Abstract Master Thesis: *Social Housing between Europeanisation and path dependency*

The research presented in this thesis had two main objectives. First, exploring the changing position of social housing in Dutch and French housing markets and analysing the mechanisms behind the developments. Second, exploring the role of the European Union in shaping housing policies. By adopting the analytical lense of path dependency, and comparing the two countries it became clear that the evolution of social housing is indeed tied to the historical trajectory as well as the political and institutional context. Both countries are increasingly hindering the social rental sector from being a viable third sector as similar trends in recent housing policies push the sector in the direction of residualisation. However, the research revealed the diverging patterns in advancing this trend as in the Netherlands the social sector has been undermined systematically whereas drastic changes in the French social sector have only recently been triggered. This research also concluded that the European Union has become an actor in domestic housing sectors, as it can tip the domestic power balance in favour of those advancing a liberal agenda. The alignment of domestic and supranational interests enable the europeanisation of social housing.