

Welcome

It is our honour and delight to welcome you to the Maastricht Region.

Expat Centre Maastricht Region was set up in response to the increasing influx of international talent in the Maastricht Region. We pride ourselves on being expert navigators, providing an efficient transition process from nervous newcomer to laid-back local, for individuals and businesses alike.

This manual is intended to be a go-to guide for all our new arrivals, from those handling the most basic municipal queries to international entrepreneurs who need to know who to turn to when faced with complex taxation regulations. Together with our partners in the Maastricht Region, we are adept at providing all the resources that expats and international businesses require.

All international residents located in the participating municipalities in the Maastricht Region are welcome to utilize our information services, consult our expert staff and join in with the professional events hosted by our team and our programme partners.

More detailed information is available on our website, and when further guidance is required our consultants can provide one-on-one advice sessions.

Enjoy your stay in the Maastricht Region, whether you're here for a short while, or if it's a life-long move, we are always on-hand to support you through your transition process.

This manual is also available in electronic form online at expatcentremaastrichtregion.nl

Contact page

Visiting address

Gemeente Maastricht council offices
Mosae Forum 10
6211 DW Maastricht

Telephone

+31 (0)43 350 5010

Opening hours

Tuesday - Thursday 09:00 - 12:30 and 13:30 - 17:00
Friday 09:00 - 12:30

Online

- 🌐 expatcentremaastrichtregion.nl
- 📘 facebook.com/expatcentremaastrichtregion
- 📷 instagram.com/expatcentremaastrichtregion
- 🌐 linkedin.com/expatcentremaastrichtregion

Expat Newsletter

Subscribe to our bi-monthly newsletter on our website and stay up-to-date on activities, events and information catering specifically for expats and internationals in the Maastricht Region.



Employers Newsletter

Subscribe to our bi-monthly newsletter with relevant and up-to-date news and information on laws and regulations, tax, insurance, experiences of entrepreneurs and more.



MAASTRICHT CITY CENTRE

EXPAT CENTRE
MAASTRICHT REGION



Index

Welcome to the Maastricht Region – 1
Contact page – 2
Words of welcome – 8

Introduction – 10

About the Maastricht Region Manual – 12
Arrival checklist – 14



Formalities – 16

The Fast Track Process – 18
EU employees Fast Track process – 18
Non-EU employees Fast Track process – 20
BSN – 20
Residence permit – 22
Work permit – 22
DigiD – 23
Mijnoverheid.nl – 23
Bank account – 23



Housing – 26

Renting a house – 28
Buying a house – 29
Utilities – 32
Waste disposal – 34



Healthcare – 38

Dentist – 43
National health insurance – 44
Welfare system / Social Security – 45
Health screening – 44
Pregnancy – 44
After childbirth – 48
Duth National immunisation Programme – 49
Vaccination – 49



Taxation & Insurance – 50

Taxation – 52



Mobility & Transport – 56

Public transport – 59
Cycling in the Netherlands – 63
By car – 64
Airports – 67



Education & Careers – 70

Childcare – 72
Dutch Primary Education – 72
Secondary Education – 74
Tertiary Education – 76
Brightlands – 78
Mature/Adult Education and Life-long Learning – 80
Working in the Maastricht Region – 81



Personal & Social – 86

Childcare – 88
Religion – 88
Volunteering – 88
Language courses – 90
Dialects – 90
Social Groups & Social Clubs – 90
News in English – 91
Pets – 91



Culture & Leisure – 94

Events & Festivals – 97
Sport – 97
Outdoors – 97
Culinary – 98
Culture – 98
Language – 100
Public holidays – 100

Living and working in the Maastricht Region – 102

Partners per theme – 144

About – 160

Euregio Meuse-Rhine – 164

Colofon & contact details – 168



A warm welcome

In the rest of our country, the south of Limburg – your current home away from home - is known for its Roman history, our regional dialects and our Burgundian way of living: you should definitely try the sweet treat ‘vlaai’. Where the majority of Nederland (the Netherlands) is known for being flat, our green rolling hills stand out.

