

New Year Speech 2016

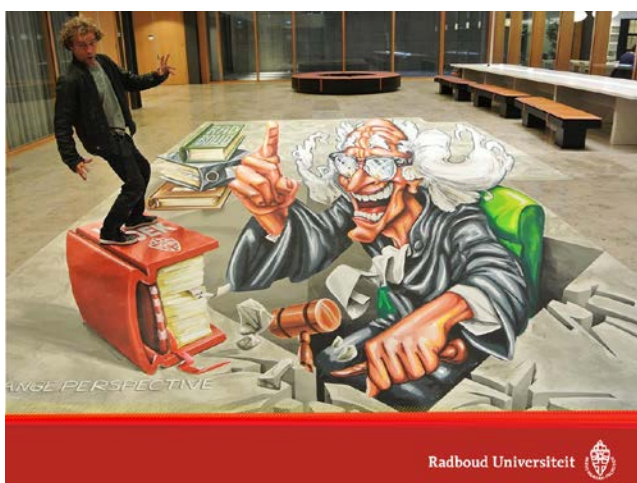
Ladies and gentlemen, members of the Board of the Stichting Katholieke Universiteit, members of the Executive Committee of Radboud university medical center, colleagues and students, dear Radboudians,

On behalf of myself and Wilma de Koning, I would like to welcome you today and wish you all a happy, inspiring and prosperous 2016. I would also like to make use of this opportunity to thank you for your commitment to Radboud University over the past year, and to invite you to start thinking of a specific colleague whom you would like to thank personally for what he or she has meant to you in 2015. I will come back to this in a moment.

If you attended this gathering last year you may be somewhat disappointed by the absence of the Radboud Bicycle or some other, more futuristic, form of transportation. I understand your disappointment, but I can assure you that today too, we will have the opportunity to reflect on the past year, to take a look at the year ahead, and to award the Hermesdorf Prizes. Wilma de Koning will be responsible for that part of the programme.

Looking back at 2015

A year ago we launched a new [strategic plan](#) for our university entitled *Change Perspective*. If you dare to look at the world from a variety of perspectives, you gain new insights and a more accurate view of reality. This idea has resulted in a number of beautiful 3-D images appearing around our campus, such as these, by artist Remko van Schaik in the Grotius building.



A month later, we were invited to admire the artistry of cabaret performers, dancers and musicians in many a Nijmegen student room, in the context of the Stukafest festival. Over the past fifteen years this Nijmegen invention, a 'student room' festival, has grown into a major cultural event in Nijmegen, and it has by now been replicated in no less than thirteen other university cities across the Netherlands. Lots of good things come from Nijmegen, as we all know.

Also in February, three researchers from our university and Radboud university medical center were awarded a VICI grant, the most substantial grant within the NWO Innovational Research Incentives Scheme: Roshan Cools, Asli Özyürek and Joris Veltman.

In May 2015, eleven of our researchers secured a VIDI grant, a truly remarkable performance, as was the fact that in July 2015 no less than twenty VENI grants were awarded to Radboud researchers. The importance of the NWO Innovational Research Incentives Schemes for scientific research in Nijmegen is well illustrated in this overview of the VENI, VIDI and VICI grants awarded over the last eight years.

Overzicht Veni, Vidi, Vici

Veni, Vidi, Vici	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Veni (totaal NL Universiteiten)	112	137	148	141	143	149	134	146
Radboud Universiteit	11	14	8	18	20	19	18	20
Percentage van NL universiteiten	9,8%	10,2%	5,4%	12,8%	14,0%	12,8%	13,5%	13,7%
Vidi (totaal NL universiteiten)	69	81	75	geen	86	80	80	84
Radboud Universiteit	10	8	10	Vidi	7	10	6	11
Percentage van NL universiteiten	14,5%	9,9%	13,3%	ronde	8,1%	12,5%	7,5%	13,1%
Vici (totaal NL universiteiten)	25	geen	27	28	24	23	26	33
Radboud Universiteit	1	Vici	3	3	4	5	2	3
Percentage van NL universiteiten	3,8%	ronde	10,0%	9,7%	14,3%	17,9%	7,1%	9,1%

The past year has witnessed a flood of media reports on the apparent problems between university executive boards and participational bodies. Even though these problems focused primarily on one particular university in the west of the country and were to a large extent specific to that university, I have to admit that in this discussion the lack of support and a clear stance on the part of our Minister was very disappointing.

On 2 March, during our hundredth meeting, Bernadette Smelik, President of the Works Council, offered her perspective on the functioning of our participational bodies. I quote: "Of course our views often differ – a quick look through the reports will tell you as much. But we know how to discuss things, how to exchange opinions, and how to listen to one another." End of quote. This hundredth meeting was concluded with some cake, most of which is hidden from view behind the Secretary of the Executive Board.

In March, as part of the *Career Week*, we organised a *Coach Café XL*. No fewer than eighty coaches, many of them alumni of our university, offered students and staff members free advice regarding their future: a future that thanks to the recovering economy is once again looking positive even for young academics.

Alumnus Charles Smit, Vice-President of *NXP Semiconductors* opened the session, shortly after what he himself referred to as the most important moment in his career. Following a few sleepless nights and with adrenalin still coursing through his veins, he told us that NXP had just taken over the former chip division of Motorola for a total amount of €10.7 billion.

Charles Smit is also involved with Radboud University in his function as member of our new Radboud Alumni Board, created to support and strengthen the university's alumni policy. He is in good company, among others with Euro Commissioner Frans Timmermans, whom I recently invited to Nijmegen on the occasion of a match played by his favourite club. As it turned out, he did not require much convincing: all Roda JC matches are listed in his agenda, and he was already planning to come to Nijmegen on 1 May to attend the NEC-Roda JC match.

When sponsors and universities discover that they have a common cause, beautiful things happen. One such example was the crowd-funding action of Johan Oosterman, which allowed him within a month to collect the €25,000 he required for the restoration of the medieval prayer book of Duchess Mary of Guelders, thus making this unique but badly damaged book available to the public once more. Incidentally, this action resulted not only

in a substantial sum of money but, more importantly, the demonstrable commitment of 300 sponsors.

Another such example was the generous donation of Ms Trudie Rigter, our guest at today's gathering, which enabled Professor of Artificial Intelligence Peter Desain to develop an app that allows children, immigrants and patients suffering from language disorders to practise creating grammatically correct Dutch sentences in a fun way.

Radboud University will in future be making increasing use of such fundraising opportunities. I would also like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank our sponsors, and to promise them that we will continue to inform them about the projects they are helping us to develop.

Staff members can also be generous, as was clear from the great success of the 'oliebol' campaign. This campaign allowed the Nijmegen Alphons Diepenbrock Student Choir to give a concert in the St. Steven's Church in March.

