Text: Sanne Tummers
Photos: Joris Hilterman

# Living and working at PITground in Sittard

Living in Sittard and studying in Maastricht, Eindhoven or even Tilburg or Leiden. A few years ago, this was hard to imagine, but nowadays it is increasingly common. Sometimes out of necessity, but often also as a conscious choice. The rise of more creative places to live outside the traditional student cities makes it more attractive for students to broaden their search for a nice place to live. PITground, behind the railway station in Sittard, is [**one such place**](https://www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/news/studios-sittard-um-students).

About PITground:
PITground offers a combination of working, living and socialising in one location. The name says it all: 'PIT' refers to a central place where everything comes together and beautiful things can grow and flourish. Housed in the former DSM offices, PITground consists of different parts: the Workground with offices for various companies, the Spareground with a restaurant, gym and meeting rooms and the Stayground with 221 student studios and 49 expat flats.

### **Luca Schoutrop, General Manager PITground Sittard:**

‘I have been involved in this concept from the very beginning. You can now see that what we envisaged is growing and growing. For example, a special mix of Dutch and international students now live in the Stayground tower. This diversity makes for interesting connections. Students, entrepreneurs and the companies located here are increasingly able to find each other. Entrepreneurs among themselves, but you also see more and more companies working with the students who live here. We try to encourage this by organising activities. Next week, for instance, there will be an Internationals Meet Recruiters Day to bring students and professionals into contact with each other. This can certainly expand further, but it is already working.’

### **Matt Flipse, Region Manager Holland2Stay:**

‘We have several sites under our management, but this place is unique because of the combination of living, working and recreation. You don't see that very often. It is also centrally located, close to the railway station where you can easily travel to Maastricht or Eindhoven and beyond. This is also reflected in the mix of students living here. They come from Maastricht University, TU Eindhoven and other universities all over the country. Students from Zuyd University of Applied Sciences and vocational schools in the area also live here. Students today look for housing in a very different way. Often because of the current housing shortage, but not only that; things like amenities and quality of life are being considered more. The distance to university and a city centre does not always play an important role.’

### **Ahmed (22) from Oman, student at TU Eindhoven:**

‘There are students living here who travel three hours to get to their university. Then the 40 minutes to Eindhoven for me is really not so bad. If you want to study somewhere, you have to make the effort. I'm from Oman and I'm used to it. The nice thing about this place is that you have your own facilities. In Eindhoven, I had to share a kitchen and bathroom with five others. That's not for me. Here it's nice and quiet, and I can visit the hustle and bustle of the city if I want to.’

### **Jennifer Dormans, Property Manager PITground Sittard:**

‘What really appeals to students is that you have a place to yourself here. All the studios are rented out fully furnished with their own kitchen and bathroom. You can just come here with a suitcase. Especially international students experience this as a plus. In addition, the rental contract and management go through a large reputable organisation, so no hassle with vague contracts and things like that. Just clear and straightforward information on what you get, and for international students also easy to arrange remotely.’

### **Baltasar Santos (22) from Portugal, recent graduate in Biobased Materials at Maastricht University:**

‘For my girlfriend and me, this place is ideal. She has an internship at the Zuyderland hospital near here and my faculty is based at the Chemelot Campus in Sittard/Geleen. In good weather, we can just bike there. We are especially happy to have our own place here with our own facilities. We share a studio and that works fine. Do we miss student life in the city? No, fifteen minutes by train and we're in Maastricht. There are big cities where you have to travel longer just to go to a party!’

*In text box:*
Smart solutions in tackling housing shortages

As in many other university cities in the Netherlands, it is often very difficult for students in Maastricht to find housing. Together with the municipality, province and other partners, Maastricht University focuses on creative and innovative solutions inside, and certainly also outside, Maastricht in order to help every student find a home. In this series, we would like to take you along to some of these places and talk to residents and others involved about their experiences at that location. This edition: PITground in Sittard.