

**M:OED**

**PARTY**

**PROGRAMME**

**2026**

# M:OED

**Maastricht: Open Honest Democratic**

## **Maastricht: Your City, Your Voice!**

Maastricht is alive and vibrant, due to the young people who study, work, and stay here. Yet, their ideas and voices are too often ignored.

On March 18th, we choose for a city that dares to look ahead.

**[www.stemvoormoed.nl](http://www.stemvoormoed.nl)**

**@moedmaastricht**

# KEY PRIORITIES

## Maastricht

*Young people are the basis*

### **HOUSING: Your Home, Our Priority**

- Establishment of a (EU)regional housing association to create affordable homes for students and starters.
- Abolish the 'student freeze' and relax regulations to protect traditional student housing.
- A proactive approach to handle misconduct, with a central point of contact and a Rental Team to combat predatory landlords.
- Mandatory insulation (minimum Label C) to prevent skyrocketing energy bills in older buildings.

### **MOBILITY: No-fine Cycling**

- Bicycle depot reform: fines reduced from €50 to €15 and extended opening hours.
- More guarded parking facilities and fast train connections to Liège, Aachen, and Brussels, including a direct connection to the airports.

## Open

*A city for everyone*

### **THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY: From guest to resident**

- No more Immigration Service queues: one central counter with English-language assistance.
- Free 'Survival Dutch' courses and better neighbourhood integration.
- Housing solutions to bring people together.

### **NIGHTLIFE & CULTURE: Maastricht must be vibrant**

- A Night Mayor and a 24-hour concept for culture and music.
- Create opportunities to learn together: Libraries and public buildings open till late.
- A city that is more accessible by bike, and through amenities such as free restrooms.
- Lowering the barriers for entrepreneurs who want to develop music, food, and cultural concepts within the nightlife scene.

# KEY PRIORITIES

## Honest

*Accessible and safe for everyone*

### **SPORTS & WELLBEING: Burst the bubble**

- A single sports pass for UM Sports and Maastricht sports clubs to strengthen social cohesion.
- More "third places" for meeting and relaxing; such as green spaces, playgrounds, and calisthenics parks in the city.

### **Tackling street harassment: everyone safe in public spaces**

- A major push for prevention and tackling harassment so that everyone can be themselves, also on the street, day and night.
- Safe routes and nightlife, made possible in part by investments in better-lit cycling and walking paths.

## Democratic

*The city is ours too*

### **DEMOCRACY: Together we make Maastricht**

- Mini-publics and Participation: Introducing 'mini-publics' through a lottery to ensure a voice for all residents, including students and the international community.
- The City as Laboratory: Structural collaboration with our own knowledge institutions to develop local policies and test solutions directly in neighbourhoods (City Deal).
- Absolute Transparency: Establishing an open-data platform in which all municipal expenditures and decisions are transparent to everyone.
- Randwyck 24/7: Developing Randwyck from a single-purpose workplace into an inclusive urban district where living, working, culture, and innovation converge around the clock.

# MAASTRICHT

*Young people are the basis*

*Young and new residents, such as students and starters, are the city's future. Future-oriented policies demand the input of future generations and an open ear for new ideas and voices. We want to give these viewpoints a voice.*

## 1. Housing: Your Home, Our Priority

**The housing market in Maastricht is deadlocked. Students pay exorbitant rents for small, poorly insulated rooms with backlogged maintenance, while rigid regulations hinder new housing. Even starters struggle to find a home. M:OED stands for a city where students and starters are not pushed out but are taken seriously as full-fledged residents.**

### *Implications for the City and Educational Institutions*

A healthy knowledge-based city is impossible without decent housing. If students from middle- and low-income groups avoid Maastricht because of the cost, the city loses its diversity and innovative potential. We demand that the city take responsibility for keeping education accessible to everyone.



