

The position of young adults on the Amsterdam housing market

How to better connect system world and life world?

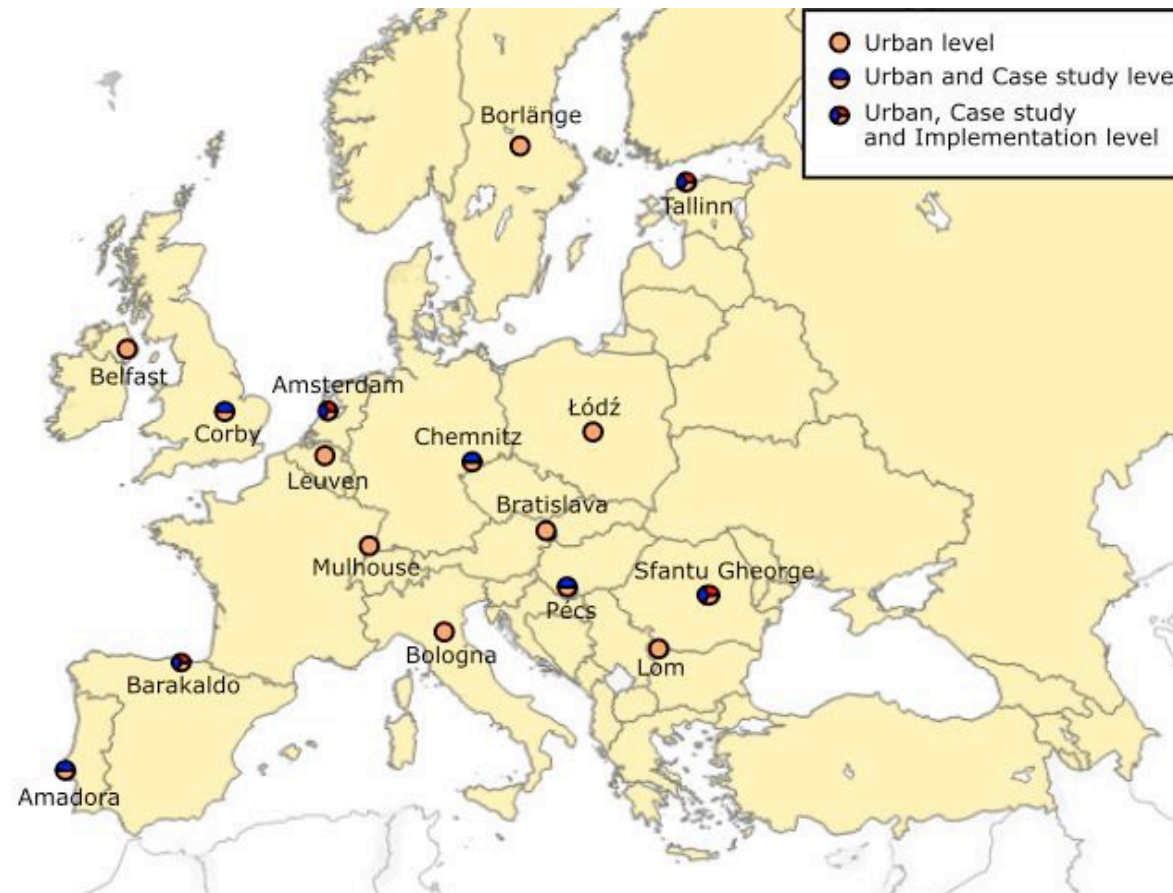
Joris Hoekstra and Martina Gentili – TU Delft
'Housing co-creation for tomorrow's cities' - Grenoble – 08.12.2022

What is UPLIFT about?

