



EUROPEAN MEDICINES AGENCY
SCIENCE MEDICINES HEALTH

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European Medicines Agency

Don't Panic!

Informal housing tips for new trainees

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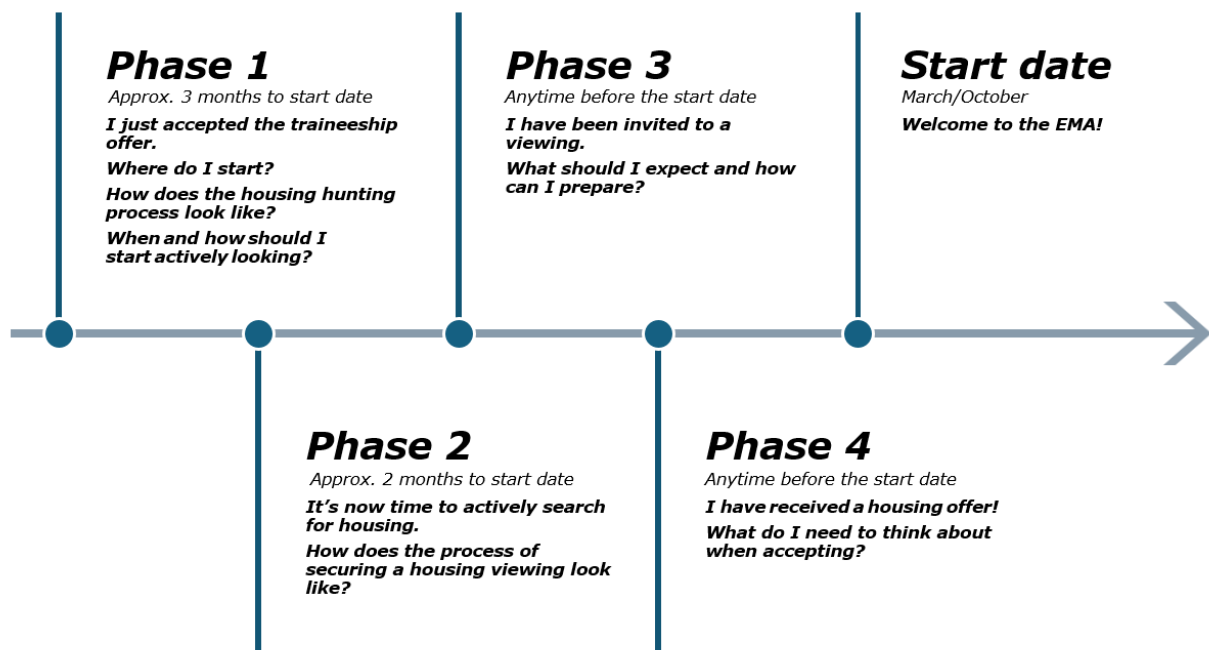
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1. What you will find in this document

This guide has been created by trainees for trainees to help you find housing when relocating to Amsterdam. It brings together useful tips, information and lessons learned from our experiences, and guides you step by step through the process. Relocation can vary widely from person to person. However, we have brought together key information to give you a general idea of what it might look like for you.

2. Our tips: from offer acceptance to securing housing



.1. Phase 1 – I just accepted the traineeship offer.

.2. Where do I start?

First of all, congratulations on your traineeship offer! After accepting, it is a good idea to start familiarising yourself with the Dutch housing market as soon as possible. While it is unlikely that you will secure something this far in advance, it is a good way to gain an idea of how the market looks.

Furthermore, start thinking about where you would like to live – whether in Amsterdam or in nearby cities. If you are considering living in Amsterdam, you might be aware of the biking culture. Cycling to the office can be a good way to save money on transport, but make sure to consider the location of your prospective accommodation in relation to how far you would be willing to bike each day. As a reference, a 30-minute bike ride each way is quite common. EMA is located in a well-connected area and is easily accessible by public transport, which makes the metro another good option.

The proximity to train stations RAI and Zuid means living in another city could be a way to find a place with cheaper rent. However, keep in mind that transportation costs will be higher when commuting (especially monthly subscriptions for trains, check the [NS website 'what fits my travel patterns'](#) to find out more).

