

# Let's do justice together in Maastricht

Election program ChristenUnie Maastricht (short version)





# Preface

ChristenUnie, part of society

Dear "Maastrichtenaren",

On March 16th 2022, municipal elections take place in our beautiful city. Politics often seem far away, however, it touches everyone. Because these elections are all about people. About you and me. About our parents, our children, our neighbors, teachers at our schools, our employers and our employees. They are about us and our way of living in Maastricht. Our principle is: Let's Do Justice Together in Maastricht.

- **Do**, because our words only get volume when we turn them into action.
- **Justice**, because every human being counts, and we want to fight against what is unjust.
- **Together**, because we want to point out that no one stands alone. And also because the government only functions well if it works together with its citizens.

We do our very best to look out for all citizens of our municipality and to be committed to them. Together, with each other and with the indispensable blessing of the Lord, we look to the future of our city with trust. We hope to give you our trust. May we receive your trust?

Kinds regards, also on behalf of all other candidates,

**Ingeborg Dijkstra- Verbeek**

*Party leader ChristenUnie Maastricht*

[ingeborg@maastricht.christenunie.nl](mailto:ingeborg@maastricht.christenunie.nl)

06 – 14 42 02 34



P.S. This is the short version of our election program. You can find our complete program at [www.maastricht.christenunie.nl](http://www.maastricht.christenunie.nl)

## A society with future

We still feel the consequences of the covid pandemic. Or rather, we are still in it. Many citizens still experience the impact of COVID-19 on a daily basis. The economic consequences were large and the rules and regulations have had social and psychological impact on people of all ages.

The polarization of society has increased. We were not able to meet each other, and we had a hard time nuancing opinions that were different than our own.

People in Maastricht feel let down by society and by the government. They feel misunderstood, unseen and sometimes trapped.

ChristenUnie is aware of these things and sees that the way we shape society together is under discussion.







Thankfully, we have also seen that, when it really matters, we look out for each other in Maastricht. We are capable of helping each other in creative ways. Practical examples of this are The Crew against Corona (students doing groceries for senior citizens), Hart voor elkaar (Moluccun foundation Moetiara Maloekoe handing out meals and surprise packages) and Voordeur Verhalen (front door stories at 1,5 meters) in neighborhood Caberg-Malpertuis. These and many other initiatives, including street art, preparing meals and home visits to fight loneliness were heartwarming. More than ever, we are convinced of the importance to believe in and build a city that is not about "I" but about "we".

Therefore, we enter the coming elections with this manifesto of hope.

Despite large financial challenges, we present our election program, which is filled with plans for Maastricht that show how ChristenUnie wants to help building a society in which we pay attention to what really matters. We invest in care for each other, a government which is the ally of citizens in a sustainable economy and in choices that benefit God's creation.

In looking for answers to the challenges of this time, we as a Christian party are inspired by the bible. The bible talks about people, about living alongside each other and about government. The bible gives us the liberating message of hope. That is why we believe that Christian principles can contribute to the welfare of our city.

The politicians of ChristenUnie are part of a movement of socially involved Christians who give a voice to their faith in several places in society. They are willing to take responsibility and work together for a better social environment.

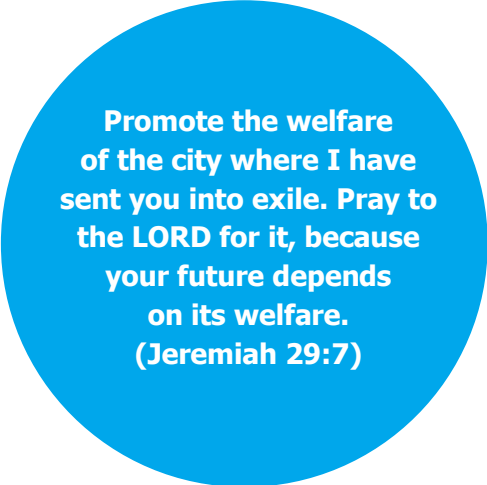
We are very much aware that the government is not capable of solving all issues. Society is not makeable. But according to ChristenUnie, the government is there to protect the weak and regulate the strong. It also protects the atmosphere within people can create peace.

In conclusion: ChristenUnie has a strong and unique answer to questions and debate about "left or right" and what the role of the government should be. In the space between decisive government and creating support in society, ChristenUnie looks for communities to encourage them to take action.