UPLIFT is a H2020 project exploring how young people's voices can be put at the centre of policy in the domains of housing, education and employment. It aims:

- To understand patterns and trends of inequality across Europe (WP1) → literature review + statistical analysis
- To map the inequality patterns and local welfare systems of 16 European cities (WP2) → policy analysis + expert interviews
- To understand how young people experience and adapt to inequality (WP3) → interviews with professionals + 40 life course interviews with young people
- To design policies aimed at addressing and reducing inequality (WP4) → policy co-creation with a youth panel

Cities that are included



The Amsterdam housing problem

Housing is a problem for many (young) people in Amsterdam

- Long waiting times in the social rental sector: average waiting time 13 years
- Private rental sector: has increased as a result of buy to let, expensive (around 25€/month per square meter) and insecure (temporary contracts)
- Home ownership sector: prices are very high (on average 7200€ per square meter)

Consequences:

- Young people stay longer at home, are forced to look for alternative options (home sharing, squatting, living on a camping) or leave the city
- Key-workers (nurses, police force, teachers) have severe problems to access the city's housing market

Research questions & theoretical approach

Research questions:

- What are the strategies of young adults to navigate the Amsterdam housing market?
- To what extent are these strategies supported by existing policies?
- How do their housing strategies intertwine with other aspects of life?

Theoretical framework: capability approach, life course analysis, intergenerational transmissions.

- Explore interactions between personal life stories and institutional/policy context
- Assess how the “system world” of policies, market and institutions can expand or restrict the capabilities of young adults in the housing market

Research methods

- 40 in-depth life course interviews
 - 20 interviews with currently young people (age 18-29)
 - 20 interviews with formerly young people (age 30-45)
- Purposive sampling: looking for balanced distribution on key variables such as gender, migrant background, education, housing situation
- Recruitment through NGO's and snowball method
- Semi-structured interview guide
- Peer interviewing: 4 young interviewers from Amsterdam
- Both online and physical interviews
- Analysis on the basis of full transcripts

Results

WOONVORMEN

woongroep als alternatief voor verhuuring

Quorum verhuuring zorgt voor minder verhuuring, etc

woongroepen mogen veranderen qua type mensen
Diverse door mensen uit de buurt voorrang te geven

~~Eigen beheer~~
woongroepen
goede oplossing
eenzame

Woongroep

voordeel specifieke afspraak met wooncorporatie
de woongroep doet het
- kosten
- niet samen met partner kopen
- geen huur subsidie
- in geen eigen voordeel
- geen kinderen

Huur blijft goedkoop want er zijn niet veel huurders/toelaten nodig

nieuwbouw: percentage voor woongroepen

promoten kantoorpanden die gereviseerd zijn tot woongroepen

uit lichten was nachts dus, personenstraling

woongroepen te maken

Deze zijn gerechtigd om naast elkaar te wonen, ook de buurt te supporten

woongroepen



~~meer mensen~~ Lobbyen: meer woningen
Coke in bestaande student-panden voor jongeren

ook wanneer je niet woonkamer, keuken, badkamer, w.c. zou delen
is het duurder, dus sociale om te zijn
- fietsenstalling
- wasruimte
- feestruimte (geluidsoverlast)
- werkruimte

niet te betalen, totaal door huurder bewoner wordt overgenomen
→ huurverhoging
Totaal huur blijft hetzelfde

kraken

Kraken moet weer legaal worden

Kantoorpanden komen vrij door huurren → de gelovenen

anti-krak

woon Cooperatie

menen ondersteunen om wooncoöperatie oprichten

wooncoöperaties

Change = maar niet commercieel

Community /gemeenschap

Versoepeling friends contract

in kaart brengen hoeveel

voordelen uitlichten

buurt meesters in voordelen

Buurt

Housing affects life choices in employment

We actually both had to take jobs we didn't really like in order to pay the rent. Or at least to stay within the same kind of budget. So I did feel a bit forced. Anyway, you do want the right environment to spend your relationship in. But at the same time, it costs a lot to maintain that privacy.

FY08, 35 years old

I was on a youth contract here in Amsterdam, and that expired in December. So then I applied at various places, including the Arnhem-Nijmegen city region. [...] So I then, well, started responding, responding, responding. And around February, I was like: let's look even beyond the cities of Arnhem and Nijmegen. And yes, what I'm saying, at some point you just start looking purely pragmatically: well, I need a roof over my head, I need a property quickly so I start looking all over the country at places that are accessible, so to speak.

Y10, 29 years old

Housing affects relationships & adulthood

But it remains 22m², it's really such a bachelor pad. And yeah, it's also not nice when you get older to then ask people over, because you say 'welcome to my bedroom'. It's a bit, yeah, look, it's nice when you're young and then it all doesn't matter and then it's normal, but it started to get a bit weird. I'm thinking yeah, I really need to get another flat anyway. But there is nothing, because I can't buy in Amsterdam and I already can't afford the free sector and there is nothing else. At some point, yes, you just fall between the cracks then at some point.

