nijmegen is an important instrument against abuses in the rental sector, however, their capacity is already at its peak. As a result, students who cannot easily find their way to this type of institution, such as international students, are often left out. Also, much information is not (yet) available in English. More resources should be devoted to solving this. A specific problem that internationals often encounter as well in the private rental market is not getting the deposit back. This is difficult to accomplish when they are already back in their country of origin. Huurteams could play a greater role here as well if their resources were to be increased. As a comparison, a city like Leiden (with 120,000 inhabitants, which is less than Nijmegen) makes 110,000 euros per year available for their rental team, while Nijmegen has only 60,000 available.⁴⁵

Chart discrimination against international students in the housing market

Following the evaluation of the room rental policy in the Nijmegen City Council on November 3, 2021, the Board of the Mayor and Aldermen concluded that "discrimination of international students on the housing market occurs, but that at the moment no clear picture can be sketched of the extent to which this happens. What is clear is that discrimination occurs both by landlords and by tenants, Dutch students."⁴⁶ Here the Board expresses its desire to tackle this, by means of a "further investigation, setting up a hotline, better information, forms of sanctioning, etc." We therefore strongly recommend that the municipality initiate an investigation to at least identify the problem.

⁴⁵ Urbannerdam 11-08-2021, Huurteam Leiden is van start, <https://urbannerdam.nl/nieuws/huurteam-leiden-is-van-start> [Consulted 07-05-2022].

⁴⁶ Gemeente Nijmegen 18-01-2022, Discriminatie van internationale studenten.

Ban on subdividing houses in Nijmegen must be lifted

In order to curb the disturbance caused by subdivided houses in Nijmegen, a ban on subdividing has been in force since October 7, 2021. By obligating landlords to obtain a permit to subdivide a property, in theory more properties will remain available for home seekers in Nijmegen and the disturbance will decrease.⁴⁷ However, in practice, home seekers and students will bear the brunt of the ban, as the number of rooms available on the private market will decline in the coming years, while 50% of the students rent rooms in this sector. Since the number of students will continue to grow in the coming years, the scarcity of housing in Nijmegen will only increase. The Wooncoalitie was certainly not founded to defend the interests of landlords and landlord vendors, but a measure such as the ban on renting out subdivided housing is in practice more harmful to house/room seekers than to the owners of the properties.

Empty properties should be better used to house people

In 2021, some 189,530 m² were vacant in the municipality of Nijmegen, of which 79,950 m² (~42%) had been vacant sometime before that year. In a statement by the municipality, some of this vacancy is labeled as “friction vacancy [...] to allow the market to function.” Some homes are vacant due to the time it takes for people to move, but there are around 480 homes that were also vacant a year earlier. The Housing Coalition believes it is immoral to leave these properties vacant at the time of a housing crisis, and not just for students. Owners of long-term vacant properties should be required to find suitable functions, such as emergency shelter or permanent housing.

Short-stay contracts should be reviewed

Currently, many international students make use of the short-stay contract offered to them by the SSH&. This is done to guarantee that new international students have a room during the first year of their studies. These contracts last for one year, after which the student must leave the room, as room must be made for next year’s students. However, students do not have the option to terminate the contract before then, which forces them to look for a room in the private sector as late as July/August. Precisely these months are very busy, and many Dutch students are also trying to get a room in the overcrowded housing market. The alternative is to pay double rent for several months. Even though the SSH& recently stated that students who rent according to the short-stay contract are allowed to sublet the room, this is only a false solution. Because the contracts cannot be canceled within a year, or have a notice period, and students must then make way for a new cohort of house seekers, we can argue that the short-stay contracts encourage homelessness. We have heard from several international students in interviews that several months after their short-stay contract ended,

⁴⁷ *De Gelderlander* 28-09-2021, *Nijmegen stelt verkamerverbod in: ban op pandjes melken moet overlast tegengaan*, <https://www.gelderlander.nl/nijmegen/nijmegen-stelt-verkamerverbod-in-ban-op-pandjes-melken-moet-overlast-tegengaan~a2a0bf67/> [Consulted 16-04-2021].

they still had not found a room and were sleeping on friends' couches or were homeless. They indicated that not being able to terminate the short-stay contract earlier and the summer peak in the rental market were major bottlenecks in the process.⁴⁸

Long-term solutions

Build more student rooms and increase the proportion of non private rentals

This report has already established that the municipality of Nijmegen, the RU and the SSH& are working on housing the growing number of students, something the Nijmegen Housing Coalition would like to see happen. The 200 emergency houses on the RU campus and the approximately 1200 houses that the SSH& want to add are good developments, but still aren't enough. Since as many as 50% of the students rent on the private, deregulated market, the municipality, educational institutions and SSH& would do well to realize more housing more quickly. This would reduce the pressure on the housing market in Nijmegen as a whole, and students can work on their studies with less stress.

Stop competition and give more money to education

One of the biggest causes of the eternal urge to grow as an educational institution is the financing system of education in the Netherlands. For example, institutions receive a certain amount of funding from the government per student. Whoever has the most students gets the largest share of the subsidy. As a result, despite a growth in the number of students, an institution may run into financial difficulties because student numbers at other institutions are growing faster. In addition to the quality of education, faculty, facilities, and all the other things that have been cut down on over the past decade, institutions simply have less room to pay attention to housing. When more money is structurally spent on education, the competition between educational institutions will diminish. This means that institutions are no longer obliged to focus on growth, but to make good policies for the students who actually study at their school.

Guarantee public access to information about real estate and land holdings

Speculation on the housing market is one of the biggest causes of high rents, but the owners of properties and land are often hard to find.⁴⁹ The names of landlords and their properties are well hidden in nv's, bv's, partnerships and foundations that in turn own the real estate. With clear information and a transparent overview of who owns what, the implementation of measures is easier and more effective.

⁴⁸ Meerdere gesprekken met internationale studenten aan de RU.

⁴⁹ De Gelderlander 27-11-2021, *Wil de grootste huisbaas van Oost-Nederland opstaan? Dit is de vastgoedbaron van de regio*, https://www.gelderlander.nl/nijmegen/wil-de-grootste-huisbaas-van-oost-nederland-opstaan-dit-is-de-vastgoedbaron-van-de-regio~af7a265f/?cb=ea3226d4703ebc5bb7206040aff-7d979&auth_rd=1 [Consulted 16-04-2022].

For further long-term solutions that should mainly be taken up by national politics, the Nijmegen Housing Coalition refers to the Housing Manifesto, drawn up by the organizers of Het Woonprotest and Woonrevolte⁵⁰ For the sake of completeness, a summary of those demands follows below.

- 1.** Make combating homelessness (or impending homelessness) a top priority
- 2.** Provide widely accessible public housing
- 3.** Guarantee affordability
- 4.** Guarantee housing security
- 5.** Reduce housing inequality between buyers and renters
- 6.** Monitor equal access to housing
- 7.** Give citizens equal say
- 8.** Curb the financialization of housing
- 9.** Don't give malicious landlords and brokers a chance
- 10.** Tackle vacancy firmly

⁵⁰ *Woonmanifest.nl [Consulted 16-4-2022].*



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