

Time to act!

Maastricht Coalition Agreement 2026–2030

D66, CDA, GroenLinks, SPM, VVD and PvdA

19 June 2026

Yes, you have been close to our heart.
Maastricht, throughout the years.

Fons Olterdissen (1865–1923)

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1. The Maastricht motif

Tradition and the future come together in Maastricht. This is evident in the historic city centre where the deep-rooted cultural life, the thriving middle class and the most European university in the Netherlands fortify one another. This may also be seen in our revitalised city, where the future is shaped every day, such as at the Brightlands Maastricht Health Campus and the Beatrixhaven business park. Tradition and the future reveal themselves in our folk culture, which is deeply rooted in carnival associations, brass bands and the Maastricht dialect, in our sports clubs and now also in our student life and at the Pasar Maluku. It's also visible in our innovative area development projects: from the unique Groene Loper to the Spoorzone, Limmel aan de Maas and Belvédère.

Our ambition for the city

We are ambitious. During this new government term, we are creating room for growth, new connections and new stories from Maastricht, and are taking steps towards the high-growth pathway set out in the Environmental Vision. This is space we are creating for a balanced growth to over 140,000 residents by 2040; we know this growth is necessary in order to reduce division and bolster connections in the city. This growth makes it possible to continue investing in the future and in the city's future earning capacity.

Our ambition is focused on building thousands of affordable and sustainable homes, actively closing the excessive gaps in opportunities, health and livelihood security, genuinely stimulating housing market liquidity, and opening up more suitable employment opportunities. This includes placing sufficient attention on the middle class, a group that is also too often squeezed in the current housing market. We are facilitating the city's growth through smart investments in the green and safe streets of the future, new Park & Ride facilities and the energy transition.

And we do it all with respect for our rich history as a fortified city, and with an awareness of our position as a border region in the heart of Europe. What's good for South Limburg is good for Maastricht, and vice versa. We work with Heerlen and Sittard-Geleen in this respect. Together with these cities, we feel a sense of responsibility towards the over 600,000 residents of South Limburg, as well as our working relationships with other municipalities and partners in the (Eu)region.

Solidarity and charitability are in Maastricht's DNA. At the same time, the city is facing issues involving poverty, inequality of opportunity and health disparities. There is a deeply rooted divide. We assume our responsibility here, even when it is formally not our remit. Working with our partners, volunteers and informal carers, we choose equitable investment to ensure equal opportunities.

Our growth agenda is focused on connectedness; together, 'sjengen' (Maastrichters) and those new to Maastricht make up the city. By investing now in people's talents and in the next generation, we are building a Maastricht that is stronger, healthier and more equal. We are also building an inclusive city where there is no place for discrimination, regardless of where you come from, what you believe in or who you love.

We are working together to improve our broad prosperity. A strong economy and a vibrant labour market form the foundation for the ambitious large-scale expansion that we aim to achieve together with our partners in South Limburg. We will only achieve our growth ambitions if we strengthen our knowledge infrastructure (with the campus and the Spoorzone as key pillars), exploit the economic potential of the historic city centre, *and* provide our SMEs (small- and medium-sized enterprises) with more space to do business.

Working together on new dynamics

Maastricht is a beautiful city we are proud of. At the same time, the Berenschot report holds up a clear mirror for us. Over the past few government terms, negative dynamics have arisen in the interplay between political, governance and administrative aspects. Dynamics that none of those involved have been able to break through on their own.

As parties involved in forming the government, many of which have also held governmental responsibilities in previous government terms, we recognise our role in this. We see it as our task

to do our utmost over the coming government term to contribute to breaking through the patterns that have developed. And to help contribute to a new governmental and organisational culture which offers more scope for dualism and a more open and equal partnership between the municipal executive and administrative organisation. This will enable us to give more back to the city: concrete results for our residents and businesses. That is the *motif*, or guiding principle that we ensure runs through the ambitions set out in this coalition agreement.¹

It is a task that we will take on every single day and for which we are explicitly accountable. Guided by this commitment we have made to ourselves, we reach out to all the other parties involved, in the hope that they will join us in working towards a better Maastricht.

Pressing ahead to achieve results

We need to get started. Some of the city's problems have been evident for far too long, and there are some opportunities we simply cannot afford to miss. We must press ahead to achieve results for Maastricht residents as well as businesses and clubs in the city. This calls for targeted decisions and demonstrates the urgency of the guiding principle we have described. It gives our work direction for the coming government term. We are fully aware that we can only take the necessary steps by working closely with the people of Maastricht, our partners and through a renewed collaboration with the municipal council and the administrative organisation. Our priorities are:

1. To stimulate housing construction, we are creating an 'affordable housing stimulus' worth an indicative investment of €20 million. If we end up on the high-growth pathway towards a population of more than 140,000 by 2040, there will be no further restrictions. We will also keep an open mind about expansion beyond the existing city limits. Limitations on municipal building and housing regulations are necessary in order to meet the housing construction objective. We therefore affirm that, in principle, we do not want to add local requirements on top of national regulations. We apply the 'no, unless' principle to both existing and new rules.
2. An integrated approach to education and youth is crucial to tackling persistent inequality in opportunity. As previously mentioned, we choose targeted investments in order to achieve equal opportunities. To support a new Youth and Education agenda, we are making stimulus funding available totalling 4 × €1 million. Our city and region are also facing significant health disparities, while the availability of healthcare is coming under increasing pressure. We are therefore providing a stimulus of an indicative investment of €5 million to help transform Maastricht into a city focused on prevention.
3. With an SME action programme and a new €20 million investment fund for the Campus, we are giving our economy the boost it needs to bring our growth agenda to fruition.
4. Folk culture, talent development and professional organisations are three indispensable pillars for our cultural climate and the appeal of the city. We are making a stimulus available totalling 2 × €2 million for an equivalent investment in culture and are creating a 'Historic Buildings Investment Stimulus' of approximately €20 million. We are also providing improved support for our sports and folk culture associations.
5. The development of new Park & Ride facilities and better bicycle facilities is essential to keeping the city accessible. During this period, we will open a new large-scale underground bicycle parking facility in the city centre and take irreversible steps towards the realisation of new Park & Ride facilities on the outskirts of the city.
6. The energy transition will only succeed if it is fair. For this reason, we are transforming the existing energy emergency fund into an 'affordable energy scheme' (within existing budgets) and making additional stimulus funding of 4 × €1.25 million available for sustainability measures (including rooftop solar with battery storage). Building on these extra efforts we are making, we are working towards a breakthrough at one or more large-scale regional locations for sustainable energy generation. Finally, we are further accelerating the greening of the city with an indicative investment of €10 million.
7. The safety and liveability challenges are increasing in scale and complexity, are following one another in rapid succession, and are increasingly affecting several areas simultaneously. For this reason, we are adding a structural increase of €0.75 million to our investment in the safety chain.

This coalition agreement is explicitly a broad outline. We would like to enter into an open dialogue with the municipal council about the major challenges the city faces and how we intend to shape our interplay in tackling them. Our starting point here is increased dualism. Amongst other things,

¹ In music, a motif is a short, recognisable fragment that recurs throughout a composition and is elaborated on within it.

we propose drawing up partial agreements on various topics that can count on the broadest possible support within the municipal council. Possible topics that would be suitable for such a partial agreement include Participation, students and the city, promoting the Maastricht dialect, integration and employment, integrated safety policy and culture.

Other elements that can contribute to a positive dynamic in the interplay between politics and governance include biannual thematic consultations on major challenges, opportunities for members of the municipal executive to amend council proposals following domain meetings, greater scope for exploratory discussions and an annual trilogue between the municipal council, the municipal executive and the organisation. We view these proposals positively – which are aligned with the Berenschot report – and support any necessary amendments to the municipal council's code of order if these enjoy broad support. Finally, as coalition parties, we will be holding coalition meetings less frequently. And when coalition meetings are held, these will, in principle, only be held with the party leaders (without the presence of the members of the municipal executive).

Implementation

During this government term, we are working towards the implementation of this coalition agreement, guided by a single common ambition. In doing so, we are making the conscious decision to adopt a more multi-year and task-oriented approach based on mutual trust. We continue to be mindful of today's urgent issues, while at the same time focusing on sustainable solutions for tomorrow.

Together with the mayor and the municipal clerk, we are taking the initiative to restore cooperation and mutual relationships between governance and organisation. We are working together to build an organisation that takes a task-oriented approach and actively seeks to connect with residents, social partners and other public authorities. We are supporting this by strengthening area-based working and decompartmentalising the underlying budgets. This initiative requires clear responsibilities and greater authority to act to ensure its implementation. It also demands an open, learning and reflective style of governance from our prospective members of the municipal executive.