In April, no fewer than nine Radboud University and Radboud university medical center staff members and former staff members were awarded a royal distinction by the Mayor of their city for their exceptional contribution to science and society. Among them was Sijbrand de Jong and who to our great pride was to appear extensively in the news in September for being elected 22nd president of the CERN Council.

A few days after the award of these distinctions, the *European Research Council* announced that Huub Op den Camp, recently appointed Professor of Ecological Microbiology, was to be awarded an Advanced Grant for his research on bacteria living in extreme ecosystems. He and his colleagues will be using this grant money to investigate three volcanic sources in Italy in order to better map their inhabitants and discover new 'acid-loving' bacteria.

Other Radboud University researchers who also successfully applied for ERC grants in 2015 were Alexandra da Silva, Floris de Lange, Martijn Koster and Martijn Verdoes with a Starting Grant (of approximately €1.5 million) and Isabella Granic, Erno Hermans and Alicia Montoya with a Consolidator Grant (of approximately €2 million).

In May we heard that in the years to come, the international police organisation Interpol would be using Nijmegen software to help them identify victims of major disasters. This software – entitled Bonaparte – was

developed by the Radboud spin-off Smart Research in collaboration with the Dutch Forensic Institute. Bonaparte can calculate with astonishing speed the odds of a relation between the DNA profiles of victims and their relatives. The software was named Bonaparte because it gives back to unidentified victims their names – just as Napoleon once upon a time gave every one of his subjects a surname.

On our campus, the first week of June was renamed Radboud Happiness, and staff members and students were invited to think about happiness. Where to find it? How to share it? And how to make yourself happy? Numerous activities were organised, such as a mass breakfast, workshops entitled 'laughter' and 'happy to knit', and lectures and theatre performances. You could also retire to the garden of the student church for a welcome break from all this activity.

On 10 June, Princess Laurentien planted this *Tree of Language*, thus opening the new wing of the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, a brand-new building that will further strengthen the Institute's leading position as a multidisciplinary language and speech institute. We are very happy to be able to share our green campus not only with Radboud university medical center, but also with the Max Planck Institute.

In June, the new KNAW President José van Dijck officially opened the Radboud Excellence Initiative. With the support of the Reinier Post Fund, we are now able to offer young talented researchers and renowned top scientists the opportunity to spend some time in Nijmegen and work together with our best researchers. In the context of this programme, there are currently twenty-four researchers from thirteen different countries active on our campus. José van Dijck made it clear that this exchange model deserves to be followed and she commended the way Radboud University breaks open borders between countries and disciplines.

Radboud University is well represented in national and international research associations. This past year the Academia Europaea appointed Barbara Franke, Mihai Netea and Peer Scheepers as its members. Furthermore Mirjam Ernestus, Janneke Gerards and Renate Loll were invited to join the KNAW.

For a meeting with international colleagues, an excellent cup of coffee, or a bit of relaxation, there is no place like the Global Lounge that opened its doors on 14 July in the Thomas van Aquinostraat, opposite the Cultuurcafé. This is also the place where our international colleagues can go for answers

to questions about such matters as healthcare expenses, public transport or housing, and many events are organised there. What's more, thanks to Roelants booksellers, you can always purchase a good book in the adjoining room.

The twentieth floor of the Erasmus building, now open to the public, offers a stunning view of the city and the countryside surrounding our university, a view that has been further improved thanks to a raised floor that makes it possible to look over the parapet.

During the Four Day Marches, the statue of the muse of art in the garden of the Heyndael House lost her head and her hand. Luckily the missing pieces of this artwork by Egidius Everaerts were found on the lawn, and we were able to restore the statue. By the end of August, the muse was once again presentable, having recovered both her hand and her head.

Sometimes research produces results that may not be very appealing, but that nevertheless carry great weight. For example, a recent Science publication revealed that less than 50% of the psychological studies that appeared in three important journals over the course of 2008 were replicable. Radboud University Psychologist Fred Hasselman was one of the Dutch co-authors of this publication in Science. These are certainly worrying figures, and yet such studies are a testimony to the self-cleansing ability of science, an ability that plays an essential role in our profession. Which does not make it easy or self-evident: in fact, we have a duty to keep each other sharp in the research workplace when it comes to conducting sound and honest research, and we have to keep holding up a mirror to one other. I would like to invite you to continue to raise this topic with your colleagues, also in 2016.

Last August, following an extensive legal procedure and the deletion of a single sentence, the article by Roel Verdult, Flavio Garcia and Baris Ege could finally be presented at a prestigious *Security Symposium* in Washington. This article describes the weaknesses of the *Megamos chip*, used in Volkswagen engine immobilizers. In 2013, following a petition by Volkswagen, an English judge had forbidden the publication of this article. Little did the car manufacturer know at the time that much more serious charges would be levelled against it in 2015, and that 'sjoemelsoftware' (tinker software) would be chosen as the 2015 Dutch word of the year.

In August, former Rector Theo van Els passed away. Famed for his modesty and service-minded attitude, as well as a real eye for the human dimension,

he was Professor of Applied Linguistics and Rector of Radboud University from 1994 until 2000.

Radboud University is the only university in the Netherlands that offers new students a joint weekend away during the introductory period. Here you can see a photograph of the popular 'Braadt es nicht dan schaad es nicht', weekend, which has been the most popular weekend for years now, with the highest score of 8.8. You can see here why this is the case. Incidentally, this year, for the first time and at the students' request, the introductory period was officially opened with a service in the Student Church.



In September, Nijmegen made all the news bulletins with the announcement that Heumensoord was to serve as a temporary refugee centre for three thousand refugees. Shortly thereafter, university magazine VOX published a special edition about our new neighbours, an edition that made it to the Radio 1 News. As a university, we wished to make an appropriate and meaningful contribution to helping refugees. A kitchen was created on campus that currently heats up 3000 meals a day, refugees are welcome to make use of our sports facilities in off-peak hours, and Radboud

In'to Languages is offering them free language courses. It is heart-warming to see how many students and staff members have spontaneously reported to the *Radboud Refugee Support Centre* responsible for coordinating refugee-related activities....

The influx of refugees to Europe has determined the news during the last year, and is testing and challenging the heart and soul of Europe. The German chancellor Angela Merkel, an honorary doctor of our university, made the clear statement to be welcoming and to be unafraid, in the firm belief that great civilizations build bridges, not walls. For asking more of her country than most politicians would dare, for standing firm against tyranny as well as expedience and for providing steadfast leadership in a world where it is in short supply, she – heralded as the Chancellor of the Free World – was elected as *Person of the Year* by Time magazine. To underline the support that the Radboud University is willing to give to the refugees and to better understand and appreciate the situation that the refugees are in, we considered it appropriate to give the floor here today to one of them, to tell us his own story. I would hereby like to introduce you, and call to the floor, one of our new neighbours. His name is Wáel Alsijak, he comes from Syria and he has kindly agreed to share his experience with us.