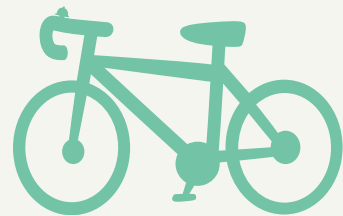
- **Structural Solution for Affordability and Supply:** Establish a specialized (EU) regional student housing association focused entirely on developing and managing affordable, high-quality rooms. This association will also create affordable rental and owner-occupied housing specifically for starters. The municipality must use its authority to firmly establish social (student) housing in zoning plans.
- **More Student Houses and an End to Social Isolation:** We want to relax the rules regarding subdivision and sharing of housing (abolish the "student freeze"), contingent on clear requirements being set for the quality and safety of the property. M:OED welcomes and protects traditional student houses with shared kitchens and living rooms; this facilitates connection and prevents loneliness.
- **Proactive Enforcement Against Malfeasance:** The municipality must proactively enforce laws based on random checks on landlords, instead of waiting for complaints. We advocate for a single, central point of contact where students can go for all housing-related problems, from excessive rent to poor maintenance and inadequate insulation. The municipality must be able to take tougher action against landlords who consistently violate the law.

# MAASTRICHT

## 2. Mobility & Fair Cycling Policy

**Maastricht is a cycling city, but current policy punishes cyclists through unnecessarily high costs and poor service.**

- **Clear and safe cycling routes:** Cyclists must be able to travel safely and comfortably to and from the station, through the city centre and on other important routes, especially in and around the city centre and the educational institutions.
- **Bike Depot Reform:** The impound fine increased to €50 in 2024, while opening hours are limited to Mondays only. This is unacceptable. M:OED will lower the fine to €15 and extend opening hours to at least three half-days per week. This is much more in line with other major Dutch cities.
- **The Bike is the Boss:** The city centre will become a "bicycle-first" zone. We will eliminate car parking spaces in favour of spacious, guarded, and free parking facilities for bikes. P&R for cars will be located on the outskirts of the city. The car park under the Vrijthof square will be converted for use by cyclists and suppliers to shops and restaurants.
- **Euregional Connections:** We will work on creating fast train connections to Hasselt, Liège, Cologne, Brussels and Antwerp to fulfil our position as a gateway to Europe.



# OPEN

*With an open European economy, open and transparent decision-making, and an open society. A city for everyone.*

## 3. International community and integration

**International students and knowledge workers are the driving force behind our knowledge economy, but the bridge between the municipality and the young residents of Maastricht (including students) is currently in disrepair.**

### International Community:

- **Maastricht International Service Desk (MISD):** No more two-hour waits at the IND desk. We will establish a single, centralized counter (both physical and digital) where all information about taxes and housing is available in English.
- **Survival Dutch & Retention:** We will offer free language courses for international residents to ease the transition to the local job market.



### Integration

- **Integration through Interaction:** We encourage mixed housing (students and seniors) to combat loneliness and increase mutual understanding. For example, by rewarding volunteer work through a rent reduction.
- **In addition to contact with neighbourhood panels, we** specifically encourage connections between (international) students and local Maastricht youth (MBO and HBO students and workers). By facilitating joint activities, sports, and entertainment, we build towards lasting friendships that truly connect young residents to the city and ease the transition to the local job market.
- **Involvement in the Municipality:** Maastricht must proactively promote its status as a student city. We advocate that students are considered in every relevant policy document, by strengthening collaborations with participation councils and educational institutions, and by directly involving students in important decisions.
- **Intergenerational Initiatives:** We will expand mixed living arrangements with mentoring programs where students and seniors exchange skills (for example, digital assistance in exchange for local history or cooking classes).

# OPEN

## 4. Nightlife, Culture & Sports: Maastricht Must Come Alive

**Maastricht is currently too focused on the "sjiek en sjoen" experience for tourists; the idea that the city centre should primarily be there for its own residents. M:OED wants a city life that meets the needs of young people and newcomers, because a vibrant nightlife and interesting shopping and dining options are essential for retaining talent in the city.**

### Nightlife & Alternative Free Spaces

- **The Night Mayor and Embassy:** M:OED will appoint a Night Mayor as an independent link between nightlife, local residents, and the municipality. Everyone can contact the Night Embassy for help, questions, or ideas.
- **Free Spaces & Opening Hours:** We will experiment with '24-hour concepts' and clubs where the party can continue after 2am to strengthen the creative infrastructure.
- **Alternative Culture:** We will protect cultural freezones (such as Landbouwbelang) and use vacant buildings as workspaces for young cultural entrepreneurs.
- **Investing in Innovation:** Instead of investing in 'more of the same' such as the Middenzaal, we will invest in attractive locations for alternative culture.
- **Venues for Talent:** We encourage private locations that offer artists a venue, paying specific attention to young students of music and art courses.