The municipal council has recently adopted various policy frameworks, such as the Environmental Vision, the 'We See You' Poverty Policy and the policy plan for social meeting places. During this government term, the focus will be on implementing these measures. This is why we are cautious about announcing new policy plans and visions in this agreement. We want to focus our available time and capacity on implementation.

We want to avoid merely accumulating new policies that are either not implemented or not fully implemented. We have learned from the experience of the previous government term, during which underspending and underdelivery occurred. Primarily as a result of this underdelivery, the general reserve increased by approximately €75 million during the last government term. This was despite the fact that Maastricht already had a very substantial reserve prior to that. We now wish to give these savings back to the city – with a little extra – through additional temporary measures and extra investment stimuli to address the major and sometimes persistent issues. Strengthening a task-oriented and area-based approach further contributes to better implementation and more results for our residents.

Accountability

After the local elections on 18 March 2026, the municipal council (once again) comprises 16 political parties. On the basis of the report prepared by the 'scout', D66, CDA, GroenLinks, SPM, VVD and PvdA held discussions led by the formateurs Pia Dijkstra and Raymond Knops.

The starting point was to reach an agreement on the main points of a coalition agreement. For this reason, we have not included all the topics in this agreement, nor have we described them in detail. This enables us to provide the scope to work with the municipal council to tackle the city's major challenges. We hope that this will lay the foundation for renewing the working relationship between the municipal council, the municipal executive and the administrative organisation, as well as the collaboration with partners in the city.

In drawing up this agreement, we have been able to build on the knowledge gained during the exploratory phase and the documents submitted by a large number of stakeholders in the city. By

request, the formateurs also held an open discussion with some of the parties not involved in the formation of the government. We have tried to incorporate these insights in this agreement.

This coalition agreement contains seven thematic sections. These are followed by a description of: a. how we would like to work together to implement this agreement on the main points; b. the financial implications of this agreement; and c. the agreed portfolio allocation and our candidate members of the municipal executive.

2. Housing

Our ambition

Maastricht is a compact and historic university city with a very diverse population: people who have lived here for generations, newcomers to Maastricht and those living in the city temporarily. Together, all these groups make up the city. They support one another, keep the economy going and preserve the (folk) culture through brass and other traditional bands, the Boonte Störm and the Heiligdomsvaart (Pilgrimage).

Our fortified town is situated in a dynamic border region and beautiful green surroundings. It's no wonder that so many people want to live here. *Here* is where they want to study at the Netherlands' leading European university. *Here* is where they can do important work at the Brightlands Campus in Maastricht. Or because *here* is where their roots lie and, as they enter the next stage of their lives, they would prefer to continue living in 'their' neighbourhood, be it De Heeg, Wolder or Borgharen.

Good housing is essential to feeling at home in Maastricht. Unfortunately, the housing crisis is also hitting our city hard. Too many people are unable to find suitable and affordable housing, and there is insufficient movement through the housing market. Recently adopted by the municipal council, the Environmental Vision has created the conditions to accelerate housing construction and boost the flow of people into new homes. This enables us to offer more housing options to the various target groups during this government term. This also means more room for students and senior citizens, as well as more scope for high-rise buildings and, for example, 'Wonen met Friends' (shared accommodation) contracts.

We are ambitious. During this new government term, we are taking steps towards the high-growth pathway set out in the Environmental Vision leading to over 140,000 residents by 2040. We know this growth is necessary in order to reduce division and bolster connections in the city. This growth makes it possible to continue investing in the future and in the city's future earning capacity. We facilitate this (balanced) growth by keeping a closely eye on developments in the region. Sometimes, the region offers opportunities for house hunters in Maastricht, but we also want to provide accommodation for middle-income groups inside our municipal boundaries.

Relaxations of municipal building and housing regulations are necessary in order to achieve our ambitions. We therefore affirm that, in principle, we do not want to add local requirements on top of national regulations. We apply the 'no, unless' principle to both existing and new rules.

Housing is about more than just bricks and mortar; it's about neighbourhoods, neighbours and daily life. The quality of streets and neighbourhoods plays an important role in people's experience of their living environment. Maastricht scores below the national average on broad prosperity. We're facing a major challenge here. There is also a divide at play ([see also: Livelihood Security, Inequality of Opportunity and Health](#)). The differences in broad prosperity between Pottenberg or Nazareth and, for example, Campagne or Sint Pieter are just too great. Poorly maintained and poorly insulated homes have a direct impact on their residents, such as the effects of mould, noise pollution and high energy bills, for example.

This – sometimes persistent – divide calls for equitable investment to ensure equal opportunities. In our housing development programme, we are choosing to strategically introduce new types of housing in districts dominated by one type of housing. We also want to tackle this division by drawing up new performance agreements with the housing associations.

We are intentionally opting for an approach in which housing is not viewed in isolation, but is seen in conjunction with amenities, mobility, energy and the quality of the living environment. It is only by working together that we can tackle the urgent housing challenge in a sustainable and balanced manner.

Our commitment

- In line with the Environmental Vision, we are opting for infill development within the existing city limits to facilitate the city's growth. With major urban development projects such as Spoorzone, Limmel aan de Maas and Belvédère, this government term will see the start of construction on thousands of homes and will create movement in the housing market once again. With 'ventiellocaties' (overflow development sites for absorbing housing demand) already designated, we can offer balanced space where necessary for expansion on the outskirts of the city.
- If we end up on the high-growth pathway towards a population of over 140,000 by 2040, there will be no further restrictions during this government term. In this case, we will keep an open mind about a new urban expansion district beyond the existing city limits. We also realise that the more we grow, the more important it is to view the housing construction challenge from a regional perspective.
- We are going to put our existing buildings to better use. This includes subdividing properties, enabling shared 'Friends' accommodations and 'hospital housing' (homestay or lodger arrangements), adding storeys to buildings and, for example, making room-rental tenancies, living above shops and backyard dwellings on residential properties more common. This is the quickest way to add housing, but it doesn't happen automatically. At present, our municipal policy contains rules that are too strict. Take, for example, our requirements regarding building aesthetics, the preservation of historic buildings and the '40-40-40 rule', which hinders the building of additional student accommodation. Given the major housing challenge we are facing, we are going to ease these regulations while continuing to pay close attention to the quality of the (historic) city.
- In parallel with the simplification of the municipal regulations, in accordance with the Good Landlordship Act, we are holding private landlords to account regarding their responsibility for the liveability of their properties. To this end, we are raising awareness of and improving access to the South Limburg Rental Team and the Municipal Reporting Centre. We are also exploring additional intervention measures, such as a housing enforcement brigade.
- In line with our basic assumption that we do not, in principle, aim to add local requirements to national regulations, we are aligning with the national objective that 67% of all new-build housing in the city must be affordable. We are moving away from our local agreement that 60% of each project must consist of social housing or affordable owner-occupied housing. We are also going to simplify our building aesthetics regulations, with the aim to create more scope for 'conceptbouw' (modular and standardised construction); Bouwstroom Limburg has had good experience with this type of housing.
- We ensure a good mix of housing in the various districts to counteract social division. This also requires adding more expensive homes in vulnerable districts and adding affordable owner-occupied homes and social housing in districts where these are currently only present to a limited extent. Amongst other things, we are setting this out in new performance agreements with the housing associations and in our housing development programme. In doing so, we ensure there are adequate amenities and social cohesion in vulnerable districts (such as the Veerkracht [community resilience] programme).
- We want to encourage affordable rental and owner-occupied housing through an affordable housing investment stimulus. This budget is primarily intended to encourage the construction of new affordable rental housing in collaboration with housing associations. The budget may also be used in part to support affordable home ownership and sustainability measures in existing buildings, provided this directly contributes to the affordability of housing in Maastricht. In addition, we are actively exploring how we can utilise our own land and real estate properties to address the housing challenge.
- Small-scale infill development, for example, can offer seniors the opportunity to move house within their familiar district or village. This often results in a family home becoming available,

which helps keep the housing market moving. In addition to the residential care zones, we offer limited opportunities for this type of small-scale infill development, for example in Borgharen and the Moluccan district.

- At the Karosseer, we are creating a substantial number of new mobile home pitches, still taking into account the complexity of business properties with a dwelling attached. In addition, during this period, we will also be working on several sites for new pitches with residential zoning permits. This applies to properties both for sale and rent.

Our implementation capacity

We are focusing our administrative capacity primarily on working with developers, housing associations and builders to actively bring the homes in the pipeline to fruition, in order to ease the pressure on the housing market as quickly as possible.