ChristenUnie is both a local and national Christian party, a network of people. This offers stability. We haven't just come up with local viewpoints, we have based them on our Christian principles. The fact that ChristenUnie is active in all levels of public government gives you great opportunities to adapt and to put local affairs on the provincial and nationwide agenda (and vice versa).

## **By Christians *for* everyone**

ChristenUnie is a party by Christians for everyone. We want to show and pass on God's love for this world, for the Netherlands, for Maastricht. Join us!



**Promote the welfare  
of the city where I have  
sent you into exile. Pray to  
the LORD for it, because  
your future depends  
on its welfare.  
(Jeremiah 29:7)**





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# Chapter 1 **Reliable government**

## **What does ChristenUnie stand for?**

The municipality's main task is to strengthen society and it must therefore stand beside people in order to point out their own responsibility, but also to think with them, to stimulate and support them where necessary. The human measure, that is what fits ChristenUnie, what fits Maastricht. In our daily lives, in our work, in our family and in the care of the municipality for its inhabitants.

## **Trust**

ChristenUnie wants to contribute to building trust by:

- Being an open, recognizable and involved presence in Maastricht.
- Focusing on good relations with residents.
- Being honest and not making promises that cannot be kept.

## **Youth**

Democracy is not a fixed concept, but a verb. That is why ChristenUnie wants to involve citizens, and therefore also young people in Maastricht, in local democracy. We think this is necessary because by talking together about the challenges in our community, we can come to supported solutions together.

- City plans should also be tested for their consequences for young people (generation check).

## **Discrimination and racism**

Local government also has a calling to do justice. Every resident of Maastricht is entitled to fair treatment, regardless of gender, background, disability, or other status. Discrimination and racism affect that equality and freedom.

- There can be no question of ethnic profiling in Maastricht.
- The ADV Limburg anti-discrimination agency must be easy to find and reach.
- Signals of unequal treatment, discrimination, and racism must be demonstrably dealt with.

## **Communication**

For many people, society is becoming more complex. Especially the elderly, people with a migration background and illiterate people often find it complicated to find the right information in time or to turn to the government for help. ChristenUnie wants the municipality to keep its rules as simple as possible.

- The municipality communicates with residents in understandable language.

## **Finances**

Public resources are inherently scarce; there are always more desires than there is money available. The City Council must carefully balance the various wishes, needs and interests. When making cuts, ChristenUnie wants to avoid those items that have to do with needs of individual residents, care, safety, management and maintenance of existing facilities as much as possible. Of course, for people with little financial capacity, customized solutions must be possible.

- Caring for one another, and certainly for our vulnerable fellow citizens, is a primary consideration when making financial and policy decisions.







## Chapter 2 Safety

### What does ChristenUnie stand for?

As residents of Maastricht, we want to be able to live safely. The government has a duty to protect residents and to fight crime. However, ChristenUnie also believes that the freedom we are allowed to enjoy in our municipality go hand in hand with responsibilities. In addition to the legal task of government, we see a major role for society. Especially when it comes to safety.

- The availability and visibility of the district police officer will be increased.
- Residents will be involved in drawing up the safety plan and priorities (possibly for each neighbourhood).
- There is room in Maastricht for organizations such as Stichting Exodus, which offers shelter and support to (former) prisoners, their children and family members.

### Drugs and alcohol

ChristenUnie wants to actively counteract the presence of coffee shops and the use of drugs, and to take strict action in the event of nuisance. Signals from the neighbourhood must be weighed heavily in this context.

- The municipality of Maastricht supports the creation of a drugs task force within the region/province to tackle drug-related crime and nuisance.
- The municipality of Maastricht prohibits the use of nitrous oxide in public spaces.
- The municipality of Maastricht is, together with social partners, committed to prevention of (excessive) alcohol consumption and the use of substances. Not only regarding to young people, but also to parents/adults.
- The municipality of Maastricht is committed to achieving the goals set in the national Prevention Agreement (2018) by means of the local Prevention Agreement.

### Human trafficking

Human trafficking means exploiting people. It involves coercion, deception, abuse of power or abuse of a vulnerable position. This also occurs in Maastricht.

- The municipality of Maastricht provides a safe shelter for victims of lover boys, pimps and human traffickers.
- Community teams and social professionals are trained (e.g., at Helse Liefde) to recognize lover boy situations and cases of human trafficking (home prostitution) in the community, and make agreements with the police about enforcement, reporting and counseling.