Those hills offer a fine vantage point for a panorama of the greater region, including the countries that surround us. Limburg is a gateway to Europe, which, if you draw a 100-kilometer circle around it, is home to more than 15 million people in three countries, countless businesses, educational and research institutions and logistical hotspots. In addition, the region offers a selection of cultural sites, museums, venues like no other.

No wonder we identify as a diverse region that combines the best of our country and the ones next to us. A province that embodies a healthy balance between tradition and innovation, history and future.

That makes us an interesting as a place to live and to work, as you already know or will undoubtedly find out. I hope this manual is a great starting point for exploring our region and the opportunities that it has to offer.

As an inhabitant of Gennepe, a municipality in the north of Limburg, I drive past a sign by the roadside on my daily commute to Maastricht: “*De Limburgers heten u welkom*”.

I happily repeat those words for you here: the Limburgers welcome you.

Emile Roemer

King's Commissioner for the Province of Limburg



1

INTRODUCTION

Expat Centre Maastricht Region is specifically focused on providing essential information, bespoke services and streamlined formality procedures for the international community resident in the Maastricht Region.

About the Maastricht Region Manual

Expat Centre Maastricht Region is a non-profit government agency. All international residents located in the participating municipalities in the Maastricht Region are welcome to utilise our information services, consult our expert staff and join in with the professional events hosted by our team and our programme partners.

If you receive this Manual you have already finished the first steps of your relocation to the Maastricht Region. There is still more to sort out and to explore. For example, do you know what a DigiD is or how to open a Dutch Bank account? We explain all in detail in **Formalities**.

Housing covers, as its name suggests, topics like buying or renting a house but also information on waste disposal. More information on the 30% Tax Facility and Tax Benefits can be found at **Taxation & Insurance** whereas in our section **Healthcare** we explain more about the important role of a GP and the obligation of a national health insurance.

The Dutch educational system, for children as well as adults, is explained at **Education & Careers**. How public transport is organised or where your bike should be parked, can be found in the section **Mobility & Transport**.

This region warmly welcomes her new international residents. How to connect socially can be read in **Personal & Social**, what the big happenings are on the cultural front can be found in **Culture & Leisure**.

For an overview of the 17 municipalities of this beautiful region head over to **Living in the Maastricht Region**.





Arrival checklist

Being prepared is key to a smooth and enjoyable transition to a new life in a new country. The expert team at Expat Centre Maastricht Region has compiled the following list of essentials that will help you navigate your way through the first few months of life in the Netherlands.

Formalities

- ☐ Arrange a Dutch bank account
- ☐ Apply for your DigiD
- ☐ Make copies/scan of all necessary documents

Housing

- ☐ Get connected: telephone / internet / tv
- ☐ Water & Electricity
- ☐ Waste disposal

Healthcare

- ☐ Find a local General Practitioner
- ☐ National Health Insurance (mandatory)
- ☐ Emergency situation: call 112
- ☐ Letter CAK

Taxation & Insurance

- ☐ Find a private liability insurance
- ☐ Tax return
- ☐ Municipal taxes & Waterboard taxes

Mobility & Transport

- ☐ Driving licence
- ☐ Cycling in the Maastricht Region
- ☐ Public Transport
- ☐ OVPay
- ☐ 9292.nl plan your route (all public transport)

Education & Careers

- ☐ Working in the Netherlands
- ☐ Orientation Year
- ☐ Educational system
- ☐ Starting a business
- ☐ International school / UWC Maastricht

Personal & Social

- ☐ Language courses Dutch
- ☐ Childcare
- ☐ Apply for child benefit
- ☐ Social groups
- ☐ Become a volunteer
- ☐ Pets

Culture & Leisure

- ☐ Sights & Museums
- ☐ Explore the Maastricht Region

Download our digital roadmap at
expatcentremaastrichtregion.nl



2

FORMALITIES

Ensuring the paperwork is complete and all formalities are handled leaves time to enjoy the best that life has to offer here in the Maastricht Region. What you are required to do depends on your nationality, your family composition and your work situation.