In order to accelerate area development, we are working, where possible, according to the principle of 'parallel planning' whereby various project phases are tackled simultaneously. This requires close coordination with our partners (developers, housing associations, etc.).

The simplification of our regulations will also simplify the processes of granting permits, supervision and enforcement. We also intend to make greater use of horizontal monitoring during this government term. This will involve taking a more trust-based approach when it comes to the granting of permits, supervision and enforcement with respect to recognised partners. This saves time and administrative capacity. We aim to include our housing associations, at any rate, as recognised partners.

Finance

During this government term, we are making a substantial extra commitment to housing. Given the focus placed on implementation, there is currently no need for a structural intensification. We will, however, provide a boost through:

- An affordable housing investment stimulus worth an indicative investment of €20 million.
- An investment stimulus to help facilitate mobile home pitches amounting to an indicative €6 million.
- A boost to implementation capacity (*temporary operating budgets*) amounting to €1.4 million.

3. Livelihood security, equality of opportunity and health

Our ambition

Solidarity and charitability are in Maastricht's DNA. The city is home to resilient communities, a whole host of social initiatives and abundant community associations. At the same time, there is a persistent divide which becomes evident in poverty, inequality of opportunity and health disparities. The mental health of our (young) residents is deteriorating rapidly, and the sustainability of our healthcare system is under pressure due to an ageing population. We assume our responsibility here, even when it is formally not our remit. We do this together with our partners (healthcare and welfare organisations, schools, housing associations and community associations) and with volunteers and informal carers.

Our growth agenda is focused on connectedness. By investing now in people's talents and in the next generation, we are building a Maastricht that is stronger, healthier and more equal. We are building an inclusive city that is accessible for everyone, where there is no place for discrimination, regardless of where you come from, what you believe in or who you love. Together, 'sjengen' (Maastrichters) and those new to Maastricht make up the city.

We set the right course during the last government term. It is not the structures and rules that are decisive, but the needs and personal strengths of our residents. An area-based approach is crucial to this. We are intensifying our efforts in this regard and will also promote more coordination of our activities during this period. This is vital if we are to take a truly area-based approach to our work *and* ensure a greater and faster impact for the residents of Maastricht.

We are encouraged in our approach by initial indications that there is increasing appreciation for the municipal presence in neighbourhoods, districts and local area centres (Court of Auditors, 2026). In line with our ambition, we want to ensure that every euro is spent where it can make the greatest difference: the people. Not through individual projects or initiatives, but by working from long-term strategic frameworks. This also means taking a strong approach to combatting healthcare fraud and subversion.

The differences in the city are too great. The neighbourhood you were born in has too much influence on your opportunities and prospects. This is why we choose targeted investment, to ensure equal opportunities. During this government term, we are fully committed to prevention. Examples include preventing language delays in toddlers and fall prevention for the elderly. Investing preventatively in education, exercise and health should not be seen as an expense, but the best choice for the city. It is better to prevent problems than to have to expend huge amounts to fix them later. This also means investing in networks, meeting places and accessible support that ensure residents get to know one another, get involved and look out for one another. Community centres and clubs play an important role in the social foundation (*; see also Culture, sport and associations*).

During this period, we will take charge to ensure a coordinated approach to addressing education and youth policy. We are continuing to make steady progress on our statutory duties in the areas of education housing, healthcare, welfare and participation. However, we are taking it a step further. We are providing integrated support from pregnancy to the age of 27, from the health centre for babies, via the schools to the first steps onto the labour market. For the first 12 years of a child's life, we choose to take a family-centred approach within area-based working. For children aged 12 and over, we adopt a more urban approach. We place attention on all levels of education: from practice-oriented to academic (*see also Economy*).

Livelihood security is the foundation of society. During this government term, we will be implementing the recently adopted poverty policy, 'We See You'. We also want work to always be worthwhile and for everyone to be able to take part. The exit rates from social assistance for people in Maastricht remain well below the national average. This can – and must – be improved. We are working on this in collaboration with the new Social Development Agency and partners such as Skills and Praktech. We offer targeted support to help people find suitable work, voluntary work or a training course. We want everyone to make a meaningful contribution to the social challenges facing our city, tapping into their own talents.

Approach

- We are transforming Maastricht into a city focused on prevention. After all, prevention is better than cure. We support South Limburg's strategy through initiatives such as Pluswijken, the Delta Plan for Elderly Care and the Mental Health transformation plan. But we want to go further. Health must be a common thread running through all municipal policy – from housing to mobility.
- With a new Youth and Education Agenda, we are ensuring an integrated approach for young people in Maastricht. This demands a new stimulus as well as the integration of initiatives such as the 'extended school day', pre-school and early school education, and school meals. We are preparing this agenda together with children, young people and their parents, as well as all the professionals involved. Together, we make the difference.
- We are making the Healthy and Active Child Centre a permanent fixture. This is a proven and effective way to invest in a healthy basis.
- We are building strong schools for strong districts. In doing so, we are looking for options to do this and opportunities to link them with our Integrated Housing Plans (IHPs). These plans ensure that during school hours, the school building and sports hall offer higher quality for pupils and learning. And outside school hours, there are more opportunities for socialising and physical activity, for example through neighbourhood kitchens. We are prioritising those neighbourhoods that need it the most.
- We are stepping up our efforts for affordable and accessible community and meeting places (*see also Culture, sport and associations*). Community centres and neighbourhood 'drop-in' spaces play a major role in this. Together with sports clubs and cultural networks, they form the foundation of social structures and neighbourhood networks. They help foster friendship, provide structure and promote social cohesion, as well as help prevent loneliness.
- We support informal carers. They are the foundation of society. One of the ways we do this is by expanding the options for respite care.
- Area-based working is crucial if the municipality is to create closer connections with the people of Maastricht. It is also essential to organising municipal services in a way that is nearby and recognisable (such as social teams, district service desks and financial coaches). We are continuing to strengthen our area-based approach by providing the professionals involved with more authority to act and support. We are reinforcing decompartmentalisation by, amongst other things, merging various ongoing programmes within the area-based approach (*see also How we work together*).
- We remain committed to the 'resilience' approach in Pottenberg and Nazareth, working with partners and residents. We are focusing on innovative approaches and solid local teams with a broad mandate.
- Our citizens' budget gives residents a voice in how municipal funds are spent. In the absence of other arrangements, it has recently become apparent that sports and folk-cultural associations have also regularly made use of the citizens' budget. To address this, we are creating two new subsidy schemes for these groups. This enables us to better focus the citizens' budget on informal organisations and neighbourhood initiatives, with a corresponding budget.
- Due in part to national funding, too many innovations in social policy become temporary in nature. This poses substantial challenges for our implementing partners; it renders them unable to offer permanent contracts, for example. We want to reach agreements with our partners that allow them to structure their activities with the confidence that funding will continue. First, we will look at the Supplementary Agreement on Care and Welfare (AZWA).
- We are seeing an increase in the willingness to employ people facing barriers to employment. However, this is only having a limited impact on the exit rates from social assistance. To address this, we will both facilitate employers and business owners in this regard and hold them to account. Amongst other measures, we will use more job and financial coaches.
- As set out in the Environmental Vision, we are increasing the number of residential care zones in the city. This results in a strengthening of our collaboration with care institutions and other partners to bring housing and care closer together. One example is to better facilitate

initiatives that offer housing combined with care, such as in the Moluccan district and Borgharen. This enables us to strengthen social cohesion in the district (*see also Housing*).

- We support newcomers in getting off to a good start in Maastricht. By investing in language, participation and employment, we help newcomers in Maastricht – in line with established policy – to integrate into society quickly and offer them the possibility to build a new future on their own.
- We aim to prevent homelessness – both those living on the streets as well as at temporary addresses – as much as possible by adopting tailored approaches. These include Early Detection, Skaeve Huse and Assertive Treatment. We remain fully committed to the 'Housing First' approach. To this end, through our housing development programme, we help ensure the availability of suitable housing (*see also Housing*). We will provide adequate shelter for those for whom this is not an option.

Implementation capacity

Strengthening area-based working and the further decompartmentalisation place significant demands on our organisation and our administrative culture (*see also How we work together*). It demands a shift from policy to implementation, from control to trust, and a greater authority to act. This means strong local teams as a foundation as well as working in collaboration with our partners in South Limburg. In doing so, we ensure that practical knowledge is utilised much more frequently in creating and implementing policy. This also means recruiting more staff with practical training for municipal positions.