### Space for Meeting & Education

- **Study Space Guarantee:** We will guarantee students safe, quiet study spaces in libraries and municipal buildings that remain open late into the night during exam weeks.
- **Sociaal-Culturele Centra:** Wij ondersteunen en beschermen deze centra als essentiële plaatsen voor uitwisseling tussen generaties en culturen.

### Accessibility & Priority

- **Transparent Financing:** Grant applications for creative start-ups should become simpler and fully bilingual (NL/EN) to limit bureaucracy.
- **Events for young people:** Events organized by and for local residents will be prioritized over large commercial events. We support large-scale events in central locations that celebrate Maastricht's diverse cultures and traditions, so that international residents and students also identify with the policy.

### *Implications for students and starters*

A vibrant cultural and nightlife scene is essential for students and young professionals to maintain their well-being and foster a strong sense of community in Maastricht. By taking nightlife seriously and ensuring that the city centre's shopping and dining options are much more geared towards young people, we remove incentives for graduates to leave immediately after graduation for cities with a more modern nightlife scene. This strengthens Maastricht's position as an international knowledge hub where people can not only work but also truly live. This is how we retain young people and graduates for our city.

# EERLIJK

*M:OED believes that an inclusive policy where everyone gets the same opportunities will help the city as a whole to learn to understand itself better.*

## 5. Sports & Exercise: Accessible to Everyone

Sports are the ultimate way to burst the 'student bubble' and promote integration in the city. The municipality's current policy of avoiding target groups falls short in this regard. M:OED believes that we will only achieve true equality when we recognize and remove the specific barriers faced by different groups

- **No "One-Size-Fits-All" Facilities:** When developing sports venues and gymnasiums, diverse needs must be considered. We demand the provision of low-stimulus gyms for people who need quiet, and the standard presence of inclusive restrooms.
- **The Maastricht Sports Pass:** We encourage active collaboration between student sports clubs (UM Sports) and regular Maastricht clubs. With a single sports pass, it should be possible to participate in both types of clubs at a reduced rate, which strengthens social cohesion in the neighbourhoods.
- **Inclusive Public Spaces:** Public spaces should encourage movement for everyone. We will invest in free calisthenics parks, skate spots, and safely lit running paths that are also accessible to Maastricht residents with physical disabilities.

- **Nature playgrounds and Healthy Neighborhoods:** We exchange paved streets and squares for challenging natural playgrounds and forest gardens, so that children can grow up safe and healthy in their own neighbourhood. M:OED wants to invest in both indoor and outdoor play areas and greenery that can function as 'third places' for meetings between starters, parents and other local residents.
- **Recognition of Specific Thresholds:** target group policy is necessary. M:OED wants to differentiate in order to achieve the same outcome (health and participation) for everyone.
- **Support for Volunteers and Local Administrators:** Maastricht's associations rely on volunteers. The municipality must support these volunteers with training, support services, and official recognition for their contribution to the city's social cohesion.



## 6. (Mentale) Health & Wellbeing: A Hopeful Future

**A vibrant city is a healthy city. M:OED sees a direct connection between a lively nightlife, a rich cultural scene and the mental resilience of young people and newcomers. We are making mental health a priority in its own right to offer the "performance-pressured generation" a hopeful future.**

- **Health through a Vibrant Lifestyle:** A vibrant city prevents social isolation. For young people and newcomers, a vibrant nightlife isn't just "fun", but an essential part of their mental well-being and identity formation.
- **Positive Health as a Basis:** We employ a broad definition of health: the ability of Maastricht residents to adapt and manage their own physical and emotional challenges. This means that the focus is on individual strength, supported by a city that offers opportunities.
- **Early Prevention at School:** The shift in thinking begins at school. We invest in curricula focused on talent development, meaning, and building healthy relationships with others. This helps prevent unemployment and dropout later in life.
- **Additional Support Youth in Vulnerable Positions:** We advocate for a sensitive approach for young people who fall between the cracks, such as LGBTI+ youth and young people with a migrant background. By addressing the reluctance of care providers to act, we will ensure that young people receive the specific guidance they need for their well-being.
- **Tackling Period Poverty:** Safe and hygienic menstruation is a basic need, but for 1 in 10 people who menstruate, this is not a given due to a lack of money. This can lead to health risks and dropping out of school. M:OED advocates for municipalities to take responsibility by making menstrual products available free of charge in schools and public buildings such as the Centre Céramique and the Municipal Offices.
- **Support for Bonds of Trust:** For young people who often feel discriminated against or unwanted, the municipality must invest in assistance that understands their world and can build a real bond of trust.