To help you evaluate your options realistically, here's an overview of the results of an investigation survey conducted in June 2026, with data collected from 22 trainees (around a third of the total trainee population at the time).

Rental costs:

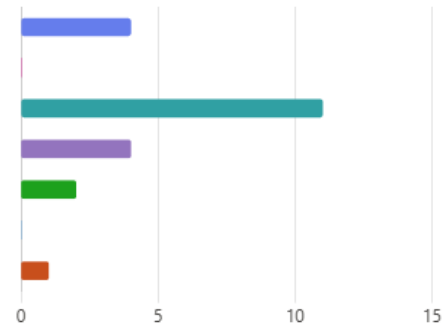
Average rent: ~900 EUR

Median rent: 885 EUR

Range: 400-1250 EUR

Housing type:

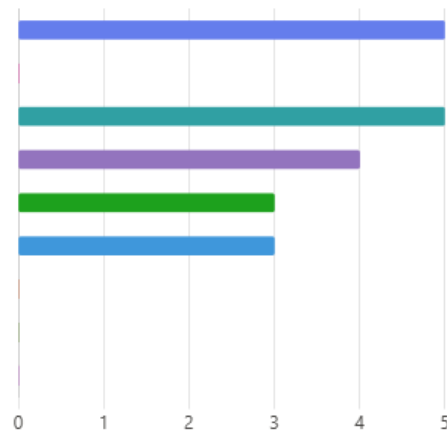
Room in shared flat (with other trainees)	4
Room in shared flat (with partner)	0
Room in shared flat (with other tenants)	11
Room in shared flat (with landlord)	4
Studio / Whole apartment	2
Dorm	0
Other	1



Note: Other = Shared with other tenants and trainees.

Location in Amsterdam:

West	5
Centrum	0
Oost	5
Zuid	4
Nieuw-West	3
Zuidoost	3
Noord	0
Westpoort	0
Other	0



Note: Two respondents reported that they live outside of Amsterdam (nearby cities).

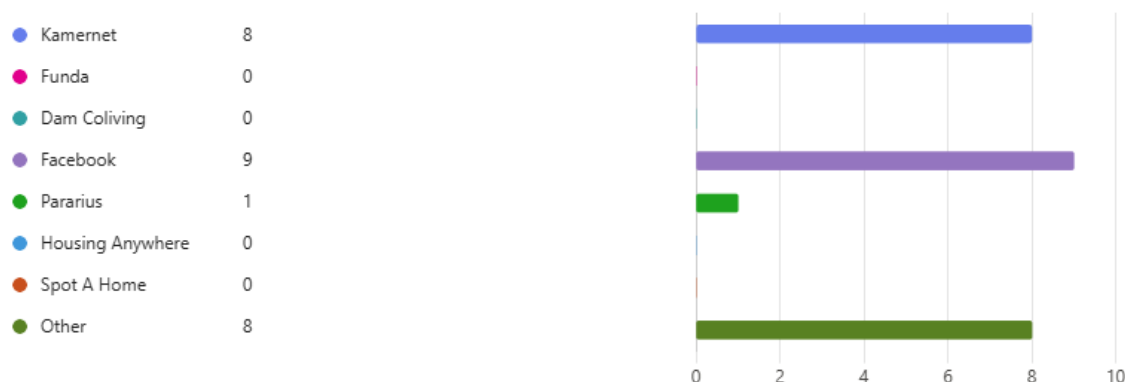
.3. How does the housing hunting process look like?

Many platforms are available to search for housing ads. Some of them are less housing specific and free to use (such as Facebook groups dedicated to housing in the Netherlands), while others are housing specific and run on a subscription model (for instance Kamernet, where you can check ads for free but replying to ads requires a subscription). These platforms usually offer higher protection against scammers.

Another option is hiring a rental agent to secure housing. This is a professional that helps you find accommodation for a fee, usually one month's rent.

To help you evaluate your options, here are the platforms that trainees successfully used in the past, based on the answers of the aforementioned survey.

Housing platforms used to find housing:



Note: Many people used more than one platform to find housing. WhatsApp and contacts or friends were other alternatives mentioned.