In October, linguists Mark Dingemanse, Francisco Torreira, and Nick Enfield were awarded an Ig Nobel Prize for their study on misunderstanding in communication and their discovery that ‘Huh?’ is a universal word that sounds more or less the same in all countries across the world. This prestigious prize is awarded every year to research that first makes people laugh and then think. Our linguists made an impression with their acceptance speech in the form of the following video. Make sure you are paying attention: this is the shortest [Ig Nobel acceptance speech](#) ever.

On Friday 30 October, Secretary of State Dekker opened two large research facilities on our campus: the renewed testing ground and the FELIX laser lab. You can see him here in dialogue with photographer Diana Scherer who published artistic photographs of roots – also known as the brain of the plant – in the Volkskrant on the very same day.



On 2 November, staff members and students enjoyed the sweetness of two thousand 'stroopwafels' as we jointly celebrated the fact that the university information guide *Keuzegids Universiteiten* had once again named Radboud University the best comprehensive, traditional university in the Netherlands, primarily on the basis of student opinion as expressed in the national student survey. This is clearly no coincidence, as evidenced by the fact that we have been awarded this title for the fifth consecutive year.

In total, five of our study programmes were awarded the distinction 'Top programme' and twelve of our Bachelor's programmes were assessed by the *Keuzegids* as best within their field.

Partially on our initiative, from 4 to 8 November, a science film festival took place in the Lux theatre. The best science films from the Netherlands and abroad were shown in an attempt to make the general public enthusiastic about the wondrous world of science. With 6,000 visitors and a great deal of national publicity, this film festival far exceeded any expectations. The second edition of the festival is planned for next year. Since no other Dutch university city has ever come up with the idea of organising such a festival,

it is as of now a uniquely Nijmegen event, and one that we can all be proud of.

Chairs played an important role at Radboud University over the past year. There was, for example, the massage chair in the beautifully refurbished university library, the first in the history of the VOX section *Ranking the RU* to be awarded a score of five stars. For the modest sum of €1, you can get a lovely relaxing massage.

When the Executive Board asked the University Student Council to come up with an idea on what to do with the excess printing money, they suggested introducing rocking chairs on campus. In the coming year, five such chairs will be purchased.

Then there is the new vestibular chair of the Donders Institute. It makes it possible to perform eye measurements on test subjects rotating around mutually orthogonal axes, in order to find out how we process movement. External companies will also be able make use of this unique research facility offered by our campus in the context of the *Radboud Research Facilities*.

Finally, the Executive Board received this cheap €50 chair as a gift from Funs Elbers, currently member of our University Student Council, but despite a successful try-out, on 1 December, our Rector, Theo Engelen, decided for personal reasons to exchange this plush version for something better. Incidentally not before he had made sure that the chain of office that was still missing two of the seven faculty medallions had been completed. The Board of the Stichting Katholieke Universiteit is making every effort to announce the name of our new Rector as soon as possible.

November brought bad news for the ITS staff: the Executive Board was forced to act on its decision to dismantle the unit. ITS is a market-oriented unit that for the past fifty years has performed policy research commissioned by ministries, municipalities and companies. Although it has a sound reputation, it has unfortunately also been facing consistently disappointing financial results as a consequence of the declining market and decreasing rates. The positions of its 70-person staff have therefore been discontinued. It goes without saying that we will do our utmost best to avoid redundancies, but we cannot as yet make any promises in this respect.

Nearly twelve thousand questions, summarised in 140 cluster questions and divided over 16 exemplary routes: that was the result of the call to Dutch citizens to ask science questions. The Dutch research agenda is currently in the hands of Bussemaker and Dekker – and this can be dangerous. We firmly believe in the importance of recognising and supporting the full width of the unique Dutch research landscape, and the 140 questions provide a sufficient basis for doing so. Trying to control this further by focusing exclusively on the exemplary routes, or worse still, by attempting to make a further selection from these, would represent an incredible impoverishment.

PhD candidate of Communication and Information Studies Kobie van Krieken, had more than one reason for considering 2015 to be an exceptional year. In December, she was awarded one of ten Frye Grants for promising female PhD candidate, and earlier this year she made her world debut on stage in the company of none other than Bono. These photographs travelled all around the world.

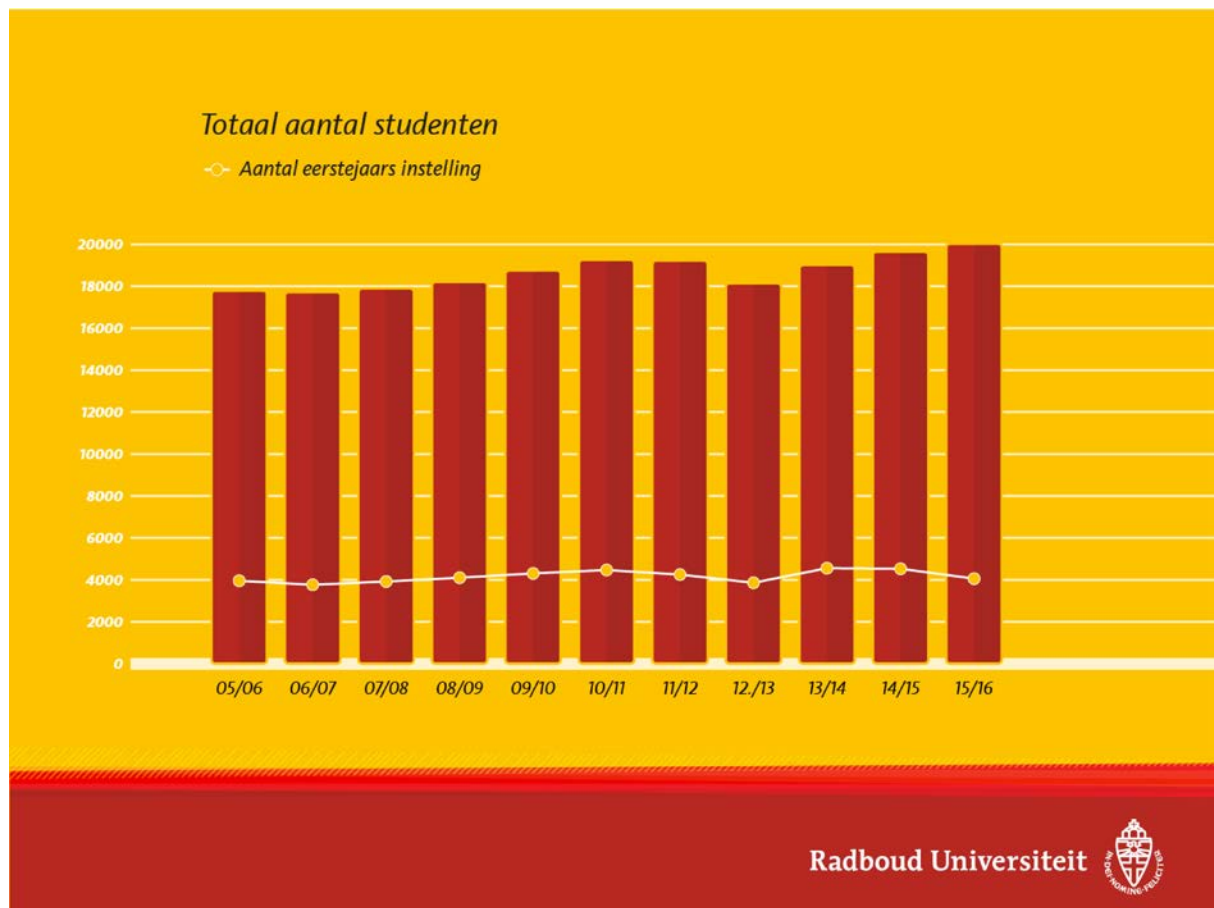
Pim van Zanen, head of the Marketing and Communications Department, responded thus on *Facebook* alert: *Where is that Radboud hoodie when you need it?* This is why I would like hereby to offer Kobie this gift. You can unpack it now.