## 7. Safety in Public Spaces for Everyone

**An inclusive city means that public spaces must be safe for everyone, regardless of gender, orientation or background.**

- **Tackling Street Harassment:** M:OED is fully committed to preventing and addressing street harassment. We demand a comprehensive and innovative policy in which the municipality actively utilizes monitoring, awareness campaigns, and enforcement. The results of monitoring and research will then be used to shape policy regarding nightlife and the physical environment.
- **Safe Routes:** While we advocate for improving cycling accessibility, M:OED also wants this to be done safely. We are investing in better-lit cycling and walking paths throughout the city.
- **Prevention through Social Cohesion:** We do not solve safety problems just by installing more cameras, but by actively involving residents and students in improving the quality of life in their own neighbourhood through neighbourhood panels.

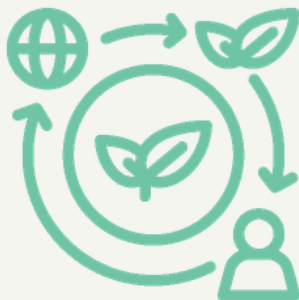
**Safety** directly impacts students' daily lives, while proactively tackling street harassment ensures that students (particularly women and LGBTQ+ individuals) feel safe on the streets, also after a night out or a late-night session at the university library. Maastricht University, Zuyd University of Applied Sciences, and Vista College will benefit from a city that takes its "duty of care" seriously and thus remains attractive to international talent.



## 8. Sustainability

**M:OED chooses concrete measures that directly improve the quality of life in the city.**

- **Climate Check for Shops:** We will implement a ban on shop doors being left open while the heating or air conditioning is running. This is a simple, effective measure to prevent unnecessary energy loss in the city centre.
- **We will keep solutions for the Energy Transition local:** The electricity grid in Maastricht is full. New homes cannot be connected, and businesses cannot make their homes more sustainable and electrified because the grid is so congested. M:OED wants solutions for this, such as energy communities, to be managed by local cooperatives as much as possible.
- **Solar Panels on Municipal Buildings:** The municipality must set a good example by equipping all its own buildings with solar panels, wherever this is feasible and cost-effective. We must proactively support resident initiatives, such as those for collective energy generation through energy cooperatives.



- **Replacing Paving and Support for Urban Farming:** We advocate replacing paving stones with food forests and natural playgrounds. Specific locations such as the Via Regia and stony areas in the city centre will be prioritized to reduce heat stress and increase biodiversity. We encourage the transformation of gray streets, facades, and roofs through urban farming. We also support residents' initiatives to green their immediate living environment through small-scale subsidies and a support center. This strengthens the local food supply, increases biodiversity, and reduces the ecological footprint.
- **Energy-efficient living:** M:OED wants social housing and student properties to be made as sustainable as possible, aiming for, at a minimum, energy label C. This is necessary to stop energy loss and keep housing costs affordable for students and low-income earners.
- **Waste policy:** A clean city is a basic requirement. We demand:
  - The installation of more underground containers in all neighbourhoods.
  - Until then, the restoration of the weekly residual waste collection rounds to limit hindrance.
  - Relaxation of the rules for bulk waste, so that students can more easily dispose of their waste properly when moving.
  - Free bulk waste collection once a year.

# DEMOCRATISCH

*M:OED strives for a city that belongs to everyone, by breaking down barriers between neighborhoods and giving Maastricht residents direct control over their own living environment through democratic renewal. By transforming Randwyck and the city center into inclusive meeting places for students, artists, and entrepreneurs, we are building a community where transparency and social connection form the foundation for a democratic Maastricht.*

## 9. The city is also ours

**M:OED sees the notion of Randwyck as a single-purpose workspace for health researchers as outdated, and envisions it rather as a place where living, working, culture, and innovation converge around the clock. Randwyck and the city centre must together become an attractive location for young entrepreneurs, students, and startups, creating an environment that is vibrant and safe, and that contributes to our climate goals.**

**Seamless City Connection:** The connection between Randwyck and the city centre is crucial for the social life of residents. We will invest in high-quality cycling, pedestrian, and bus routes that physically and emotionally connect the campus to the centre of Maastricht.