Following is an overview of what is generally required. For more in-depth information on any of these topics, head to our website. If you have specific questions our expert team can be consulted via our contact form on our website.



The Fast Track Process

Expat Centre Maastricht Region offers a fast-tracked way of registering new arrivals from both EU/EEA countries and non-EU/EEA countries who have relocated to the Netherlands as a highly skilled migrant, researcher or professional artist along with their family members.

This Fast Track process appointment consists of collecting biometric information or issuing residence permits, registering with the municipality and receiving a personal consultation about living and working in South Limburg. Furthermore, with the Fast Track process, the *Burgerservicenummer* – BSN (resident service number), which is the first and most crucial element for a solid landing in the Netherlands, is issued within five days of application, instead of the legally stipulated four week waiting period.

To be eligible for a Fast Track registration the applicant's employer must be an IND (Immigration and Naturalisation Service) recognised sponsor. The process is instigated and conducted by employers and they manage the process for their employees.

EU employees Fast Track process

- EU employees of an IND recognised sponsor will have a two in one appointment, to register at the municipality and to get a consult at the Expat Centre Maastricht Region. The employee must have an address in Maastricht or one of the participating municipalities.
- Employees receive their BSN by post within five days after municipal registration at Expat Centre Maastricht Region.

Expat Centre Maastricht Region, gemeente Maastricht and the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (Immigratie- en Naturalisatiedienst /IND) provide fast tracked registration procedures and immigration service provisions in the region for both EU/EEA countries en non-EU/EEA. Otherwise, the IND desk is available for appointments only for the specific purposes of issuing residence permit cards, stickers, return visas and collecting biometric information. ind.nl/en





Non-EU employees

Fast Track process

- Depending on the employee's country of origin, the IND recognised employer files an application with the IND for the relevant work / residence permit.
- IND makes a decision within two weeks and informs employer.
- Depending on the employee's country of origin, they can travel directly to the Netherlands or require further permits to be issued prior to travel.
- Upon arrival in the Netherlands the employee will be informed by their employer about the combined appointment via the Expat Centre Maastricht Region.
- Employees receive their BSN by post within five days after municipal registration at Expat Centre Maastricht Region.

BSN

All residents in the Netherlands who are planning to stay more than four months must register with the municipality in which they intend to live. Upon registration they are issued with a *Burgerservicenummer* – BSN (citizen service number). The BSN is crucial for gaining access to a range of services and facilities including banking, taxation, insurances and benefits, similar to the National Insurance number in the UK and the social security number in the US. The registration needs to be made in person, with all family members present. All residents new to the Netherlands are required by Dutch law to register their presence within five days after arriving.

When registering at the municipality where a BSN will be issued the following documentation is required:

- a valid passport or identity card;
- non-EU citizens must also have a valid residence permit, be in the process of applying for one or have intent to apply within four weeks;
- a tenancy agreement, or a signed statement with a photocopy of the passport of the main occupant, stating that they are allowed to register at that address, or a document that proves that the applicant is the owner of a property: a deed of ownership or a deed of transfer.

The following documents are not necessarily required at the registration appointment however must be supplied for administrative purposes:

- an original or legalised copy of the applicant's birth certificate;*
- if applicable, an original or legalised copy of the applicant's marriage/divorce certificate.*

Note: applicants must intend to reside in the municipality for at least four months in the six-month period following registration.

** If the document is written in a language other than English, German, French or Dutch a translation must be provided by a sworn translator and in some cases the translated document needs to be legalised.*



Residence permit

In the Netherlands visas and residence permits are issued by the IND (Immigration and Naturalisation Service).