Although it did not look that way for a long time, just before Christmas, we found out that our scientists will continue for the next three years to have access to the newest scientific articles in the Elsevier journal collection. It was essential for VSNU to link the agreements reached on the subscription fees of the entire Elsevier collection, the so-called Big Deal, to clear agreements regarding Open Access publication, a link that Elsevier refused to make for a long time. In October, Radboud Reflects – the new name of the former Soeterbeeck Programme and the Centre for Ethics – organised a well-attended debate on the topic, a debate of which this photograph offers an impression. The agreement with Elsevier specifies that by 2016, ten percent of all articles by Dutch authors in Elsevier publications will be freely available to all, and that this figure will increase to twenty and thirty percent in 2017 and 2018, respectively. This will be achieved by making journals in specific fields Open Access for all Dutch authors; the list with these journals will soon be announced. This model is new, and what is also new is that scientists are not required to pay any additional fees for these Open Access publications. For the specialists among you: the APCs that are traditionally paid by the authors are now covered for the hybrid Gold Open Access publications in the Big Deal, which makes this agreement with

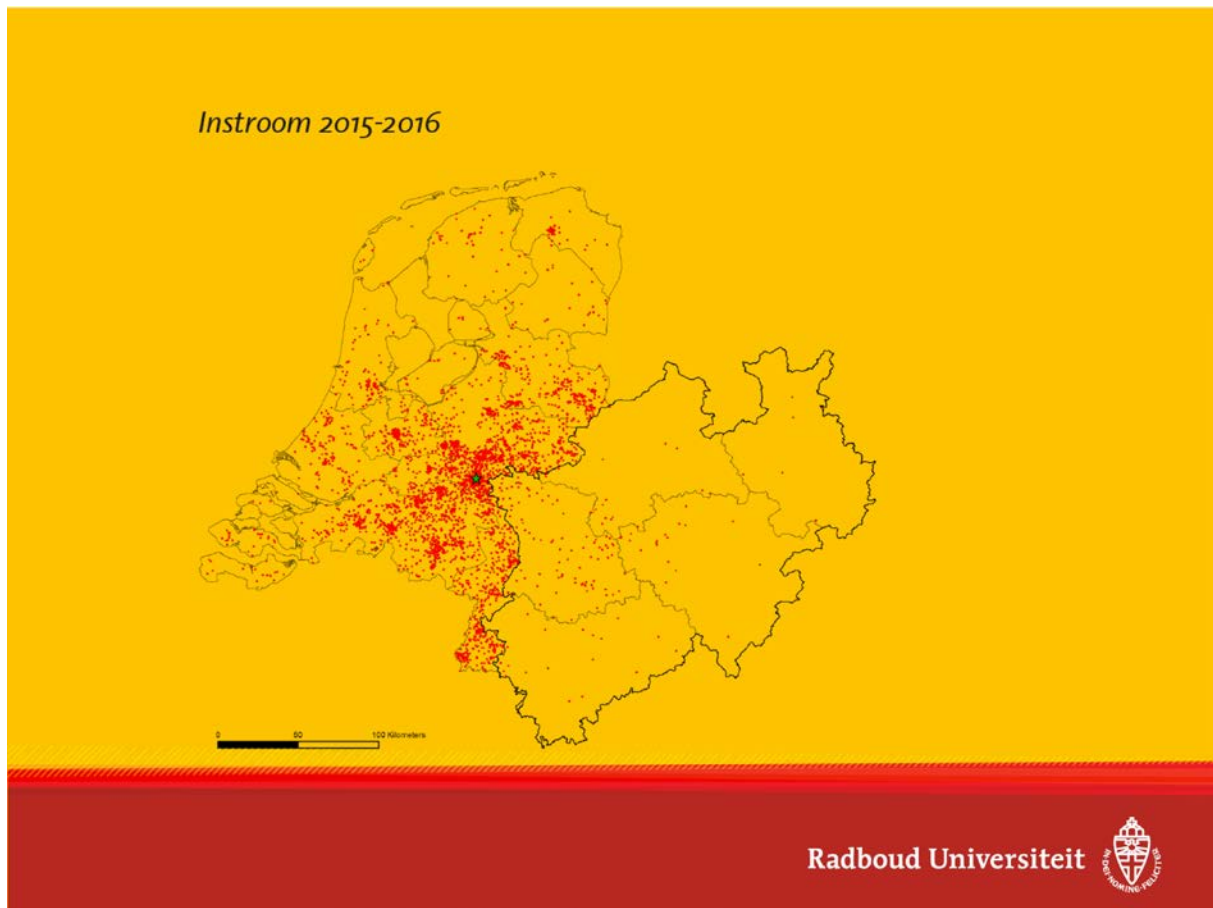
Elsevier into a partial 'APC Big Deal', the very first of its kind. And although I would have loved to achieve even more in the course of our eighteen month-long negotiations with Elsevier, this is an agreement that is good for Dutch science and that we have good reason to be happy with. I would hereby like to particularly thank all the researchers who have made this result possible by expressing their explicit support for the efforts made by VSNU in these negotiations.

In the last week of the past year, Bas Bloem made the world news. While a stiff walk using only one arm is generally one of the first symptoms of Parkinson's disease, President Putin probably owns his remarkable gait to his pistol training with the KGB. KGB trainees are instructed to keep their right hand close to their pistol, so as not to waste precious time should an enemy suddenly appear. Incidentally, it turns out that John Wayne and other famous cowboys in classical Westerns also refrain from waving their arms when walking. This deluge of media attention would clearly make Bas Bloem a good candidate for the 2016 Hermesdorf Prize 2016, were it not for the fact that he is at present still a member of the jury for this Prize, a problem that we will be happy to solve for him.