Finance

We are making approximately €2.4 million per year available for the described intensifications, including a Participation Budget for making a social contribution. In addition to the structural intensifications described, we are providing the following stimuli:

- An investment stimulus of an indicative investment of €5 million for measures specifically targeting prevention.
- A €6 million investment stimulus for implementation, which we will apply to the Education and Youth Agenda, amongst other things, with a *temporary operating budget* of 4 x €1 million.

4. Economy

Our ambition

A strong economy and a vibrant labour market form the foundation for the ambitious large-scale expansion that we aim to achieve together with our partners in South Limburg, the goal of which is a promising future for all our residents. We will only achieve our growth ambitions if we strengthen our knowledge economy, capitalise on the economic engine of our historic city centre and provide our wider SME sector with more space to do business. This is how we are working together to improve our broad prosperity.

A connected city means that we cherish our diversity of economic activities. For the desired development to take place, it is essential that labour market policy is properly aligned with the needs of the city and the region. Both theoretical and practice-oriented education are necessary in equal measure in this regard (*see also Livelihood Security, Equality of Opportunity and Health*).

Strengthening our knowledge infrastructure is crucial. For this reason, we are vigorously continuing the development of Brightlands Maastricht Health Campus. We are setting up an Investment Fund for the campus so that we can actively invest together with both public and private partners. Furthermore, we are linking the campus's dynamism more closely to the economy and the broader educational offer available throughout the city. As a result, the growth of the knowledge economy on campus is clearly creating more opportunities for all residents of Maastricht. It helps to ensure that more students can continue to live and work in the city after completing their studies and provides a breeding ground for new manufacturing industries.

The Einstein Telescope represents a fantastic opportunity for Maastricht as a knowledge city and for Europe. We fully support this initiative through our lobbying efforts. We are also actively lobbying for better national and international rail connections to Liège and Aachen which are crucial to realising Euregional ambitions. We also want to ensure our manufacturing industry can flourish. This is the ideal location for opportunities for the circular economy and job growth for Maastricht residents with various educational backgrounds.

With its many cultural attractions, our historic city centre holds a great appeal for tourists and day-trippers from all over Europe. This is further enhanced by events such as TEFAF and André Rieu's concerts at the Vrijthof. While this is of great value to our economy, it also has a downside, such as during peak periods. Clear decisions are necessary to ensure a dynamic *and* liveable city centre. During this government term, we are making a concerted effort to create space for new events. We are also continuing our efforts to make the city centre greener.

Businesses such as plumbers, electricians and bicycle repair shops keep the city going. Local small businesses form the foundation of our economic dynamism. They are active on campus, in the city centre and in every neighbourhood and district. Not only do they provide employment, but they also foster innovation, create opportunities for people to come together and offer the necessary support to associations and communities. Our wider SME sector is calling for better support from the municipality. This is a spearhead for this government term.

Our commitment

- The campus is the engine driving our economic development. To support further development, we are setting up an investment fund so that we can invest in strategic leverage projects together with partners. These are large-scale public-private partnership projects that serve to strengthen the campus ecosystem. Examples of this include the 'circular space' at the Brightlands Chemelot Campus and the high-tech research greenhouse at the Brightlands Greenport Campus in Venlo. We would also like to make strategic leverage projects like this possible on our campus. For the implementation of the fund, we are working together with Maastricht University, Maastricht UMC+ and the Province of Limburg.
- In order to make the city's growth possible, it is necessary not only to retain talent but also to attract new talent. This is a prerequisite for a future-proof economy.
- In line with the Environmental Vision, we are creating more physical space for our manufacturing industry and other activities. This sometimes demands targeted relocation or

restructuring in order to make the most optimal use possible of the limited hectares of land we have. It also enables us to create opportunities for the circular economy.

- The development of the Spoorzone offers opportunities to attract new businesses such as consultancy, the creative industries or new European institutions or agencies. We are also actively focusing our business development and lobbying efforts on the national government and Europe, together with our partners in South Limburg.
- We are continuing our policy of supporting our energy-intensive businesses (the so-called 'Cluster 6' companies) in their efforts to become more sustainable and to electrify their operations (*see also Sustainability*).
- For the city centre, we are working together with shopkeepers, restaurants and business owners to create an attractive and green city centre. Our efforts remain focused on enhancing the distinctive quality of the five city quarters. We are stepping up our efforts to make the city greener, and one of these key projects during this government term is making the Markt greener (*see also Sustainability*).
- We are recalibrating our rules for events to ensure we can offer specific scope for additional and distinctive events that are evenly spread throughout the city as well as over time. This specifically also involves scope for events organised by and for the local community (in the city centre). We would also like to attract a number of top (sports) events (*see also Culture, sport and events*).
- We are also working to improve accessibility, including through better Park+Ride and Park+Walk facilities (*see also Mobility*).
- We are launching an action programme for SMEs to help our businesses become future-proof. These efforts involve sustainability, the circular economy and digitalisation. Part of this is improving municipal services from the Maastricht Business Team such as making the municipality more accessible and visiting businesses more often.
- As agreed in the Environmental Vision, we offer more space in our districts and neighbourhoods for hospitality businesses, social facilities and cultural activities, for example. We are concentrating this primarily in 'vibrant hubs', such as those around existing retail clusters.

Our implementation capacity

During this government term, the focus will be on implementing the plans set out in our Environmental Vision. Revising the rules on events and the SME action programme will require (temporary) additional capacity.

Finance

We are making approximately €0.5 million per year available for the described intensifications, such as the SME action programme. In addition to these intensifications, we are providing the following stimulus.

- A €20 million campus investment fund.

5. Culture, sport and associations

Our ambition

Maastricht has a rich and diverse cultural life, one that is inextricably linked to the city's history and language, to our identity. Our unique folk culture forms the foundation for this. Take, for example, the brass bands, rifle clubs, carnival associations, and the energy and connection that are generated when organising the various processions taking place in the city. We are going to reinforce this cultural foundation. After all, this helps foster social interaction, a sense of community, the development of talent and the passing on of traditions to new generations. This broad cultural foundation enables professional institutions to emerge and excel. Think of nationally recognised cultural institutions such as the Toneelgroep Maastricht theatre company, the Jan van Eyck Academie art and design school and the philzuid symphony orchestra.

During this government term, we are making an extra commitment to culture. We choose to place an equal focus on folk culture, talent development and professional institutions. Working together is how we create the optimal cultural climate, which is an important factor to encourage talent, knowledge institutions and innovative businesses to settle here. In this way, culture also contributes to the economic development of Maastricht and the region.

We believe that culture should be accessible to everyone. People of all ages should have the opportunity to experience culture, take part in it and develop their creativity, regardless of their background or income. We ensure that every child has the opportunity to be exposed to culture, such as through music education or activities in local neighbourhoods and districts.

Our culture is also visible in our historic buildings and neighbourhoods, our religious and industrial heritage, and in the green countryside surrounding the city. It is this combination of heritage, culture and attractive surroundings that makes Maastricht so appealing. A historic buildings investment stimulus enables us to ensure that our cultural heritage receives the care it deserves (including making it more sustainable).

Maastricht is a sports city, and during the coming government term, we aim to attract several top-class sports events. We also encourage sports and physical activity in public spaces, and when redesigning streets and squares, we actively create space for sports activities ([see also Mobility](#)). Street sportscan make a substantial contribution to health, creativity and mental resilience. We are also exploring whether we can create more space for outdoor swimming and/or water play areas.

Our sports clubs are of great value, and since they are often dependent on volunteers, they deserve our support. During this government term, we will be supporting sports clubs that play a unifying role in the community or those that wish to develop these kinds of activities. Take, for example, a football club that also offers seated tai chi classes or a social restaurant for the elderly. These clubs will have increased access to existing municipal subsidies during this government term. The available budgets will be increased where necessary.

We place a high value on making a minimum level of facilities for sport and socialising available in every district and neighbourhood. Some clubs and associations, however, are struggling to stay afloat. A change in the offer or focus can sometimes help to keep them in the neighbourhood. We provide targeted support to these clubs when the minimum level of facilities is at risk.

Finally, we have seen that our community associations sometimes struggle to find an affordable place to meet for activities such as bingo nights, amateur art and starting theatre groups. Community centres provide a solid basis for this. We will also structure our accommodation facilities policy to provide these groups with more affordable and accessible options.

Our commitment

- The Maastricht dialect is an essential part of our identity; it brings generations and neighbourhoods together and conveys what makes our city so distinctive. This is why we actively encourage the use of the Maastricht dialect, through, amongst other things, education, associations, events, heritage and cultural initiatives.