### Child abuse

Children have the right to grow up in a safe environment and to be protected from abuse. That is why we focus extra on the following actions, including:

- Already during pregnancy, we are alert to high-risk situations (in close collaboration with projects of Trendbreuk)
- Consultation agencies (CJG/JGZ) offer guidance in dealing with babies' crying behavior.
- ChristenUnie is committed to an approach to child abuse that pays attention to prevention, and to strengthening interaction between child, midwifery, education, community team and Veilig Thuis.







## Chapter 3 **Energy, climate and environment**

### **What does ChristenUnie stand for?**

ChristenUnie wants to move towards a locally designed energy system of fully renewable energy. The municipality has the steering role in this local energy transition, ensures that the goal is achievable and affordable, and that everyone can participate in this transition.

### **Energy coaches**

ChristenUnie is in favor of deploying energy coaches who guide residents in taking steps to make their homes more sustainable, and help residents make the best use of subsidy opportunities.

- The first step is to insulate the home. This is followed by measures, such as solar panels and the use of a heating pump or connection to a city heat grid.
- The municipality also supports minimum income groups in Maastricht in making their homes more sustainable.

### **Moving away from natural gas**

Natural gas-free construction has become the norm for new buildings. The objective is that the Netherlands will no longer use natural gas in 2050. This means a lot for owners of an existing home. The Municipality of Maastricht is responding to this locally by providing suitable plans.

- Inhabitants of Maastricht must be able to go to one place for both technical and financial arrangements to adapt their homes.
- Prevention of energy poverty: where natural gas is replaced by sustainable heat, we invest in insulation to reduce energy bills directly.

### **Energy saving industry**

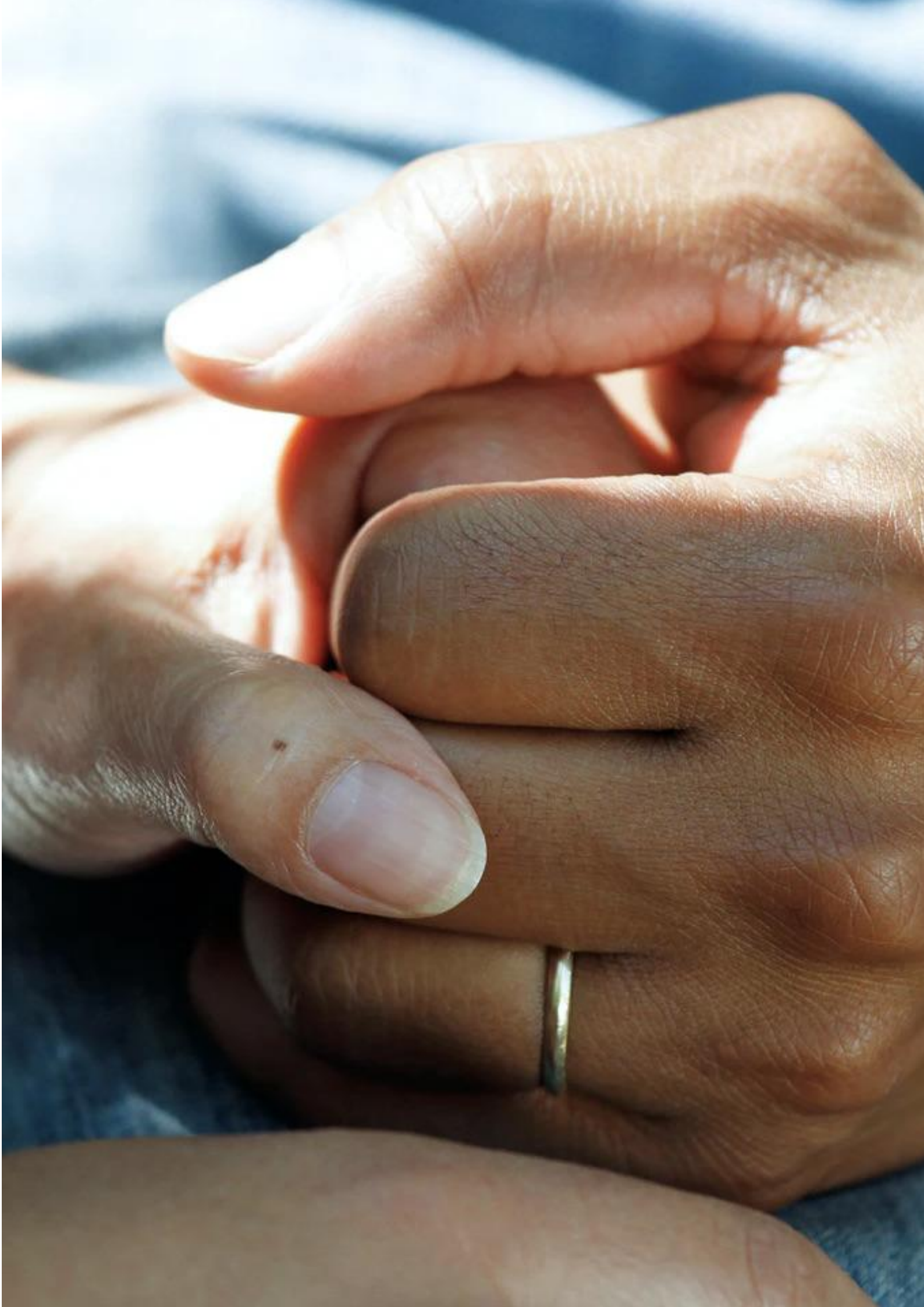
The municipality should challenge local industry to continue taking energy-saving measures (together). By working together, companies will inspire each other and take extra steps to become and/or remain energy efficient.