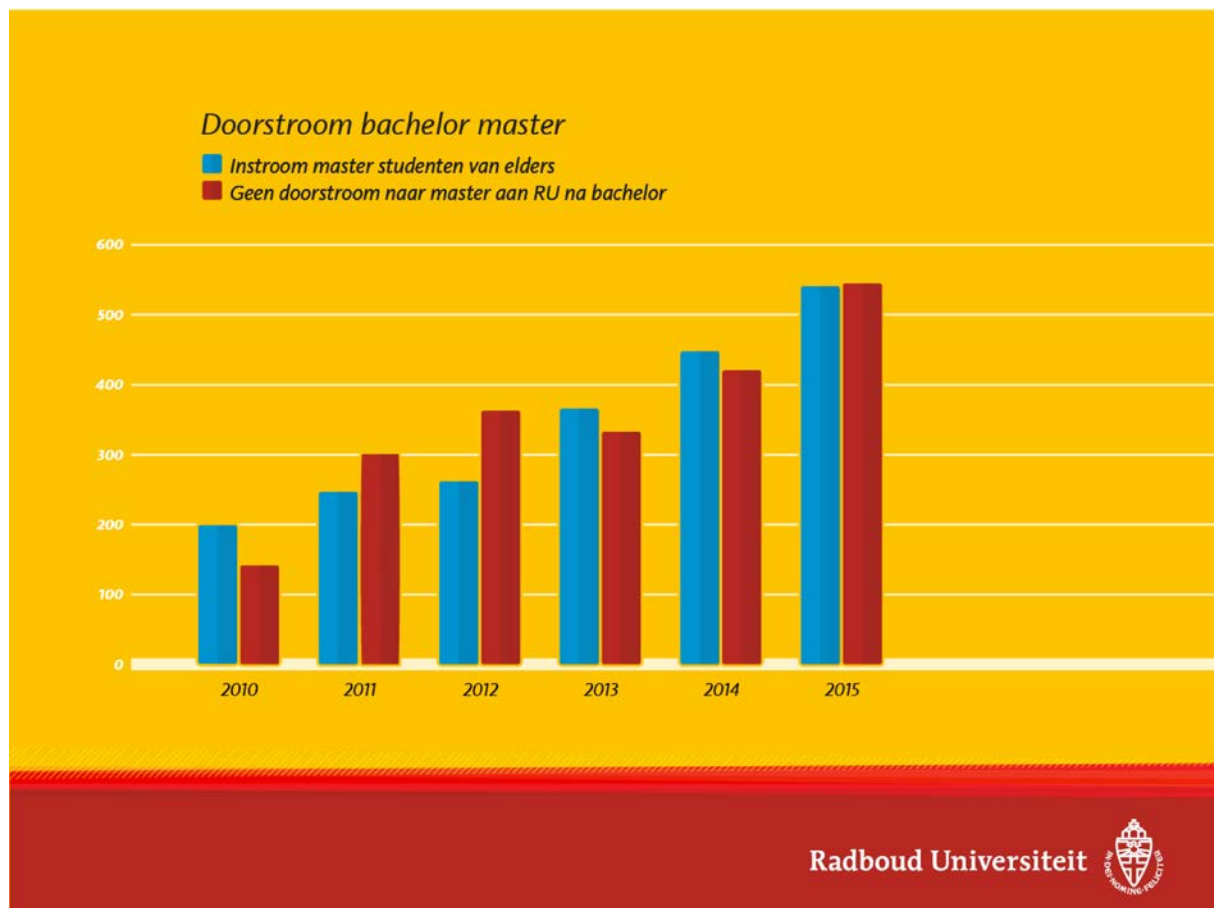
2015 in figures and prospects for 2016



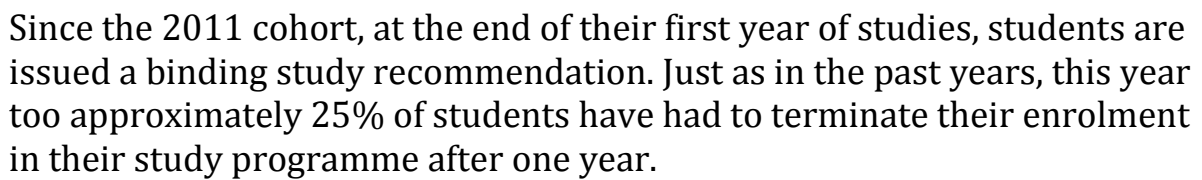
As of 1 October, Radboud University is home to a total of 19,904 students – including the more than 600 students who pay tuition fees elsewhere, a group that we will cease to include in our total as of now. Although we have more students than ever, the number of students at Radboud University has nevertheless remained fairly constant over the years, as we will see shortly.



And this is where they come from: every red dot represents one student. The number of first-year students this academic year is 4,000. They are the first cohort to make use of the new study finance system that Minister Bussemaker presented during our Open Day in March. We have some reason to be concerned about the student inflow at the Faculty of Arts, which has dropped sharply. The Faculty is doing its utmost best to turn the tide, among other things with a national campaign entitled 'Ontdek!' (Discover!)

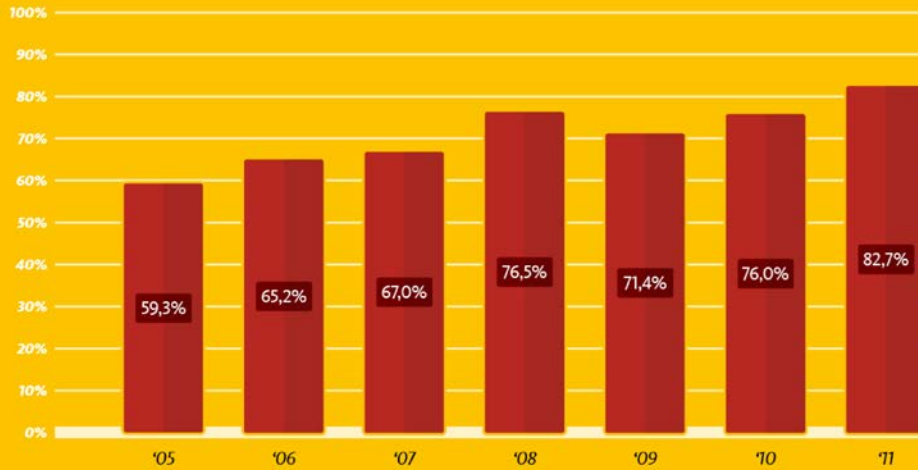


It is no longer self-evident that students completing a Bachelor's programme automatically go on to follow a Master's programme at the same university. An increasing number of students from other universities are registering for Master's programmes at Radboud University. In the past year this applied to a total of 541 students. On the other hand, a similar number of our students have decided to continue their education elsewhere; to be precise, we have lost four students more than we gained. Three years ago, our net outflow of students was distinctly more worrying.