- We recognise that we are a city of culture, and folk culture and professional culture are linked to one another. Since folk culture serves as a breeding ground for our professional arts and culture, the equal treatment of both is the guiding principle. During this government term, we will, for example, be investing to retain young (recent graduate) creative talent in the region and to improve their chances of developing into professional creators and creative entrepreneurs.
In parallel with the national review of the basic cultural infrastructure (BIS) in 2028, we are adjusting our own commitment to secure equal attention for this area. We propose that the municipal council make arrangements in this regard through a partial agreement, with the broadest possible support (*see also How we work together*).
- We are creating a historic buildings investment stimulus to support owners in preserving and making historic buildings and cultural heritage more sustainable.
- We are implementing the plans for the development of De Bonbonnière within the adopted budget and with a focus on folk culture, knowledge and society.
- We are one of the few municipalities that still run our theatre ourselves, and this hinders cultural entrepreneurship. We are therefore making the Theater aan het Vrijthof an independent organisation, while still preserving quality and accessibility through performance agreements.
- It sometimes proves difficult for neighbourhood initiatives, residents' groups and associations to find suitable accommodation or rehearsal spaces. During this government term, we will pass a public-interest resolution to provide more opportunities for a fair rental rate. We will also be working on a subsidy scheme to give associations more access to affordable and suitable premises for their activities. We will incorporate the details of this into the partial agreement on culture to be drawn up (*see also How we work together*).
- We intend to increase access to sport and culture for young people, adults and seniors. This means removing barriers where necessary such as through the proposed expanded subsidy schemes and by making better use of cross-sectoral opportunities to link physical activity to the maintenance of public spaces (*see also Mobility*). In addition, the existing Sports and Culture Funds offer (financial) opportunities for participation in sports and culture through affiliated organisations. In order to boost participation, we want to expand the offer, following the example of the successful addition of Basic Fit to the existing range of activities for adults. We are also working on health and the development of a wide range of talent through the Youth and Education Agenda (*see also: Livelihood Security, Equality of Opportunity and Health*).
- We offer support to sports clubs that play a vital role in maintaining a minimum level of facilities in neighbourhoods and districts, yet which are struggling to make ends meet. The aim is to help them draw up plans to ensure their continuity, thus enabling them to keep contributing to a sense of community in districts and villages.
- During this government term, we will be making resources available to attract several (top-class sports) events that complement the existing offer, such as the Ironman.
- Sports connect, and that is why we encourage students and non-students to take part in sports together, as is already the case at the Heugem Sports Park and Sportpark West. This is why we are actively working on the collaboration between Maastricht University Sports, Maastricht Sport and other sports clubs in the city.
- We believe it is important for MVV to be able to play in a future-proof stadium. Whether this will entail renovation or a new-build project, the (primary) financial responsibility lies with the club. We have commissioned a study to examine the traffic and safety aspects of a new development at the Belvédère site. Based on the resulting insights, we will determine what, if any, subsequent steps should be taken at the Geusselt or Belvédère site.
- We are making more room in public spaces for sports, physical activity, socialising and green spaces. This will include fitness trails, play areas and public chess boards. We apply an opportunity-based strategy here, amongst other things, with the revised budget for cross-sectoral opportunities in the management of public spaces (*see also Mobility*). We are also

making resources available for a running trail along the Maas. The intention is for this to be a pleasant trail to run, even when it's dark.

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Our implementation capacity

By passing a public-interest resolution, we are simultaneously reducing the administrative burden since we no longer need to work with a commercial lease structure that has to be compensated via a subsidy.

Finance

We are making approximately €2.5 million per year available for the described intensifications (which will be recalibrated with regard to the culture component in 2028). As part of these intensification measures, resources have been allocated not only for culture but also for attracting (top-class sports) events and for a municipal contribution towards increasing the number of outdoor swimming areas. In addition to these intensifications, we are providing the following stimulus:

- A historic buildings investment stimulus worth an indicative investment of €10 million.
- A boost to implementation capacity (*temporary operating budgets*) amounting to €1 million to support sports associations in the context of transformation and urban sports, amongst other things.

6. Mobility

Our ambition

We want to grow to over 140,000 residents and achieve greater economic dynamism, and good accessibility is essential to achieving this growth ambition. Every day, tens of thousands of commuters currently travel to our city, and residents of Maastricht travel to the wider region. They travel by train, bike, car or van and the growth of the city requires targeted investment in better connections and accessibility.

Within our compact city, many residents of Maastricht choose to walk or cycle to work or school. We aim to further encourage this and are significantly increasing the number of bicycle parking spaces in the city centre. We are also improving the bicycle ring road around the city centre and enhancing fast cycle routes in the city.

In maintaining our roads and squares, we make the most of cross-sectoral opportunities to make our city greener, more accessible and more conducive to physical activity. We are also making quality improvements through the realisation of various 'Streets of the Future'. An attractive city is also a green city (*see also Sustainability*).

Public transport is essential to the accessibility of our city. The bus transport concession runs until the end of 2031. During scheduled interim evaluations, we examine opportunities for targeted improvements. We are also committed to improving regional rail connections. Better rail connections to Liège, Leuven and Brussels, and to Aachen and Cologne, are a spearhead on our (Eu)regional lobbying agenda.

In line with the Environmental Vision, we are opting for a low-traffic city centre. We are starting this government term by making the Jekerkwartier and Wyck low-traffic areas (taking into account the results of the pilot programme). It goes without saying that a low-traffic city centre will ensure the same standard of access to homes and other facilities, such as for care providers. This also applies to accessibility for people with reduced mobility.

Visitor parking is provided as much as possible at Park & Ride locations on the outskirts of the city. During this period, we are taking irreversible steps towards the construction of at least one new Park & Ride facility.

Our commitment

- We apply the STOMP principle to the accessibility of our city. First, priority for pedestrians; then cyclists; followed by public transport and shared modes of transport; and finally, private cars.
- We are realising various sections of the fast cycle routes set out in the Environmental Vision, with a focus on improving access to the city centre, the railway station and Randwyck from the local area centres surrounding Maastricht. We are also building an underground bicycle parking facility in the city centre.
- During the previous government term, a budget was available to implement additional mobility measures during regular maintenance activities. We are increasing and broadening the scope of the budget for the current period to incorporate cross-sectoral opportunities that take into account greening, accessibility and physical activity.
- During the coming government term, we want to redesign five streets as 'Streets of the Future'. This involves working with the neighbourhood to determine which of the street functions are important and/or may be given more space. In line with our choice for equitable investment to ensure equal opportunities, we are focusing primarily on streets in neighbourhoods with a lower level of broad prosperity.
- We are taking steps towards the new Spoorzone GRAND MSTRG urban axis (Campus-Station area, Griendkwartier-Sphinxkwartier-Geusselt). We want to reach final agreements with the national government regarding the removal of the railway bridge over the Maas in order to replace it with a footbridge and bicycle bridge.

- In making the Jekerkwartier and Wyck low-traffic zones, we are not immediately opting for a complete redesign, but for temporary measures such as installing planters and street furniture. We will remove any necessary restrictions relating to building aesthetics and visual quality standards for this type of measure. Once it is time for the streets in question to undergo regular maintenance, a permanent redesign will follow. We are also applying this strategy to the greening of the Markt.
- The realisation of Park & Ride locations is our top priority. We are amending the environmental plan for P+R West and intend to reach an agreement with the landowner during this government term. We aim to reach voluntary agreements but will make use of the legal tools available to us where necessary. In addition, we would like to speed up the building of a Park & Ride facility at at least one other location. This will mean taking irreversible steps towards the realisation of new Park & Ride locations during this government term.
- In line with the Environmental Vision, we will eventually reserve (part of) the Vrijthof underground car park for parking spaces for residents, specific target groups and/or bicycle parking. To this end, we are looking into how we can make space available on a permanent basis for these groups once the lease expires (at the end of 2031). During this government term, the underground car park will continue to serve as a visitor car park.
- We are continuing to pursue our policy on (electric) freight hubs for deliveries in the city centre. We are encouraging the use of this through the SME action programme (*see also Economy*).

Our implementation capacity

We can implement most of our planned initiatives within the existing budget and capacity. As is also the case with the housing challenge, we are prioritising implementation over drawing up new plans. We are however reserving capacity for the preparation of plans for the Park & Ride facilities. Inspired by examples from home and abroad, we are increasingly applying temporary redesigns.² This enables us to achieve visible results more often in the short term. Additionally, the ability of residents and businesses to adjust to the temporary set-up can help speed up the final planning process.

Finance

We are making approximately €1.2 million per year available for the described intensifications including the municipal contribution to the Accessible South Limburg programme. In addition to these intensifications, we are providing the following stimulus:

- A boost to implementation capacity (with *temporary operating budgets*) amounting to €11.5 million for cross-sectoral opportunities for the redesign of public spaces.

