

Summary of

City sketch

Maastricht

2040



Gemeente Maastricht





What will Maastricht look like in 2040? What qualities do we want to retain and what do we want to change? And how will we start working on that?

Under the motto of '**Maastricht of tomorrow**', the City of Maastricht is focusing in 2021 on updating its urban vision, economic vision and social vision. In June and July, we asked residents and parties to provide input so we could do our '**homework**'. But in doing so, we did not start from scratch. In the '**Maastricht 2040 outline**', we had already given an initial impetus for a possible development direction. And we asked six key questions that we wanted to discuss with the city.

The key questions:

- Should Maastricht grow or stabilise?
- What will the city centre look like in 20 years?
- How do we distribute our precious space?
- How do we ensure that healthcare remains affordable?
- How do we keep our society together?
- How will Maastricht be experienced if more and more things take place online?

Introduction

With more than 90 completed questionnaires, several reports of online sessions and more than 35 submitted responses, we have collected a varied collection of wishes, ideas, concerns and needs. We are presenting these responses **unfiltered** in the city sketch. We are doing this for two reasons:

- Firstly, to **make clear** how promising and varied these contributions are. Any kind of summary will not do justice to the contributions.
- Secondly, on the basis of all this input, we will then **discuss** together with you the conclusions we can draw and the choices we can make. We will do so on 22 September 2021.

Ultimately, **the city council** will decide at the end of 2021 regarding the urban vision, the economic vision and the social vision. The city council will therefore decide which input will be adopted.

But that will not be the end of it. The visions provide us with a framework to focus on together. And we need the residents and parties of the city and region to do so. By **continuing to discuss** the future of Maastricht, we can shape our splendid city together.



The neighbourhood walks

On Monday 21 June, walks were organised in all Maastricht neighbourhoods to collect input. What will the neighbourhood look like in 2040? Participants could complete a questionnaire and engage in conversation during those walks. There were roughly **60 registrations** for the **23 walks** in all Maastricht neighbourhoods. Furthermore, we received **93 questionnaires**.

The online sessions

What will the city centre look like in twenty years? How will we live together and what role will technology play in our lives? How do we keep healthcare for vulnerable people in the city fit for purpose and affordable? Maastricht residents discussed these and other questions during three online sessions in June. Residents reflected on the vision of their city's future.

In a personal letter and through other communication channels, the municipality invited residents to participate in the debate. Key question: what will our city look like in 2040? An open question that can prompt a huge variety of responses. Not all residents have a clear idea about such a major topic. You need a great deal of imagination to be able to look 20 years ahead. Nevertheless, a group of residents enthusiastically signed up for the dialogue evenings. We spoke to approximately 50 people. They thought and dreamt about the Maastricht of the future.

The future walks

Bureau Europa and the **Municipality of Maastricht** organised four future walks about the situation in 2040 to gain inspiration and input for a new urban vision. The four walks took in the entire city and touched on the issues that Maastricht people can discuss. Each walk focused on a different topic:

- **Walk 1: the mobile city**
- **Walk 2: the green city**
- **Walk 3: the knowledge city**
- **Walk 4: the social city**

Floor van Spaendonck (director of Bureau Europa) and Jake Wiersma (urban planner at the Municipality of Maastricht) set out the four routes, guided the groups through various locations, asked questions and gave explanations. About 45 people participated in the four walks. The number of participants per walk varied from 20 people on one walk to a select group of two people on another. The group composition was diverse: some born in Maastricht, many born in Limburg, a few international participants and the number of men and women was equal. The involvement in the city varied from city councillors, neighbourhood volunteers and a property developer to architects and inquisitive residents. The average age was 50 to 60 years. Several participants completed a questionnaire or responded by e-mail. The responses can be found in Section 2 and in Section 5 of the city sketch. Many topics and issues were discussed: What opportunities does Maastricht have if we expand? Does Maastricht's strength lie in its small, manageable scale, or is the city overcrowded with tourists?

Or are they important because they provide sufficient employment for the citizens of Maastricht? Should we try to retain young graduates after their studies, or is it fine if they find a place elsewhere in the country or in the region after their studies? Should we maintain facilities in the neighbourhoods as much as possible, or is that (financially) unattainable and should we look for a different means of distribution?

The digital responses

Maastricht residents were asked to provide input so that the municipality could do its 'homework'. People and organisations have been called upon to share their wishes, ideas, considerations and concerns digitally. A total of 35 online responses were submitted via the website and e-mail. Several participants of the future walks and the online sessions also responded online.

Results of the various response rounds

A number of topics surfaced regularly. That, of course, does not do justice to the diversity of all the input we have received. We have the city sketch for that purpose. Nor does it give a complete or fully representative picture of how the city thinks. But it does give an idea of the issues that play a role in the city.

The following topics emerged regularly:

- We asked people about the unique qualities of Maastricht and what they would like to retain. The following were frequently mentioned:
 - nature and parks
 - the joie de vivre atmosphere and conviviality
 - the range of cafés, restaurants, shops and culture
 - the historic character of the city
 - the compact nature of the city with amenities
 - greenery and nature within walking and cycling distance.
- We also asked people what improvements they propose for the city and their neighbourhood. The following were frequently mentioned:
 - more greenery (and better maintenance)
 - more enforcement measures
 - more homes
 - more traffic measures (focused particularly on restricted access/car-free)
 - focus on better distribution and balance of tourists and students.
- The liveliness and development of Maastricht are predominantly considered as positive, although attention is drawn to the availability of housing for existing residents. There is also a demand to safeguard the diversity in neighbourhoods in relation to the increase in students, tourism and rack-renters who buy and rent houses.
- The housing market is a frequent topic of discussion, not only nationally but also in Maastricht. People are concerned about the high prices and the (future) availability of owner-occupied homes. People of limited financial means, singles, young families and the elderly are mentioned as target groups for whom it is especially difficult.
- The following key words were often mentioned about the city centre and tourism: diversity, perception and balance. A point of concern is monitoring of the quality of life in the city centre.
- Spectres include Amsterdam and Venice: cities where hardly any 'permanent' residents live and tourism is dominant.
- As for students and tourists, the wish is often expressed for a better spread across the city. As regards student accommodation, it is suggested that solutions be sought in campuses and/or a maximum percentage at street or neighbourhood level.
- Traffic and mobility are also frequently discussed topics in the city. The input is diverse and ranges from specific suggestions for measures in a certain neighbourhood to the more general ambition of restricted access to or even a car-free city centre.
- More green is a desire shared by many. This would increase the quality of life in the city, boost encounters in public spaces and contribute to the necessary adaptations to climate change.

- Strikingly, the importance of the neighbourhood was mentioned often. The neighbourhood is where a person's social network can be found. Healthcare and support must be arranged at that level (particularly if people have to live at home for longer). That is also where encounters take place through activities and in different locations (buildings and public spaces). Basic facilities in neighbourhoods must also be in order and efforts must be made to reduce the divisions in society and to increase the mix of target groups. Cooperation between organisations in neighbourhoods is also mentioned as an area for improvement.
- As regards the municipality's working methods, it is said that the municipality should be closer to residents, less secluded and with more personal contact. There is a need to take citizen participation seriously, to listen to complaints and act on them, and to make initiatives possible.
- Several suggestions have been made about the impact of technology on the future of the city. People see opportunities for more remote working (living in Maastricht, working somewhere else), to boost the sharing economy and to achieve sustainability goals. Points for attention include awareness, information and security in the use of technology. In addition, people argue for always offering an alternative to a digital tool, so that people are not entirely dependent on technology to be able to participate.



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