FY14, 37 years old

Let's say, I don't really feel welcome where I live now either, so to speak. Because yes, they show in a super childish way that they don't actually want me and my daughter there anymore. So that has created a tension that means I don't really have contact with my flatmates now either, whereas our contact was always really good before. You know, these bonds can deteriorate because you just can't simply move on to another place very quickly.

Y02, 28 years old

Housing affects relationships & adulthood

I've been a long-term student, I must also say that my housing situation has had a lot to do with that. I had a pretty tough time of, you know, going back to live at home. You're in your mid-20s, you're already an adult, well you're still trying to become an adult, so to speak, right? I mean, you're just starting to discover it all, and then when I went home to my parents, that just stopped. And I kind of, yes, maybe it was not really a depression, but I really found it very difficult. And that also had repercussions on my studies. I felt that I... I wasn't happy, it just didn't make me happy.

FY08, 35 years old

We were almost at the point where she moved here too, purely because it was financially feasible. That's of course very cruel in these times. A good friend of mine stood at the housing protest with a sign: 'we don't want to live together yet because we have only just met'. That's the whole point, that's exactly the whole thing. You're forced into these kinds of crazy structures, just because you can't do it otherwise.

Y20, 27 years old

Housing affects life choices in education

Well, I was able to take advantage of that long period of studying because I spent a lot of time in student accommodation, so actually until very recently. Well, on paper I graduated in January last year, but I actually finished more than a year earlier, but that was because I wanted to stay in my student accommodation for a bit longer. Well, that's how it goes. I also hear from many friends around me; I have several friends who are already 31-32-33 and still say 'well, I'm going to enroll for teacher training again' - they don't want to do that at all, but then you can stay in your house for another year.

FY02, 32 years old

I'm also studying right now because otherwise I won't have a home. That's my biggest motivation right now. [...] I can't stop studying now. I am not sure whether I want to stop studying, but I want to be able to stop if I want to.

Y13, 23 years old

Housing affects all other life choices

It's not just about having a job or having a house, it's that when one of these things goes away, it's so difficult to ride the ship again. You know, you really fall out of step. And for the first year in COVID, I really fell out of step with everything.

FY08, 35 years old

I have no idea what I'm doing, no. And I have no idea how I'm going to go on with this, whether I'm going down a path in my life that I like, and then on top of that I have to find a house that I can afford. I think you make under stress just a lot of choices that might not be the best choices and you don't have the chance to really reflect on that until later and then it's like yes, what are you going to do now. And I think a lot of young people have a bit of that now.

Y15, 24 years old

Insecurity & chaotic housing pathways

I pay almost 900 euros now. My mother has a mortgage of 700 euros. [...] That I think is bizarre, isn't it? That people have a mortgage of 700 euros. I really pay considerably more money per month for a small studio and I still can't buy a house. [...] Everyone my age I hear from has exactly this. So what I say, my best friend has had social housing in Amsterdam for two years. She lives in De Pijp. Also a good job. She is quite willing to buy, but we are both single. So two actually quite well-earning young women, who could quite well do something else with their housing, are now sitting in a social dwelling, which should be, I think, for people earning under 3000€ a month, and in an overpriced studio for young people where there is no hope of making a family or living more comfortably.

FY20, 34 years old

Insecurity & chaotic housing pathways

Definitely my housing shortage [is my biggest problem at the moment]. That I have no peace because I don't know what my situation is going to be in two years. And that I am going to register my little daughter next year at a primary school that I have had a very positive experience with, and that she will then have to make a whole life switch to another neighbourhood, school or city. So that's really my biggest problem.

Y06, 29 years old

I just don't have 800 euros for a room so, the choice is just not very big. And for the rest it is indeed, you know you just want to stay in a room so even if your landlord does things you think 'this can't be', you just shut up because you don't want to be evicted either because otherwise you'll be homeless. So in terms of tenant, you may have official rights, but what are you going to do?