² See for example <https://nymag.com/news/features/56794/>

7. Sustainability

Our ambition

The effects of climate change are becoming increasingly apparent in the daily lives of Maastricht's residents. Examples include heat stress, (the threat of) floods, periods of extreme drought and ever-increasing energy bills. This is having a major impact on our residents, and the burden is not evenly distributed across our neighbourhoods. Poorly maintained and insulated homes in areas such as Wittevrouwenveld lead to health issues during hot summers, and alarmingly high energy bills in winter. Uncertainty about what the energy transition actually entails is making some Maastricht residents uneasy.

At the same time, we are seeing in more and more places how sustainability measures improve the quality of life, lower energy bills and boost the quality of public spaces. In many neighbourhoods, residents are also taking the initiative themselves to generate energy collectively or better insulate their homes. We can learn from these good examples and build on them.

Over the past government term, we have taken important steps, together with residents and businesses, to reduce CO₂ emissions and arm ourselves against the effects of climate change. This is how Maastricht is growing as an adaptive and green city. During this government term, we will continue to steer the city towards becoming climate-neutral and natural-gas free by 2050. The current high energy prices resulting from geopolitical developments once again emphasise the need to move away from fossil fuels as fast as possible.

At the same time, we are seeing that the pace of this is too slow. The implementation of the Regional Energy Strategy (RES) in South Limburg is lagging behind considerably. This calls for a regional breakthrough, but this can only succeed if we, as Maastricht, assume our responsibility. Not through new plans and policies, but by making implementation the focus. This also helps us ensure that our residents and businesses have clarity as soon as possible about what the transition means for them in concrete terms.

Tackling grid congestion is a priority. This is necessary both to accelerate the energy transition as well as to realise our ambitious growth agenda. Since the power grid is already at full capacity, there is currently little to no scope for new grid connections.

The objective remains to actively work on the energy transition at the neighbourhood level throughout Maastricht by 2030. The transition must also be fair so that everyone can participate in and benefit from it. Efforts must be made to combat energy poverty, and the developed network of energy coaches is very valuable in this regard. Communication and accessibility must be improved, and this starts with recognising that the transition is far-reaching. During this government term, we will continue with the actual expansion of the heat networks in the city. This is how we ensure affordable heating as well as transparency for our residents.

Making the city greener is an important part of our strategy. It is necessary to be better equipped to cope with heavy rainfall and flooding, but also to combat heat stress. To this end, during this government term, we are placing a higher priority on those districts outside the city centre that are most affected by heat stress, as well as to incorporate more green spaces into our major urban development projects. In addition, we are reaching agreements during this government term with the national government and the province on the necessary measures for flood protection.

Our commitment

- We are converting the emergency energy fund from the previous government term into an 'affordable energy scheme' (within existing budgets). In doing so, we are continuing our commitment to tackling energy poverty and ensuring that all residents of Maastricht are participating in the energy transition.
- Since the generation of wind energy is lagging behind at the regional level, Maastricht is stepping up its efforts in the areas of rooftop solar and battery storage (for energy hubs, for example). We are doing this primarily by making this possible in spatial terms. The goal of this is not to compensate for other objectives set out in the RES, but to reduce the gap as well as maintain a realistic development path towards climate neutrality by 2050. From this increased

commitment on our part, we are working on a breakthrough in the RES file: by focusing our efforts on one or more large-scale sites in the region. At a regional level, we are also examining new technologies such as hydrogen, small modular nuclear reactors and modern hydro-electric power stations.

- To prevent grid congestion, we are working towards smarter use of the power grid. We are providing spatial planning support to the grid operator to enable expansion of the existing network as quickly as possible. Where possible, we also use our municipal real estate and land holdings to facilitate the energy transition. Furthermore, we will continue to coordinate energy generation, storage and local consumption at the neighbourhood level, such as through neighbourhood batteries and neighbourhood cooperatives.
- Through active development and investment, we are realising new heat networks and expanding existing heat networks based on available local heat sources. One example is the start of construction of the heat network for Trega Zinkwit, with the option of expanding this to Limmel. We will set out the preferred strategy for each district during this government term.
- In districts where a heat network will not be available, we are exploring how we can support individual owners as a municipality in making their homes more sustainable. One example involves facilitating the collective purchase of heat pumps.
- We are implementing the *Strategic Memorandum on Making Real Estate More Sustainable*. The guiding principle **remains that** we will aim to achieve the highest possible climate returns on our euros. A new aspect is that, subject to certain conditions, we are prepared to prioritise other sustainability measures if they deliver significantly higher climate benefits for our euros. To make sustainability easier to achieve, we are continuing our efforts to simplify the rules governing building aesthetics and the preservation of historic buildings (*see also Housing*).
- The energy transition can only be successful if it is feasible and fair for all residents. Despite declining national government funding, it is vital for us to continue with our insulation strategy. Better insulation has an immediate effect on tackling energy poverty. To this end, we are focusing our efforts on those neighbourhoods where energy poverty is most prevalent. We are continuing our partnership with the Centre for Nature and Environmental Education.
- We are incorporating the green standard from the Environmental Vision into the Environmental Plan. This standard will serve as the guiding principle for agreements with developers. We are also making funds available to make the city greener. For new green projects, we are placing a priority on districts outside the city centre.
- Making housing association homes and the many historic buildings in Maastricht more sustainable demands a new stimulus. We are actively working with housing associations to help them make their properties more sustainable at the desired pace. We elaborate on this in new performance agreements and the 'Affordable Housing Investment Stimulus' (*see also Housing*). It is also desirable to support owners of historic building through the 'Historic Buildings Investment Stimulus' by providing targeted, customised advice and financial support for sustainability measures (*see also Culture, sport and associations*).
- As part of our mobility policy, we encourage, amongst other things, the use of bicycles and public transport, and are working on electric freight hubs and Park & Ride facilities. This enables us to work towards sustainable mobility. The budget for cross-sectoral opportunities in public spaces also makes a further contribution to the greening of public spaces (*see also Mobility*).
- During this government term, we will be reaching agreements with the national government and the province to improve flood protection (through the Multi-Year Programme for Infrastructure, Spatial Planning and Transport or MIRT). In line with the Environmental Vision, we are focusing as much as possible on measures that reduce the burden on the historic city centre.

Our implementation capacity

The targets for 2050 and 2030 are clear. When it comes to sustainability, speeding up implementation is the key. This also means that we have to speed up the process of granting

permits for the necessary energy facilities. Simplifying regulations in areas such as building aesthetics and historic building policy also makes it easier to implement sustainability measures. We are not dogmatic about the measures we take to achieve our goals; we can have the greatest climate impact with feasible and affordable measures.

Finance

Based on the focus described, no structural intensifications are required for the time being. We are, however, providing a significant boost:

- An investment stimulus for the greening of the city with an indicative investment of €10 million.
- A boost to implementation capacity (with temporary operating budgets for implementation) amounting to €5 million for sustainability and rooftop solar with storage.

In addition, the 'Affordable Housing Investment Stimulus' and the 'Historic Buildings Investment Stimulus' are helping to make these properties more sustainable ([see also Housing and Culture, Clubs and Sport](#)).

8. Safety and liveability

Our ambition

Feeling safe in your own neighbourhood is a prerequisite for being able to participate fully in society. This begins with social cohesion, in which residents live together with respect for one another, look out for one another and are inspired by role models. Conversely, neighbourhoods characterised by high levels of vulnerability actually tend to reinforce anti-social behaviour. Safety and liveability are therefore inextricably linked to our efforts in the areas of livelihood security, equality of opportunity and health. Various groups such as women, members of the LGBTIQ+ community and the elderly are more likely than other residents of Maastricht to experience incidents involving safety and violence. This is unacceptable and calls for recognition and a tailored approach.

The presence of visible and approachable professionals in the district is essential for preventing problems and clamping down on them where necessary. District police officers, special investigating officers, and youth and welfare officers play a key role in building trust and in preventatively identifying and addressing problems (*see also: Livelihood Security, Equality of Opportunity and Health*). The foundations for this were laid during the previous government term.

In spite of this, the safety and liveability challenges are increasing in scale and complexity, are following one another in rapid succession, and are increasingly affecting several areas simultaneously. This trend has been evident throughout the Netherlands post-COVID, but it is often even more pronounced here. Examples include disturbances on the streets caused by people experiencing a mental health crisis, robberies and muggings, domestic violence and femicide. The causes include a lack of affordable housing, mental health issues (including those resulting from harmful algorithms on social media), financial problems and addiction. As a border region, we are also particularly vulnerable to drug-related crime and public disturbances.