Bachelorrendement na 4 jaar

(van heringeschrevenen na een jaar, bron: 1CHO; cohort 2011 bron: Osiris)



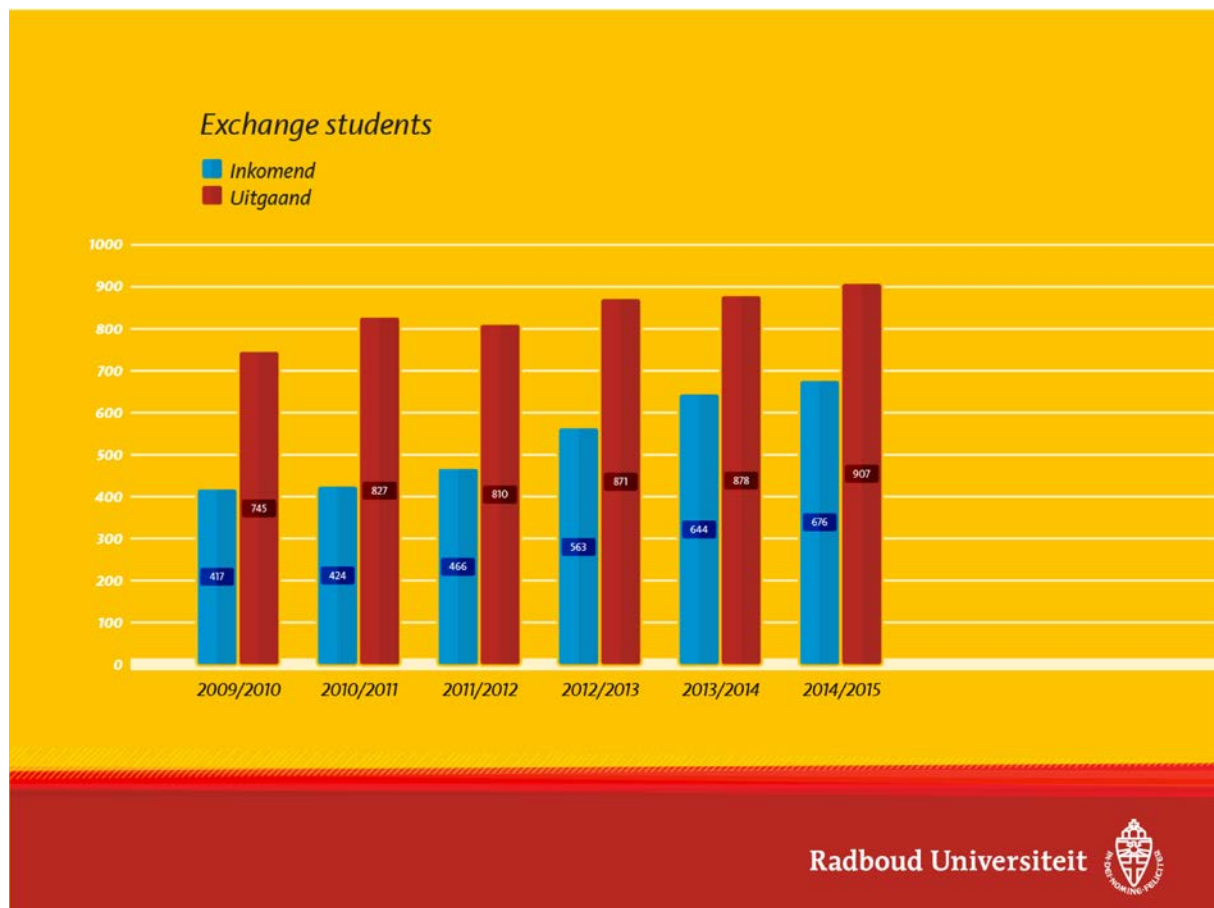
Radboud Universiteit



Of the students who re-enrol after the first year, an increasing percentage goes on to successfully complete the study programme. Of the 2011 cohort, i.e. the first cohort that was issued a binding study recommendation, 82% of students managed to complete their Bachelor's programme within four years, while a year ago this figure was 76%.

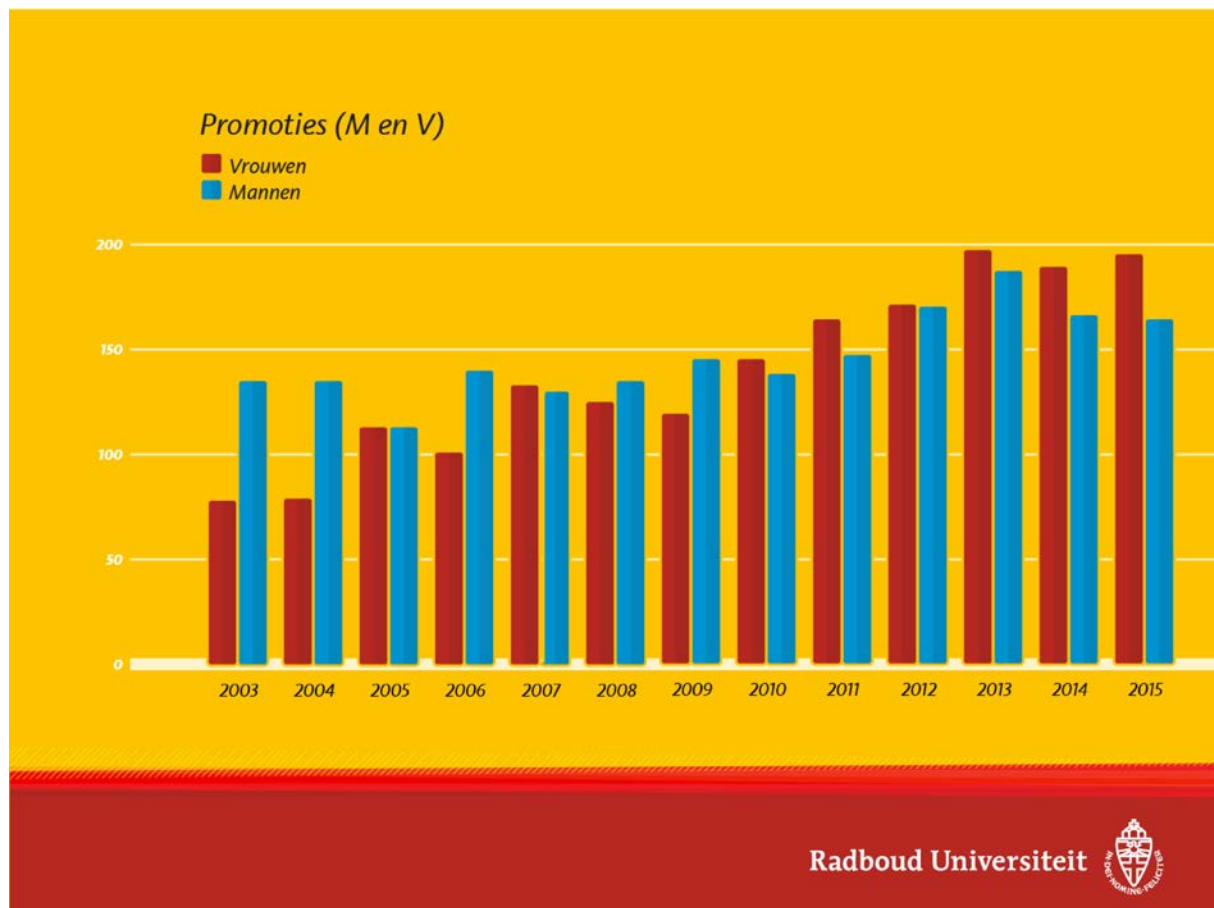
In the coming academic year we will be raising the norm for a positive binding study recommendation up to three-quarters of the total study credits, up to a corridor of 42 to 45 ECTS to be precise. This is a logical step since these students will in any case be on track to complete the three-year Bachelor's programme within four years.