- In large-scale energy projects, the local community must be given a say and be able to participate.
- Maastricht municipality ensures that its own energy needs are generated sustainably, within the country and preferably as regionally as possible.

### **Recovery of reusable raw materials**

- In Maastricht there is no more waste, only raw materials. The recycling platform is the place where raw materials can get a new life. Therefore, there must be space for collecting goods for recycling and repair.
- Separating waste is the standard.
- The central submission of residual waste (at recycling platforms in the neighborhoods) remains a good way of separating waste. However, attention must be paid to families (diapers), the elderly and disabled (incontinence materials) and people living in high-rise buildings.
- The reduction of litter is a priority.







# Chapter 4 Healthcare

## **What does ChristenUnie stand for?**

One of the characteristics of today's society is that almost everyone is part of one or more networks of people, such as families, school classes, groups of friends, associations, faith communities, direct neighbors and the neighborhood, online networks and social media. At the same time, there is individualism and loneliness, and there are people who cannot keep up. The Covid pandemic has intensified this problem. However, in this period also some great initiatives arose in which people looked out for each other. There is strength in society. Therefore, ChristenUnie remains committed to a participatory society; it is important that people help each other when possible and take care of each other.

## **Public health**

- The municipality draws up a local health profile (or several district health profiles) for the development of the local health policy and for determining priorities. Ideally, ChristenUnie would like to see tailor-made profiles for each district.

## **Family/network caregivers**

- In Maastricht, we are developing a vision of informal care and how informal care relates to formal care.

## **Volunteers**

- Volunteers can, if necessary, obtain a free Certificate of Good Conduct (VOG).
- The municipality of Maastricht is investing in a campaign to put volunteer work on the map more prominently.

## **Everyone counts, everyone participates**

- The municipality makes sure that its buildings and facilities are easily accessible to all residents. Also in terms of digital accessibility, the municipality must be available to people with disabilities.

## **Senior citizens**

- *Sense of purpose* is to be a topic of discussion in conversations with elderly people with a need for care. If necessary, the municipality will make use of expertise from churches or other religious organizations for this purpose.
- The municipality's website is 'elderly-proof'. There is an up-to-date social map per district, which is also available in printed form.

## **Shelter facilities**

- The ChristenUnie supports the concept of "Housing First" for homeless people with multiple problems. The allocation of housing is the start of a road to independence.

## **Care for refugees**

- The municipality engages the business community and challenges them to employ status holders.
- In Maastricht we provide at least bed, bath and bread (and counselling) for asylum seekers who have exhausted all legal remedies, as long as they are (still) in the Netherlands (for example through Stichting Vlot).







# Chapter 5 **Family, youth, childcare and education**

## **What does ChristenUnie stand for?**

Children and young people are the future. Therefore, the municipality of Maastricht must invest in safe families, safe schools, and safe neighborhoods. ChristenUnie wants children to receive education and care as close to their homes as possible, including those children who need extra support. In Maastricht, there is education and support that fits the culture, identity and background of families.

