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## YAG Statement about Internationalization

The Young Academy Groningen expresses its concerns about the recent proposals made by Minister Robert Dijkgraaf, which imply a possible reduction in the number of courses taught in English. We share the views of the Board of the University that the proposals risk undermining the success of Dutch universities and the role they play in society regionally, nationally, and internationally.

Within the early career academic community, the Minister's proposals have caused serious concerns. The University of Groningen is one of the world's leading universities and every year, it attracts dozens of exceptionally talented early career academics who move cities, countries, and sometimes even continents, to contribute to Dutch society through their education and research activities. In our view, the underlying assumption that international colleagues do not seek to integrate in Dutch society is unfounded and offensive. All international colleagues we know make extra efforts to learn the Dutch language and participate actively in their local community. Yet, there is a big difference between asking internationals to learn Dutch to play a role in the community and forcing them to teach in Dutch, which could be the consequence of the Minister's proposals. It is reminiscent of what happened in Denmark in recent years, but also from Brexit. Even though we acknowledge that there are challenges to be faced, the proposed plans seem to be ill-fitting and will do very little to improve the challenges highlighted in the recent debate held in the Dutch parliament, e.g., with regards to student housing and worker shortage.

We will remain vigilant throughout the summer and follow very closely how the proposals and debates evolve. We want to make sure these reflect the value that our international

community brings to the University and the Dutch society. The doors of the Young Academy Groningen are always open to those who would like to express their thoughts and concerns regarding this issue. Our first Early Career Researchers' Lunch of the 2023-24 academic year will focus on the future of internationalization at the University. We will work together with the University leadership to ensure that we keep embracing internationalization as an essential asset going forward.