You will find many ads that list some eligibility criteria in order to apply.

- For example, sometimes only students from an accredited higher education institution are eligible. Although the traineeship is considered a learning programme, this is unfortunately not our case (unless you are a student at a Dutch university who is also doing a part-time traineeship).
- Another common criterion is to prove a gross salary of 2 or 3 times the rent. This can pose a challenge, as our stipend is not considered a salary, and lacks a gross monthly or yearly equivalent.
- Don't be startled if you see ads with phrases such as "sorry, no internationals". While Amsterdam is an international city, it is not uncommon for Dutch tenants to prefer other Dutch tenants.

.4. When and how should I start actively looking?

The housing market in Amsterdam moves fast, so while you should start looking early, one month to two weeks before the start of a rental period is the time where you will see a peak in housing ads. Therefore, don't be surprised if you find few relevant postings at this stage.

.5. Phase 2 – It's now time to actively search for housing.

About 2 months before your relocation to the Netherlands, it is time to start actively looking for housing.

How does the process of securing a housing viewing look like?

.6. Step 1: You find a housing posting.

- In this phase, you'll likely spend some time each day selecting and replying to suitable housing ads. It's a good idea to set alerts for the most common housing platforms listed above.
- Some people's rental contracts might start earlier than the traineeship start date. It is common to cover some extra weeks of rent to have housing secured by your start date.
- **Take a moment** to make sure that the post you're about to reply to is not a scam (especially on platforms like Facebook – see possible red flags in the section below).
- Many rooms are filled before reaching housing platforms through personal network. Instagram stories are a common way to post housing ads to reach friends of friends. Also, don't hesitate to team up with other trainees (this has worked well in a few cases in the past), and use any other contacts available to you.

Step 2: You get in touch with the person that posted.

- When replying to postings, it is generally expected to provide a short introduction about yourself. As many people reply to each posting, and landlords or current tenants want to make sure prospective tenants are a good fit, it is important to stand out. Generally, you should opt for an informative introduction message rather than simply asking if the accommodation is still available when reaching out.

- Don't: "Hi, is it still available?"
- Do: "Hi, my name is X, I am from X country, and I will be in Amsterdam for a traineeship at the EMA. I would describe myself as X. My previous housing experiences were X and as a tenant, I enjoy X. In my free time X. I would love to request a viewing of the place 😊"
- Be fast! Every posting you see might receive hundreds of responses in a matter of a few hours. Depending on the platform, if the post is up for more than a couple hours, your chances of securing a viewing are much lower.
- It's a good idea to prepare a template message like above and modify a few details to personalize it based on the ad (e.g. you might briefly mention how much you like the area of the posted apartment, etc). This can help in being rather quick but still have enough catchy details.
- However, in the hurry of replying, **never give out sensitive personal information**, such as date of birth, current address, bank details, etc.

Step 3: You wait for a response.

- This is the hardest step, as the demand for housing is high. Don't be surprised if many messages receive no response. Perseverance and calmness are key!
- Keep applying to other postings in the meantime. Don't put all your eggs in the same basket.

.7. Phase 3 – I have been invited to a viewing.

.8. After replying to ads, you might be invited for a viewing. Well done!

This is a common part of the rental process in the Netherlands. Whether you're moving into a shared flat or renting on your own, viewings are often as much about getting to know each other as they are about seeing the property. It's not only your opportunity to see your future potential place first-hand, but also a chance to show why you'd be a good fit for that place. Viewings can take place either in person (at the property itself) or online and may be conducted one-on-one or together with other candidates.

.9. What should I expect and how can I prepare?

- Be prepared to introduce yourself and answer a few questions about who you are, your interests, daily routine, or what you're looking for in a place to live. The aim is often to see whether you'd be a good match for the household. Think of it like a job interview, but most importantly, be yourself!
- Prepare any questions in advance. This is your opportunity to learn more about the property, your future housemates, house rules, expenses, or anything else that is important to you.
- Bring any requested documents with you. If the landlord or current tenants have asked you to provide specific documents during the viewing, make sure to have them readily available.
- Don't hesitate to seek support from fellow trainees. If you're unable to attend an in-person viewing, or would simply like advice, you can reach out to current trainees. They may be willing to attend on your behalf, share their experience, or help in other ways.