## **Randwyck: From Campus to Inclusive City District**

- **Diversity through Culture:** A neighbourhood with only scientists and research labs will never be truly vibrant. M:OED advocates for making spaces in Randwyck available for the arts sector, for example, as a (temporary) replacement for the Landbouwbelang. By connecting artists and researchers, we will stimulate unexpected encounters and creativity.
- **Crowd-pleasing and socializing:** We support the ambition for a rich selection of cafés, restaurants, an international sculpture park, and the 'Maasmoestuinteras' with pick-your-own gardens. These kinds of amenities will make the neighbourhood attractive and socially safe, also after work.
- **Social Housing on Campus:** Innovative urban development also means providing a place for everyone. We demand substantial investments in social housing for students and newcomers on campus, so they become part of the ecosystem.

# DEMOCRATISCH

## Room for Pioneers and Start-ups

- **Accessible Incubators:** In addition to formal incubators, there should be room in both Randwyck and the city centre for cheap, simple accommodation for young entrepreneurs for whom an official incubator is still too big a step.
- **The Green Link between Randwyck and the City Center:** The former military sports fields are an excellent location to develop such facilities in a green setting. This work park for start-up entrepreneurs will strengthen the connection between Randwyck, Tapijn, and the city centre. A flexible approach allows young entrepreneurs to scale up and grow here and make joint investments in machinery.
- **24/7 Knowledge Society:** We encourage the development of a 'Campus Forum' where knowledge workers, students and entrepreneurs can meet 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to exchange ideas.
- **Attracting Leading Companies:** Maastricht must promote itself more actively as a location for knowledge-intensive organizations to strengthen the local labour market and retain international talent.
- **From Startup to Scale-up:** By supporting young pioneers with start-up capital, flexible workspace and relaxed rules, we will create an ecosystem in which graduates can grow their own company in Maastricht

## The city center: From tourist attraction to vibrant hub

- **A Center for Maastricht Residents:** The city centre needs more space for its residents. The focus is now too much on tourists who come here to spend a lot of money.
- **The NHM as the Heart of Sustainability and Debate:** We applaud the development of the Natural History Museum. This is an ideal location for addressing greening and sustainability. In addition to educational programs for primary and secondary school students, the NHM can also become a centre for debate on sustainability and greening.
- **The Vrijthof Given Back to the City:** As far as M:OED is concerned, Rieu no longer needs to be Maastricht's main attraction. It's time for a new sound. Make the Vrijthof a place where Maastricht residents can organize their own events, with an important role for local (student) associations and alternative culture.



# DEMOCRATISCH

## 10. Democratic renewal

**Politics isn't about "them" in city hall, but about "us" in the city. M:OED aims to bridge the gap between citizens and government by giving power back to Maastricht residents. We will make Maastricht a city where active participation is rewarded and where knowledge is directly applied to local solutions.**

- **Lottery and Mini-publics:** We will introduce "mini-publics" and citizens' assemblies consisting of randomly selected residents (via lottery) who provide structural advice to the council on complex issues. This will give a voice to everyone, including students and internationals who often feel unheard.
- **The City as Laboratory:** We applaud collaboration with educational institutions to test solutions directly in our neighbourhoods, for example through City Deal. In this way, we will leverage existing brainpower to make the city smarter and more social, instead of diverting funds to expensive consultants from the Randstad. Maastricht must collaborate more with its existing knowledge institutions to develop local policies with local resources.

- **Smart E-Democracy:** Following successful examples like Estonia, we will expand our digital services. We want citizens to not only manage their paperwork but also have direct say in the design of their neighbourhoods through intuitive participation platforms and e-services.
- **Transparency in Hand:** M:OED advocates for an open-data platform where all municipal expenditures and decisions are publicly available. We believe absolute transparency is the foundation for restoring trust in local politics.
- **Radical Hospitality in Governance:** The municipality will actively reach out to the people. Instead of waiting in city hall, we seek dialogue in neighbourhoods and on campuses to broadly legitimize decision-making.