The number of Bachelor's diplomas awarded in 2014/2015 was 2720, which is slightly higher than in 2013/2014 (2668).



This graph shows the continuous increase in the number of incoming and outgoing exchange students over the past years. Their number must however increase faster if we are to realise one of our internationalisation objectives: our goal is that by 2018, half of our students will complete part of their study credits abroad.

According to the October figures, there are currently 1700 students of non-Dutch nationality studying at our university. Most EU students come from Germany, and most non-EU students from Brazil.



There were 359 PhD defences this year, four more than in 2014. This overview also shows that since 2010, the number of women defending their PhD at Radboud University has grown steadily every year.

In our current Strategic Plan, one of our ambitions is that by 2020, one quarter of our professors will be women. At present, 22% of our professors are female, not counting professors by special appointment. This is a clear improvement on last year, partially thanks to the recent appointment of eight new female professors. Compared to other universities, we are doing well in this respect. Last November, the Monitor Female Professors reported that together with Leiden University, we are leading just behind the forerunner, the Open University, regarding the percentage of FTEs of female professors. Incidentally, these figures only concerned female professors working at university medical centres. This is a clear encouragement for us to continue in our efforts so that in the coming year we can consolidate our reputation as an emancipation university.

With this objective in mind, we have launched the Christine Mohrmann programme, named after the first female professor of Radboud University. This diversity programme covers more than gender issues alone, but its

primary focus is gender. The programme makes it possible to attract, retain and further promote young talented female researchers by means of fellowships, or to use the so-called overlapping construction to appoint a female professor before her predecessor retires.

Since gender inequality is largely the result of unconscious prejudice, raising consciousness among managers and appointment committees is essential – a fact we are well aware of.

Radboud staff members enjoy their work and feel connected to the university, as apparent from the personnel survey conducted this year at the request of the Works Council. The survey also revealed points for improvement, such as better information about training opportunities, more flexibility on the part of the university during periods of organizational change, and reduced work pressure for postdocs and assistant and associate professors. The Executive Board has made additional funds available to this end, and will be discussing progress in these matters on a regular basis with the participational bodies.

Prospects

Het cluster facilitair en het cluster ondersteuning gaan vanaf vandaag door het leven als Radboud Services; een passende naam die door meerdere personen onafhankelijk van elkaar is bedacht. U ziet de bedenkers op deze foto in een rode hoodie, die zij als dank ontvingen van de benoemde tweekoppige directie: Jef van de Riet en Peter Bosman – op de foto in het wit. Zij zullen in afstemming met de faculteiten de ondersteunende functies doorlichten om zo optimale ondersteuning te leveren aan de primaire taken van onze universiteit.



This photograph shows the participants in the last edition of the Radboud Summer School, which has now grown into one of Europe's largest summer schools, and is highly appreciated by all. The third edition is planned for this year.

Internationalisation remains one of our top priorities. In September, we will be launching six additional English-language Bachelor's programmes. Artificial Intelligence, Chemistry and Molecular Life Sciences will be taught exclusively in English, while Arts and Culture Studies, International Business Communication and Psychology will retain both a Dutch-language and an English-language track. Together with the two English-language programmes offered by the Nijmegen School of Management, this brings us to a total of eight English-language Bachelor's programmes. And although I am still giving this New Year Speech in Dutch, an English translation will be published soon on Radboudnet.

The campus continues to grow and thrive. The renovation of the Dentistry building is progressing fast and should be completed by 2017, according to plan. By the end of 2017, we also hope that the Collegium Berchmanianum on the Houtlaan will be ready for use as our new Academy Building, and that the Nijmegen School of Management will have moved to the

Gymnasion, to which a new wing will have been added. The Gymnasion will also be home to the new cultural centre. Some of the buildings in the Thomas van Aquinostraat will be demolished to create room for the new building of the Faculty of Social Sciences.

2016 will be a crowning year for Nijmegen thanks to the 100th anniversary of the Four Day Marches, the visit of the Giro d'Italia and the Special Olympics. On this occasion, the opening of the academic year will take place in the centre of Nijmegen, in the St. Steven's Church. This will allow us to strengthen our bonds with the city and protect those attending from the heat in the Radboud Sports Centre.

The St. Steven's Church has also been chosen as the venue for the award of the Treaties of Nijmegen medal to the European Court of Human Rights. We will be awarding this medal together with the municipality of Nijmegen and NXP sometime in the autumn.

The Netherlands convincingly failed to qualify for the European Football Championships in France, which gives us all the more room for the other great sports events of June – Radboud Sports. All faculties have qualified for this event, including the winners of the three previous editions (Medical Sciences in 2013, Science in 2014 and Social Sciences in 2015). On this photograph you can see the Faculty of Arts team taking part in Radboud Sports 2015. The team had decided not to waste its energy screaming encouragements to one another, but instead to communicate by sign language. They qualified in the team battle with a sound fourth position. I would hereby like to ask you to make a note of the afternoon of 24 June in your calendar.

And now it is my pleasure to give the floor to our Vice President, Wilma de Koning, who will announce the winners and award this year's Hermesdorf Prizes.

Hermesdorf Prizes

For the fourth consecutive year we are awarding the [Hermesdorf Prizes](#). Prizes for Radboud University researchers who have in the past year received special attention in the media for their own research. It may be a good thing that no such prize is awarded to administrators who received special attention in the media, as I would undoubtedly have been nominated, together with my office chair, and would therefore have been unable to award these prizes today!

The Hermesdorf Prizes reflect the core strategic objectives of Radboud University: strengthening our reputation, attention to young talent, and internationalisation.

The person after whom this prize is named, Bernardus Hubertus Dominicus Hermesdorf, was Rector of our university from late 1943 until September 1945. He was the only Dutch rector who refused, on principle, to force students to sign a declaration of loyalty to the German occupiers, which inevitably led to the university being closed in 1943. One day before the closure, Hermesdorf confirmed the news himself by writing a message on the board in the Aula. He was a man who kept his spine and his principles straight through difficult times.