.10. Phase 4 – I have received a housing offer!

If you are the selected tenant, you secured housing. Congratulations!

What do I need to think about when accepting?

- Before accepting an offer, signing a contract, or transferring any money, make sure to review the red flags listed below and verify that the accommodation is legitimate.
- The Dutch rental market has specific rules and protections for tenants. *The Huurcommissie website* is a useful resource for understanding your rights and obligations.
- Some accommodations require municipal registration (*gemeentelijke inschrijving*). Make sure to check the registration conditions of your new accommodation and complete any necessary administrative steps after moving in.
- Some accommodations, on the other hand, might not offer the possibility for you to register at the municipality with that address. Consider if municipal registration is something important to

you (see the *Trainee Relocation Guide* for the services accessible with registration) before accepting and signing the contract.

.11. Red flags: beware of scams!

Keep an eye out for...

- Blurry, AI-generated or recycled photos or a general lack of details on the housing posting, or a mismatch between the location shown in the pictures and the address on Google Maps.
- An inability or refusal to arrange an in-person or online viewing before asking for payment (for instance, a landlord claiming to be abroad and therefore unable to show the property in person).
- A reluctance to provide a written rental contract.
- A landlord who requests excessive or sensitive personal information that is not relevant to the rental process.
- "Too good to be true" offers. If the rent, location, and conditions seem unusually attractive for the market, proceed with caution.
- Requests to transfer money before viewing the property or signing a contract, or through unusual payment methods, such as gift cards, cryptocurrency, or international money transfer services.
- Inconsistencies in the listing, contract, or communication (e.g., different names, addresses, or payment details).

3. Testimonials: our experiences

While the steps above give you an idea of the housing market in the Netherlands, there are many ways to find housing before your traineeship. Below, some current trainees share their stories.

.12. Elvira – Swedish - Trainee from March 2026.

How would you describe your housing situation?

Currently, I live in a shared apartment in Amsterdam with two roommates, around 15 minutes biking from the office. However, I have moved twice since the start of my traineeship, and have also lived in a shared house with 5 roommates.

How did you find your accommodation?

I found my first room through a Facebook post prior to relocating to the Netherlands, and attended a virtual viewing. The second room was also found through Facebook, but for this I attended a "hospi" (a physical viewing where a couple of potential candidates meet with the current roommates). I found my third room through contacts.

Do you have any tips for future trainees?

Make sure to create a good introduction of yourself when replying to postings! I find that many people here value a prospective roommate being "a good match" for the house, and therefore want to know about you as a person before a potential meeting. Furthermore, don't worry too much if you are only able to find short term housing – while moving during the traineeship is not ideal, it is quite common in Amsterdam, both among internationals and Dutch.

.13. Fulvia – Italian - Trainee from October 2025.

How would you describe your housing situation?

Currently, I live in an apartment that I share with another trainee of my cohort. It is on the outskirts of Amsterdam, so it is not a picturesque neighbourhood that people expect when thinking of Amsterdam, but it has everything needed and, most importantly, it is very well connected by metro to the Agency.

How did you find your accommodation?

When looking for housing, I thought of teaming up with another trainee I had met via the WhatsApp group, so we opened our searches for apartments to rent with 2 rooms. Luckily, the other trainee found the apartment ad on Kamernet, and the landlord invited us for a viewing. I had the chance to go to the viewing in person, which perhaps helped a little bit.

Do you have any tips for future trainees?

My first tip would be, don't panic! When I started searching for housing and realised it was much tougher than I had expected, I panicked a great deal, and I spent entire days refreshing Facebook pages, leading to no good outcomes. Make use of the trainee network already, even if you haven't met yet! Ask for others (previous or incoming trainees) who are in Amsterdam already to go to your viewings if you can't, ask for advice if a housing website or ad is legitimate, and team up! Also, feel free to ask your mentor for help as well, for example by asking around.