## **Family, youth and childcare**

- Together with professionals in the field, the municipality will develop a preventive divorce policy (either a messy divorce or not), focusing first and foremost on the voluntary strengthening of relationships of all parents in Maastricht, but also on timely help when a divorce is unavoidable.
- Couples with children should be able to qualify for free couples' therapy.
- Childcare facilities and schools in Maastricht must be enabled to shape their pedagogical climate in such a way that children and young people can develop their full potential and will not drop out. The ambitions as included in the Maastricht Educational Agenda are the starting point for this.
- ChristenUnie wants to make additional investments in foster families, family homes (gezinshuizen) and support families (steungezinnen) in order to reduce the number of placements in foster care and institutional care, and to prevent more severe assistance.
- Together with health care partners, the municipality ensures continuity of care and support when adolescents in youth care turn 18.
- Families with multiple problems benefit from an integrated approach in which relevant care agencies work closely together, and the approach of one family - one plan - one director is important in this regard.
- Procurement of youth care is not done solely on price, but primarily on quality.
- The municipality of Maastricht offers teenage mothers support, care and guidance.

## **Education**

- Parents can choose a school that matches their own values, identity and ideals. The municipality must continue to advocate the diversity of schools on philosophical and pedagogical grounds. In Maastricht, parents remain free to choose the school that fits their principles.
- To strengthen prevention and early detection, the municipality works with professionals in education, early-childcare and pre-school facilities as much as possible.
- ChristenUnie wants the municipality to make an effort within the regional job market, to ensure a good connection between education, government and business community in the municipality of Maastricht. The focus is on lower and intermediate vocational education (vmbo and mbo) that is relevant to the job market.
- ChristenUnie is of the opinion that Maastricht should make internships available for young people from its own municipality. Special attention should be paid to internships for secondary vocational education (vmbo and mbo) students.
- In Maastricht, vulnerable young people with special educational needs receive the right guidance towards a valuable place in our society. ChristenUnie wants adequate support for students at high risk of dropping out.





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# Chapter 6 Economy

## What does ChristenUnie stand for?

ChristenUnie stands for an economy that is there for people rather than the other way around. A good market flourishes when labor and capital are not opposing forces and when entrepreneurs, employers and employees benefit from each other's talents. Companies and entrepreneurs in Maastricht are indispensable. They are of great value to our economy and quality of life. They create work and provide innovations. A strong local and regional economy is a precondition and a way to achieve other goals. The economy is not only about growth and consumption, but also about quality of life.

According to ChristenUnie, any economy is only healthy when everyone is given a chance and takes responsibility, when work and leisure are in balance, when growth is green and has limits. The Covid pandemic has shown how much businesses also depend on a well-functioning government. On the other hand, we may ask entrepreneurs and companies to serve their local community as well.

## Sustainable employment

- Social entrepreneurs are given a bigger chance in tenders and public procurement; social return is a condition in all tenders.
- ChristenUnie believes that, together with entrepreneurs, the municipality should continue focusing on energy savings in companies and on generation of sustainable energy.
- Encourage the circular economy by research groups that focus on saving raw materials and energy, and on making use of each other's heat or energy.

## Work and rest

- Shop owners should not be forced to open their shops on Sundays. The municipality must guarantee and monitor this.

## Recreation and tourism

- In addition to opening up our tourist sites, we are going to work towards an optimal opening up of cycling and walking connections, both for recreation and for commuting.
- Commitment to area promotion of Maastricht and South Limburg, together with residents and local entrepreneurs.

## Thriving inner cities

- In small cores/urban districts, we focus on maintaining functions. Small shopping centers are very important for the quality of life and social contacts. We deal with this creatively, for example by combining functions.

## Food valuation

- Connection between school, food and nature. Every primary school class is given the opportunity to visit a (circular) farm or fruit company, to create a school garden or to make an excursion to a nature reserve. In this way, children can learn what healthy food is, also in the context of the 'healthy primary school' of the future, how it can be produced sustainably and what impact food has.
- Facilitate the possibility for local food producers to sell their products at the (weekly) markets in Maastricht.