The bronze medal that accompanies the prize shows on one side a stylised representation of Hermesdorf himself, and on the other side a straight spine.

In consultation with the Communications Department of Radboud university medical center, the Radboud University science editors have put forward candidates in all three categories.

The jury this year consists of former Rector Kees Blom, acting as Chair, Professor of Neurological Movement Disorders Bas Bloem (whose name you already heard mentioned earlier today), and Professor of Communication Science Moniek Buijzen.

It is my honour to reveal the three winners, after which I will ask them all to join me on the podium to receive their Prize. There will be flowers for all nominees afterwards.

The general Hermesdorf Prize 2015 is awarded to the researcher whose work has made a recognisable contribution to public debate in the national media and has consequently substantially deepened this debate.

The nominees, in alphabetical order, were
Jan Derksen, Associate Professor of Clinical Psychology and Professor of Clinical Psychology at the Free University of Brussels
Henk van Houtum, Head of the *Nijmegen Centre for Border Research*
Marcel Olde Rikkert, Professor of Geriatrics
Carolina de Weerth, Professor of the Psychobiology of Early Development

And the jury has selected as winner of the Hermersdorf Prize 2015:
Marcel Olde Rikkert!

Marcel Olde Rikkert is uniquely adept at generating attention for the topic of care for the elderly. His book *Jong blijven en oud worden* (Staying young while aging), which was published in May 2015, was awarded four stars in the Volkskrant and received extensive coverage in other media. In this book, the author provides fascinating information on how to continue to have fun while growing older, and how doing so can help us remain healthier as we age. The book also features quotes from athletes, actors, poets, artists, economists and scientists, as well as personal anecdotes. In the same month, Olde Rikkert also published an article in *Neurology* with Geke van den Elsen on the frequent use of cannabis pills to treat dementia symptoms. The researchers discovered that these pills do not work at all. This was world news.

With his son and another secondary school student, Olde Rikkert also conducted research into football shirts. Their conclusion: the colour of the shirt has an effect on the success of the team. The greater the contrast between the colour of the shirt and the environment, the better the players are able to spot each other. For years Olde Rikkert has also been writing columns in provincial newspapers on healthcare issues. A topic that concerns everyone and that he treats in an entertaining and interesting manner.

The Hermesdorf Young Talent Prize is awarded to the young researcher whose research received most special attention in the media.

The nominees for the 2015 Hermesdorf Young Talent Prize are
Yvonne van den Berg, PhD candidate in Developmental Psychology at the Behavioural Science Institute
Joris van Loenhout, PhD candidate at the First-line Healthcare Department of Radboud university medical center
Miriam Reelick and Franka Bakker, researchers at the Geriatrics Department of Radboud university medical center

And the 2015 Hermesdorf Young Talent Prize goes to:
Yvonne van den Berg!

Do not separate bickering students, but instead put them in situations where they are forced to interact. It turns out that this will make them like each other a lot more. This was Yvonne van den Berg's finding in her PhD

research, which she defended on 10 April. Through this approach, student pairs who have a mutual dislike of one other come to know each other better without realising it, which results in greater mutual appreciation. Van den Berg let students from 27 classes fill out questionnaires about their classmates. Who did they like and who did they really dislike? A few weeks later Van den Berg drastically changed the classroom seating arrangements. After ten weeks the students filled out the questionnaire again. Responses had improved considerably.

The jury finds Yvonne van den Berg's research original and relevant, and foresees a much broader application than just in education. The researcher received widespread media coverage in newspapers and youth news, and on the radio. Her research has since led to the development of an online tool for mixing up classroom seating arrangements, a method known as the *Social Shuffle*.

The International Hermesdorf Prize is awarded to the researcher whose research has received most international media attention.

This year's nominees, in alphabetical order, are
Lucien Engelen, Director of Radboud university medical center REshape and Innovation Center
Heino Falcke, Professor of Astroparticles Physics and Radio Astronomy
Roel Verdult, PhD candidate in Digital Security

The 2015 International Hermesdorf Prize goes to
Heino Falcke!

Heino Falcke investigates black holes, perhaps the most mysterious objects in the universe. Last year he received a great deal of international attention for the results of his research into the origin of lightning in a thundercloud: *Exploding stars help to understand thunderclouds on Earth*. He conducted this research together with his PhD candidate, Pim Schellaart. The research received worldwide coverage in publications such as *Neuer Zürcher Zeitung*, *Nature*, *Science*, *The International New York Times*, *Mail Online* and the *Westerly Sun*.

Falcke also made the news, via *Nature News* and various Chinese media, as a result of a proposed joint space mission between the European Union and China to explore the 'Dark Ages' of the universe. The Radboud Radio Lab, launched in 2015, collaborated with Falcke on an experiment involving a rocket build by students from Delft University of Technology. Falcke also

appeared in a number of international publications, including *US Official News*.

Falcke's publications reach a wide audience partly because he frequently collaborates with international research institutes. And he makes sure that Radboud University is mentioned in every single news item. He is seemingly tireless in his contact with the press. In this way, he greatly contributes to the international reputation of Radboud University's research in astronomy and other areas.

I would now like to invite the winners to join me on the podium to receive their Prizes:

Marcel Olde Rikkert, Yvonne van den Berg and Heino Falcke

Wilma: At the start of today's gathering, you were shown a video of staff members and students thanking other staff members and students for inspiration and support. I would like to take this opportunity to thank someone by means of this card. The person I would like to thank has been an important source of support not only to me, but also I am sure to Gerard and to former members of the Executive Board. He likes to remain in the background, is very modest, and yet plays an incredibly important role behind the scenes. It is no secret that 2015 has been a tough year for the Radboud University administration, and these are precisely the times when it is important to have a Secretary who knows how the academic world works, and who is able to offer asked and unasked for advice, criticism and support. He is an ace at his job. He knows his place and knows exactly when to intervene. This is why I would like to thank Jef van de Riet. I would like to invite Jef, not for a lunch, or a cup of coffee, because that's something that we do often enough already, but for a walk – with his pipe.
Jef, thank you so much!

Gerard: I would also like to make use of this opportunity to thank someone for the support I have received this past year. I very much wanted, alongside my job as President, to continue to teach first-year Physics classes. Both last year and this year, I would not have been able to teach the Mechanics IB course without the incredible support of Marina Katsnelson. I would like to invite Marina to step forward, and to thank her I would like to offer her the new Radboud scarf, so that everyone who has not yet seen it can do so now.

Marina, thank you very much for your support!

We have now reached the end of this gathering. I would like to invite you all to join us for lunch. As you exit this room you will be handed a card which you can use to thank someone and invite them for lunch, a walk, or some other activity. Thank you for your attention, and I wish you all the best in 2016!