.14. Giulia – Italian - Trainee from March 2026.**How would you describe your housing situation?**

I live in a room converted into a small independent studio in Oost. The location is good as it's pretty close to the more central areas of Amsterdam but pretty far from the EMA. It takes me around 30 minutes of biking each way – at first it was a bit tough, but I got used to it pretty fast!

How did you find your accommodation?

I followed the advice of a friend who lived in Amsterdam and posted on Facebook a post about me, and what I was looking for in an accommodation. Luckily my current landlady replied to my post, and so my search ended there.

Do you have any tips for future trainees?

Don't be afraid of exposure and use your network. Spam yourself everywhere! You never know who your future flatmate/landlord might contact you from. Also, don't be afraid to contact current trainees for advice and guidance – and for help with attending in person viewings.

Carlo – Italian – Trainee from October 2025.**How would you describe your housing situation?**

I live in Zuidas, in a modern two-bedroom apartment that I share with a flatmate. My room is slightly above the average price for Amsterdam (€1,100 per month, plus yearly water and waste taxes), but considering the location, I really cannot complain. The office is only a 15-minute walk or a 3-minute bike ride away.

Being so close to the office has definitely made my experience much better. It has encouraged me to go into the office as often as possible, which helped me settle in quickly, meet colleagues, and make the most of the traineeship experience.

How did you find your accommodation?

I found my accommodation through Kamernet. I was regularly browsing listings and, as soon as I found the advertisement for my current room, I purchased a monthly subscription to be able to contact my current flatmate, who is also the primary tenant of the apartment.

The subscription costs around €40–50 per month. Although I had never paid for this kind of service before, I found it worthwhile. In my experience, Kamernet felt more reliable than Facebook and made the search process much easier and more structured.

Do you have any tips for future trainees?

I was fortunate enough to find accommodation quite easily, so I know that not everyone will have the same experience. However, one thing I learned is that many trainees and colleagues end up changing rooms or apartments after arriving in Amsterdam, often for a variety of reasons.

My advice would be not to put too much pressure on yourself to find the "perfect" place before your traineeship starts. Securing a room that allows you to arrive on time and begin your traineeship is already a great first step. Once you are here, networking with other trainees and colleagues can open up many more housing opportunities. Additionally, being physically present in Amsterdam makes it much easier to attend viewings and verify that listings are legitimate.

Giovanni – Italian – Trainee from October 2025.**How would you describe your housing situation?**

For the whole period of my traineeship, I lived in a single room in a shared apartment with other 3 people (2 of which trainees) in Amsterdam West. It's about 7km away from EMA, and you can comfortably reach the office in 30min either by bike or by public transport. I have lived in a shared apartment before, so sharing a single bathroom (split as typical in Dutch homes) was not hard!

How did you find your accommodation?

While I was actively searching using Kamernet, Facebook and other websites, a trainee reached out in the group chat saying that in the apartment she was going to, a room was still available. After a "selection" chat with the other flatmates I started living there.

Do you have any tips for future trainees?

The search for an affordable place will be hard. Acknowledge it and equip yourself with a lot of patience. You cannot predict when you are going to close an opportunity so continue scanning for opportunities, reach out in Facebook groups and people you know to land a place. It might not be the ideal place, but your priority is to have a roof over your head in the city. Consider also paying an additional month of rent (e.g. if you are starting in October, paying September), as being sure to have a place in October is well worth that money. Consider also that some agents make you pay a month of rent extra to them if you help you in the process. Don't see other trainees as competitions, but as colleagues and future friends. Help each other and team up to find a place to everyone. It will be a great strategy and you will have a great time!

Gary – Spanish - Trainee from October 2025.**How would you describe your housing situation?**

I live in a tiny room on the 3rd floor of a family house (a mom and two kids), with one more roommate, with whom I share the toilet and the corridor. There is a fridge, washing machine, dryer and a microwave, but I have no access to a kitchen. It takes me about 50 minutes by public transport to arrive at the EMA.

How did you find your accommodation?

After having no success through Kamernet, I went through national expat groups in Facebook.

Do you have any tips for future trainees?

Consider connecting with expats from your home country. It might increase your chances of securing housing based on your shared nationality, culture, background and a sense of familiarity.