The effectiveness of the current approach is under pressure and no longer always reflects the nature of the growing problem. This is why we are creating an explicit link between safety and liveability to area-based working. In doing so, we are choosing to make equitable investments in order to have the maximum impact in those areas where the need is most urgent. This development has begun recently and calls for substantial further development to make it faster, more flexible and more innovative.

Our commitment

- Safety and liveability demand an integrated and area-based approach. Good, attractive facilities can prevent young people from becoming involved in crime (*see also: Livelihood Security, Equality of Opportunity and Health*). A better design of public spaces can sometimes make all the difference to people who no longer always feel safe on the streets in the dark (*see also Mobility*).
- We help build our residents' resilience through our networks in districts and neighbourhoods. One example is providing information on what to do if you are targeted by a 'babbeltruc' (doorstep or street distraction scams) or how to improve your digital security. We are continuing our efforts in this area, for example in libraries and community centres.
- We are strengthening the enforcement organisation by expanding its capacity and deepening its expertise and specialism. Where possible and effective, we are also making use of 'city reservists' for light supervisory duties and to promote social cohesion. By working together with the local community, we gain a better awareness of what is going on.
- We remain fully committed to tackling healthcare fraud and subversion and do this at a regional level.
- We are recalibrating the working relationship between the police district teams, special investigating officers and social workers. This ensures a visible presence in districts and neighbourhoods, and around educational institutions. We are continuing the 'Prevention through Responsibility' urban programme and linking it to area-based working (*see also How we work together*).

- CCTV surveillance in the city is being expanded. We have made the explicit decision to use mobile CCTV. This also makes our interventions mobile wherever troublemakers are moving around the city.
- We are working to create a resilient public authority, and this demands a focus on our digital systems and the protection of our critical infrastructure and facilities.
- Given our (security-vulnerable) location in the border region, we are drawing up a single Euregional security proposal in which, as South Limburg, we will join forces with Hasselt, Liège and Aachen to form a unified front vis-à-vis our national governments and Europe.

Our implementation capacity

A preventative approach begins in our districts and neighbourhoods. This is why we are closely linking our commitment to safety and liveability with area-based working ([see also *How we work together*](#)).

Finance

In view of the worrying trend described above, we are allocating an additional intensification of €0.75 million per year to improve safety and liveability. We are not opting for a temporary stimulus here.

9. How we work together on the city

Our ambition

This coalition agreement on the main points is an ambitious one. Ambitious in its objectives. Ambitious in its focus on implementation capacity. And ambitious in its desire to implement it through open collaboration with partners. The recent Berenschot report underscores the importance of this.

We see it as our task to do our utmost over the coming government term to contribute to breaking through the patterns that have developed. And to help contribute to a new governance and organisational culture which offers scope for dualism and an open and equal partnership between the municipal executive and administrative organisation. This will enable us to give more back to the city in the form of concrete results for the residents and businesses.

During this government term, we want to work as a single municipality towards the shared ambition set out in this agreement: to be less incident-driven, to be more mindful of the longer term, and to build mutual trust. And to do all this without losing sight of the city's urgent needs. During this government term, we will be focusing specifically on shifting from policy to implementation. From control to trust. And to more authority to act. This means further developing area-based working as well as giving an extra boost to decompartmentalising budgets. Not as a goal in itself, but as a means of achieving more for our residents and businesses.

We ensure that our shared ambition consistently guides our work. It guides the municipal organisation's prioritisation and actions. It also lays a better foundation for regional cooperation and (joint) lobbying activities, challenges businesses to invest, and provides partners and residents with guidance on the choices they have to make.

It is a task that we will take on every single day and for which we may be explicitly accountable. Guided by this commitment we have made to ourselves, we reach out to all the other parties involved, in the hope that they will join us in working towards a better Maastricht.

Our commitment

We are taking the Berenschot report as the starting point for all our efforts. For us, this begins with an open dialogue with the municipal council and the administrative organisation.

- We want to highlight implementation when it comes to major challenges. We are therefore reluctant to add all sorts of new policy aspirations. We also want to proactively involve the municipal council in tackling the city's major challenges. For example, by explicitly setting aside time for this during biannual thematic consultations. In consultation with the municipal council, we would like to decide together how and for which challenges we will do this.
- We can envisage dualism being given a boost by the measures set out below (which are aligned with the Berenschot report). We would be happy to discuss this with the municipal council and will support any necessary amendments to the code of order if there is broad support for this within the municipal council:
 - o opportunities for members of the municipal executive to amend council proposals following domain meetings;
 - o greater scope for exploratory discussions;
 - o an annual trilogue between the municipal council, the municipal executive and the organisation.
- As coalition parties, we intend to hold coalition meetings less frequently. And when these meetings are held, they will, in principle, only be held with the party leaders (without the presence of the members of the municipal executive).
- This coalition agreement is explicitly a broad outline. We do not cover all topics, and the topics we do cover are limited to the path we are pursuing. We invite the municipal council to discuss the details of this with us. To this end, we intend to reach partial agreements on a number of

important challenges that enjoy the broadest possible support. These areas include, for example:

- o Participation;
 - o Students and the city;
 - o Promoting the Maastricht dialect;
 - o Integration and employment;
 - o Integrated safety policy;
 - o Culture.
- We work as a collegial administration. We share responsibility for implementing this coalition agreement. This also means that major files and area development projects are coordinated during expanded portfolio holder consultations. We regularly review our working methods and are accountable when it comes to our own awareness of and adherence to our roles.
- Together with the mayor and the municipal clerk, we are taking the lead in improving relationships between the administration and the organisation. This enables us to work towards a task-oriented organisation that takes an area-based approach to its collaboration with partners, other authorities and residents. This also requires greater authority to act, for example on the part of district and safety coordinators. For us, official expertise means providing solid advice in advance and ensuring targeted implementation once the political and administrative decision-making process is complete. In this regard, the code of conduct provides a self-evident foundation for working on an open, honest and fact-based debate. We monitor progress, partly on the basis of available benchmarks and, where necessary, external quality reviews or evaluations.
- We want to implement our agenda in collaboration with the city. Participation is the key. For us, participation means that, as municipality, we create connections with residents and business owners at the district and local levels. These insights inform the decisions we have to make. This does not mean we are able to accommodate every wish from the city. Our ambitious growth agenda also requires clear choices and direction.
- One of the processes that can help the municipal council take more control is the Planning & Control (P&C) cycle. In collaboration with the Budget and Accountability Committee (B&V), we will be introducing a new budget structure this government term which is more recognisable and transparent. To this end, we intend to start applying key performance indicators (KPIs), amongst other things, to the major challenges.
- We see solid opportunities in the so-called Tripolar partnership with Heerlen and Sittard-Geleen. Together, we feel an administrative responsibility for South Limburg, with its population of over 600,000, and to make a significant contribution to the national urbanisation challenge as described in the National Spatial Strategy. We are working intensively on our shared urbanisation objective and on coordinated advocacy towards the national government and the European Union. And this does not come without commitment.

Our implementation capacity

The municipal council recently adopted various policy frameworks such as the Environmental Vision, the 'We See You' Poverty Policy, the policy plan for social meeting places and the Maastricht Inclusion Agenda. During this government term, the focus will be on implementing these measures. This is why we are cautious about announcing new policy plans and visions in this agreement. We want to avoid merely accumulating new policies that are either not implemented or not fully implemented. We have learned from the experience of the previous government term, marked by underdelivery and underspending. We want to focus our available time and capacity on implementation.

We can strengthen (a culture of) task-oriented and area-based working primarily by shifting capacity from policy to implementation. This is a step-by-step process. During the transition phase, this means that we will use flexible external capacity where necessary to organise the necessary implementation resources. As a municipality in a border region, we also emphasise the importance of a strong national and European network. Participation in national and international networks such as the Bloomberg programme often pays for itself twice over in the long term.

To help contribute to decompartmentalisation, we are integrating the following programmes, amongst others, into our area-based approach: Resilience, Healthy Maastricht and the Liveable Districts initiative ([see also *Living Together*](#)). The urban approach to 'Prevention through Responsibility' and area-based working reinforce one another.

Finance

Given the focus described and the intended shift from policy to implementation, we have opted not to pursue structural intensifications here, but rather to provide stimuli. The basic principle is that, in the long term, these stimuli will be covered on a structural level as a result of fiscal returns (and can be incorporated as such in the budget). This involves stimuli for the entire government term. We are making agreements with the municipal clerk regarding the additional output this is designed to produce and what this will require in the mutual cooperation.