# Chapter 7 Participation in the labor market

## What does ChristenUnie stand for?

Having a job is important. Our job is the place where talent and responsibility are manifested and where people connect with others. Many people have had to rely on the support measures of the government. People who run their own business or are self-employed. It is important that they can pick up their profession again and generate an income from their business.

People who need extra support, can make use of a social assistance benefit on the grounds of the Participation Act. It is good that we have many schemes in place to enable people to continue participating in society and to have a decent income. There are, however, too many people who live near or below the poverty line despite having a job. The long-term use of schemes also causes people to sink further and further into structural poverty. We do not want this to happen.

## At work

- The municipality encourages the business community to actively work together with (vocational) education on a good connection between education and the labor market in both the short and medium term.
- The municipality focuses on long-term projects and volunteer programs in which vulnerable target groups are deployed in the business community and/or social organizations.
- The municipality is making extra efforts to get people with mental health problems into work (on a voluntary basis).
- Refugees are offered tailor-made training, an apprenticeship, or a traineeship. Good examples of this are Grenzeloos, Athos and Kinderboerderij Daalhoeve. There are sufficient possibilities for this within the new integration act.

## Poverty and prevention

- The municipality of Maastricht is going to join the Alliance on Child Poverty and make the connection with 'Kansrijke Start'.
- The municipality agrees with housing corporations and energy suppliers that they will report late payers in time and only proceed (or threaten) to disconnect or evict after active help has been offered, especially for families with children.
- Developments in the field of sustainability cost money. The municipality ensures that the minimum wage earners in Maastricht can also participate and benefit from a lower energy bill.

## Debts

- In Maastricht, we set up a plan whereby employers who deal with employees in debt can support their employees in cooperation with the municipality.
- The municipality of Maastricht also supports entrepreneurs and self-employed persons with debts, by realizing debt assistance for them and offering support for new businesses and the self-employed.
- In case of homelessness due to rent debts, Maastricht works on a joint solution with housing corporations operating in Maastricht. In Maastricht, families with children under 12 are not evicted from their homes. Corporations may not act as preferential creditors.





## Chapter 8 Living and space

### What does ChristenUnie stand for?

Everyone needs space. Space to live, to work, to travel and for leisure. But space is limited, and interests clash. Our choices regarding nature, nitrogen, housing shortage, climate, economy, production and consumption are inspired by the need to protect the natural balance in God's creation. Sustainable use of space is the starting point. Living is about so much more than building houses. Housing is about living together, about cohesion, about communities in streets, neighborhoods or districts. ChristenUnie is fighting for the chances of starters on the housing market and young families, for dignified living for the elderly and for affordable and sustainable living for everyone.

### Live

- Strategic building. In order to preserve green space outside and within cities, we will continue to focus on smart inner-city densification. At the same time, we recognize that the housing challenge is so large that building on agricultural land is unavoidable.
- ChristenUnie is in favor of a housing obligation for new construction homes (so that houses cannot be bought up by slumlords).
- There will be space in Maastricht for residential care projects, but also for multi-generational homes, inclusive neighborhoods, and courtyards.
- In Maastricht, there should be no obstacles to forms of collective housing for seniors and mixed living (such as multi-generational housing, adaptive homes and kangaroo housing).
- Maastricht is committed to giving starters space on the housing market. In addition to the starter loans, new instruments are sought such as 'Duokoop' (the buyer only buys the house and not the land) and 'koopgarant' (buying at a discount, usually through the housing association).
- Ample space for housing corporations. In addition to affordable owner-occupied homes, more social and (low) medium-priced rental housing is needed, including apartments and studios for starters and divorced families.
- Together with housing corporations, the municipality ensures that sufficient social housing is available for special target groups (ambulant clients protected housing, status holders, teenage mothers, labor migrants).
- Building energy neutral in new construction. ChristenUnie stimulates the construction of energy neutral homes in new construction by housing corporations. In this way, we accelerate the sustainability of the housing sector.

### Space

- Our municipal buildings will have as many green facades and roofs as possible.
- Municipal administrators and councilors in Maastricht must take an annual accessibility walk with experience experts. For example, a blindfolded walk under the guidance of someone who is blind, or a round in a wheelchair. In this way, the municipal administrators become aware of the importance of accessibility and direct ambassadors for accessibility.

The municipality gives space to residents to maintain their neighborhood or street under their own management. Consideration should also be given to any neighborhood budgets that residents can invest in their neighborhood or street if they maintain the neighborhood or street under their own management.