Y15, 24 years old

Lack of trust & informal networks

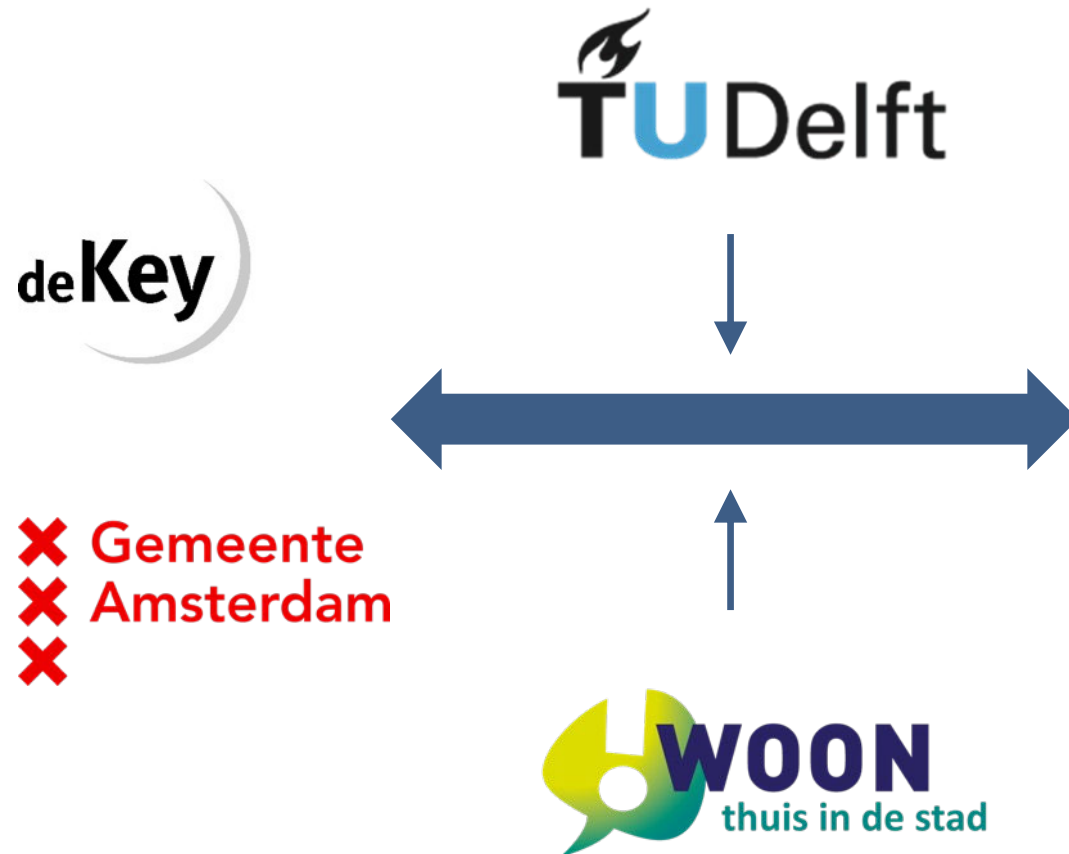
The temporary contract is quite bizarre, the idea is that you live there for five years and then there is something in the market that allows you to move on, but there isn't. There are a lot of systems with good intentions at the moment, but they are so stuck because the market has changed so completely by now that you have nothing to go on, even with the rent subsidy scheme.

Y20, 27 years old

And I was also lucky to find mostly affordable housing through clients. [...] So I feel like I've had some kind of outside chance to find good housing situations for a long time, and that actually has nothing to do with my pocket money or how it would go if I just searched the internet, or Woningnet or places like that.

FY08, 35 years old

Policy co-creation with young people



Policy co-creation with young people

→ Evaluation questionnaire at the end of the process

- Personal growth for Youth Board members
- Attitude change for institutional stakeholders
- Stakeholder commitment despite limitations
- Room to integrate co-creation in policy making (municipal level + housing association level)

Thank you!

Martina Gentili & Joris Hoekstra



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 870898.

The sole responsibility for the content of this publication lies with the authors. It does not necessarily represent the opinion of the European Union. Neither the EASME nor the European Commission is responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

Housing policy co-creation

- Structural causes (international economy, national policies) → problem cannot be solved by local stakeholders
- However, involving young people in the formulation of new youth housing policies and initiatives can lead to:
 - More effective housing policy responses: rooted in the real experiences of young people and tailored to the local context
 - A new format for policy creation: based on durable collaboration between policy makers and policy recipients
 - Improved credibility of institutional actors