10. Finance

This coalition agreement exudes ambition and places a priority on implementation capacity. We will do this within the limits of the available resources and will make even more effective use of these by applying more focus and decompartmentalisation.

At the same time, we see an urgent need to reduce division and improve connections between residents in the city. It is also key to invest in the future and in the city's earning capacity. To do this, we are making two choices:

- We are setting aside *investment reserves* for the investment stimuli described (including affordable housing, historic buildings and greening). We will determine the scope and implementation on the basis of proposals still to be finalised, which we will submit to the municipal council.
- To create *temporary operating budgets* during this government term for the implementation (and implementation capacity) stimuli described. Temporary budgets to emphasise that a stimulus is involved. An initiative aimed at achieving the stated objectives. This temporary commitment allows for a more flexible budget, making adjustments easier.

We will cover these investment reserves and temporary operating budgets from our general reserve. In previous years, Maastricht has inadvertently generated substantial savings, mainly due to underdelivery. The ambitions were higher than the capacity to realise them. As a result of this, the general reserve increased by approximately €75 million during the last government term. This is despite the fact that we already had an ample reserve that was far above the national norms. We would now like to give these savings back to the city – with a little extra – through the described additional temporary efforts for implementation capacity and extra investment stimuli to address the major challenges we now find ourselves facing.

In addition, we are making targeted choices for a number of structural intensifications totalling (annually) approximately €5 million. The focus is on intensifications in the areas of 'Livelihood security, equality of opportunity and health', 'Mobility' and 'Culture, sport and associations'. We are offsetting these structural intensifications by lowering the contingency reserve and by applying an inflation adjustment to the property tax (OZB) rates. This prevents any increase in the tax burden on top of the inflation adjustment.

Financial ground rules

Creating temporary budgets and reserves from the general reserve – our 'savings' – requires clear financial ground rules:

- *'Temporary' really does mean temporary.* We work with temporary operating budgets designed to ensure implementation capacity. If these prove successful, we will consider converting them into regular (structural) budget items. To this end, structural funding must be secured through realised fiscal returns, for example.
- *Drawing up proposals with measurable targets.* The investment reserves may only be used on the basis of implementation plans, still to be drawn up, that contain measurable objectives. The detailed proposals will be submitted to the municipal council as soon as possible, yet no later than within one year.
- *Additional financial scope*
Any additional financial scope arising from windfall gains will, at the time of scheduled integrated assessment (P&C documents) and with the municipal council's approval, be given priority when applied to cover a budget deficit and then preferably added to the general reserve. In doing so, we can take into account the freedom of choice of future city administrations.
- *Resilience*
The municipal council has set the resilience ratio³ in the financial regulations at a minimum of 1. We aim for a ratio higher than 2.

³ This refers to the available resilience capacity divided by the required resilience capacity (total quantified risks).

Explanation of stimuli

The resilience ratio provides the framework for the use of the general reserve to fund temporary operating budgets and to create reserves. Assuming a desired resilience ratio of 2 (set by the municipal council at a minimum of 1) and net assets of €155.9 million after incorporating the 2025 annual account results, there remains a potential margin of approximately €120 million. Of this amount, we are making a maximum of approximately 4 x €7.5 million available for *temporary operating budgets* and a maximum of €81 million for *investment reserves*.

Temporary operating budgets

The operating budgets below are broken down by the various themes set out in this coalition agreement. These are maximum amounts for the entire government term, to be allocated over the years.

Temporary operating budgets 2027-2030	(x €1 million)
Housing	1.4
Livelihood security, equality of opportunity and health	6.0
Culture, sport and associations	1.0
Mobility	11.5
Sustainability	5.0
How we work together on the city	5.0
Total	29.9

Investment reserves

The allocation of the maximum €81 million for investment reserves and the distribution across the various items will be set out in more detail in accordance with the ground rules (with the exception of the Campus Investment Fund, for which we will allocate at least €20 million). An overview of the (indicative) size of the reserves follows below. These are gross amounts in each case, including preparation and legal costs.

Investment reserves 2027-2030	(x €1 million)
Affordable housing	20.0
Mobile home pitches	6.0
Maastricht Prevention City	5.0
Campus Investment Fund	20.0
Historic buildings	20.0
Greening	10.0
Total	81.0

Explanation of structural intensifications within the financial scope

The overview below sets out the structural financial scope for the period 2027–2030. The starting point for the financial overview is the available budget as set out in the second administrative report for 2025. The financial effects of the municipal fund circulars published since then, the decisions taken and autonomous developments have since been incorporated. These are not yet finalised but have been added to provide an idea of the financial scope.

Development of the budgetary framework				
	2027	2028	2029	2030
Status following the 2nd administrative report for 2025	16.7	2.5	2.7	2.9
Impact of the Municipal Fund circulars (December 2025 circular and May 2026 circular)	-1.4	-2.2	-3.8	2.7
Other adjustments (autonomous developments and the implementation of decisions already taken)	-8.7	-5.1	-8.0	-6.6
Starting point	6.5	-4.8	-9.1	-1.1
Intensifications*				
Livelihood security, equality of opportunity and health	-2.5	-2.4	-2.4	-2.4
Economy	-0.5	-0.5	-0.5	-0.5
Culture, sport and associations	-2.6	-2.5	-0.5	-0.5
Mobility	-1.3	-1.2	-1.1	-1.1
Liveability and safety	-0.8	-0.8	-0.8	-0.8
Subtotal	-7.6	-7.4	-5.3	-5.2
Measures to create scope				
Reduce contingency reserve to €0.5 million.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6
Property tax rates with inflation adjustment	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6
Creation of contingency reserve for underutilisation of capital expenditure and updating of investment plan	1.9	2.7	3.4	3.8
Subtotal	5.1	5.9	6.6	7.0
Budget balance after financial translation of coalition agreement	4.0	-6.2	-7.8	0.8

* Amounts exclude temporary operating budgets and investment reserves charged to the general reserves.

The province supervises the municipality's finances. A requirement here is that the long-term outlook must show a positive balance. Our budget meets this requirement. We expect a budget deficit in 2028 and 2029. This is also due to the reduced funding from the national government via the municipal fund, also known as 'the (budget) cliff'. Together with other municipalities (via the VNG), we are exploring ways to engage with the national government to address this issue, and, in anticipation of this, have decided not to make any budget cuts. If necessary, we will cover the expected budget deficits in those years from our general reserve. From 2030 onwards, the budget will once again see a surplus.

11. Portfolio allocation

Wim Hillenaar (Mayor)

- General and governmental affairs
- Public Order & Safety (including the Care and Safety House)
- 5 • Enforcement
- Integrity
- Permits reserved for the mayor
- Lobby (coordinating)
- 10 • Communication & Local Media (Eu)regional cooperation (coordinating)

Marlou Jenneskens (D66)

- First deputy mayor
- 15 • Knowledge infrastructure (*Brightlands, higher professional/university education, students*)
- Education (*Policy, Primary Education, Secondary Education, Property/IHP*)
- 20 • Labour market
- Youth & Youth Services
- Sport and Leisure
- Culture (*BIS institutions & education*)
- 25 • District: North Maastricht

Hubert Mackus (CDA)

- Second deputy mayor
- Economy (city centre & campus development, including acquisition)
- 30 • Tourism, Events, Hospitality & Hotels
- Housing (housing associations, mobile homes, student housing, residential care zones)
- Historic Building Policy
- 35 • Permits & Supervision (including policy rules on housing, building aesthetics & historic buildings)
- MIRT & BOL (coordinating)
- District: East Maastricht
- 40

Jeroen Hoenderkamp (GroenLinks)

- Third deputy mayor
- 45 • Healthcare, health and wellbeing (*including the Social Support Act [WMO]*)
- Social Affairs
- Sustainability & Energy Transition
- Personnel & Organisation
- 50 • District: South Maastricht

Vacancy (SPM)

- Fourth deputy mayor
- Environmental planning
- Urban development
- 55 • Integration and participation
- Diversity and inclusion
- Culture (coordinating)
- Cultural heritage
- 60 • District: Central Maastricht

Guiseppe Noteborn (VVD)

- Fifth deputy mayor
- Mobility & Infrastructure
- 65 • Flooding, Nature, Landscapes & Animal Welfare (*climate adaptation, water, flood protection*)
- City Management (*waste, NIBOR*)
- Maastricht dialect
- 70 • District: South West Maastricht

Manon Fokke (PvdA)

- Sixth deputy mayor
- 75 • Finance & Operational Management
- Resilience Programme
- Area-based Working
- Real Estate & Land Policy
- Citizen Participation
- 80 • Districts: West Maastricht and North West Maastricht