# Chapter 9 Mobility

## What does ChristenUnie stand for?

Good roads, paths and public transport connections are necessary to undertake economic, social and cultural activities. Mobility brings people together. But the growing mobility must not be at the expense of our living environment.

More than half of the journeys take place at a short distance. That is why slow traffic in Maastricht is given priority. This makes our living environment livable, safe and sustainable.

When distributing the public space and setting up traffic lights within our municipality, we adhere to the current STOP principle: First walking (stappen), then cycling (trappen), then public transport (openbaar Vervoer) and only then the passenger cars (personenwagen).

In the period ahead, ChristenUnie will continue its efforts to make mobility more sustainable (completely CO2-neutral by 2030), to avoid unnecessary traffic and to increase walking and cycling possibilities and public transport in the total mobility in Maastricht. A few concrete points from our election program are:

### Pedestrian

- We adapt walking routes to and from public facilities to the needs of the elderly and disabled people, so that they can rest regularly or meet each other.

### Bicycle

- ChristenUnie is going to push for charging points for electric bicycles and water taps at cultural places.

### Public transport

- Within 4 years, all bus stops will be made accessible to mobility-impaired persons if this has not yet been done.

### Parking

- To compensate visitors and volunteers of social facilities such as churches, there will be a social parking permit. There will also be a parking permit for volunteer carers.

### Road safety

- The municipality provides safe walking and cycling routes to schools and designs safe school streets in the vicinity of schools: by closing off streets near schools during collection and drop-off times.

### Car mobility

Traffic management: fast and safe to your neighborhood, quiet and safe in the neighborhood.

ChristenUnie wants to improve traffic flow by smartly adapting intersections, progressive signal system and dynamic traffic management ('intelligent' traffic lights that work based on traffic supply and not according to fixed patterns). This will also yield environmental benefits.







# Chapter 10 Art, culture and sport

## What does ChristenUnie stand for?

Art, culture and creativity enrich life and society. Art can confront, pause, relax, awaken and connect. For ChristenUnie, art also reminds us that we may be the image of God as creative Creator. In our cultural institutions, professionals and amateurs work together to make Maastricht society more beautiful. Art and culture are first and foremost of and for society. The government fulfils an important role as subsidizer, commissioner and guardian of our cultural climate and heritage.

In playing sports, fun comes first. That is why ChristenUnie opts for an accessible sports world where everyone can participate. We stimulate recreational sports in Maastricht. Whether you are young, old, disabled, poor, talented or just want to have fun together; sport should be available to everyone. 'Meedoen in Maastricht' is a good example of this.

## Art and culture

- Cultural education remains close by and affordable for all children. Initiatives such as Kaleidoscope continue to exist.
- Buildings are used multifunctional as much as possible; to optimize the use, but also to find and strengthen cross-connections between schools, associations, childcare, libraries and music schools, care institutions, etc.
- ChristenUnie also wants the municipality to coordinate the accommodation policy with surrounding municipalities in order to not compete with each other, but to strengthen one another and cultural participation.
- ChristenUnie wants to investigate the possibility of a façade-fund, to give historic façades and inner cities their momentum back. This fund helps entrepreneurs and landlords to refurbish their façades at street level.

## Sport

- When planning and building new neighborhoods and infrastructural projects, ChristenUnie wants to see as many public exercise places and routes as possible in public space. Neighborhoods will have the opportunity to opt for public fitness equipment in addition to children's play equipment.
- A healthy lifestyle with sufficient exercise also contributes to self-reliance and social contact for elderly. For all elder people in our community, the municipality develops low-threshold sports and exercise projects. Where possible, cooperation is sought with the many sports clubs in the municipality.
- ChristenUnie calls for more neighborhood-sport-coaches in order to promote the connection between sport, education and care.
- Initiatives such as 'Maastricht Sport' and 'Meedoen in Maastricht' are supported.
- In Maastricht we ensure that there is at least one playground for children with a disability.
- The municipality of Maastricht, together with associations, draws up a sports agreement that includes agreements on a positive sports culture, inclusiveness, discrimination and racism, alcohol and drugs, accessibility, and volunteer policy.
- All sports facilities must be accessible to people with disabilities.
- The municipality of Maastricht ensures that everyone who is entitled to it, knows how to find het Jeugdsportfonds (Youth Sports Fund).