There are different types of residence permit for the Netherlands, which are based on the reason for stay. Examples of reasons for stay include:

- joining a spouse/partner when they go to work in the Netherlands;
- studying at an educational institution in the Netherlands;
- starting a business in the Netherlands.

Not all foreign nationals require a residence permit to reside. European Union / European Economic Area (EU/EEA) nationals have the right to free movement within the EU, so may come to live in the Netherlands. Non-EU/EEA nationals who wish to stay in the Netherlands for longer than three months require a residence permit. The Immigratie- en Naturalisatiedienst – IND (Immigration and Naturalisation Service) determines who may be granted a residence permit.

Work permit

Work permit applications for expats already in the Netherlands or those who find themselves in cross-border working situations are usually made by the potential employer. These applications are made to the UWV (Employee Insurance Agency) and are free of charge.

Non-EU/EEA students studying in the Netherlands may work for up to 16 hours a week however require a work permit as a working student. This is applied for by the employer. It is usually issued for a period of one year without question as long as the wages offered and other conditions offered meet the legal requirements.



DigiD

The DigiD (Digital Identification) is a way of providing secure access to national and local authority websites and to a growing number of other websites such as health insurers and pension funds.

The DigiD is linked to your BSN. Once you have a DigiD you can also use it when you are not in the Netherlands. Application for a DigiD can be done via the website digid.nl.

MijnOverheid.nl

Mijnoverheid.nl is a personal, secure platform provided by the government. You can access *MijnOverheid* by logging in with your DigiD. After logging in, you can view your personal information and check your digital inbox for messages from government organisations such as the IND, the *Belastingdienst* and the municipality.

Bank account

Once registered in the Netherlands, the following documents are required to open a bank account:

- proof of identity (passport, identity card or residence permit);
- BSN;
- proof of address (rental contract, utilities bill).



In certain circumstances, an employment contract may be sufficient to open a bank account before receipt of a BSN. Banks can provide further information on this exemption.

For more advice, ask our related partners on page 145



Mosae Forum

Gemeenteloket
Municipal Office



**Maastricht
International
Centre**

- > IND
- > GRENSINFOPUNT
- > EXPAT CENTRE
MAASTRICHT
REGION



3

HOUSING

Further to providing a reliable source of information, our team also collaborates with local housing professionals and organisations who know the area, the current trends and the unique requirements of expats. Together with them we organise events and information sessions that enable informed choices and provide assistance in navigating, buying, renting and managing properties in the Maastricht Region.



Renting a property

The property market moves quickly in the Maastricht Region. When a potential suitable residence is found, contact the real estate agent or owner as soon as possible. If it is possible a viewing will be arranged. This can be carried by the potential tenant, or if not a contact or colleague of the potential tenant.

Residences for rent are available in three different states of furnishing:

- *kaal* (bare);
- *gestoffeerd* (soft furnishings);
- *gemeubileerd* (furnished).

If the property is suitable, an application is made by the potential tenant to the owner either directly or via the real estate agent. Note that there are 2 types of real estate agents: *woonstichtingen*: agencies owning the estates (housing associations) and *makelaars*: agencies mediating between the owner and tenant (real estate agents).

Real estate agencies are not allowed to represent both the landlord and the tenant parties at the same time, as this would give rise to a conflict of interest. They either represent the landlord or the tenant.

Points to note in the rental contract:

- states the beginning and end of the huurovereenkomst (rental contract). It usually starts from one year. If a shorter contract is required, this needs to be negotiated. Expats can request a diplomatenclausule (diplomatic clause);
- details regarding who is responsible for maintenance and repairs (tenant, owner or real estate agency);
- details of the amount of the security deposit (usually one- or two-month's rent) and the first and last month's rent paid up front.



According to Dutch law rent can be increased within a certain percentage once per year.

For questions or problems concerning rent or rented accommodation you may contact the Huurteam Zuid-Limburg. They are also able to assist with the *Huurcommissie* (Rental Tribunal). A national, independent and impartial agency which can mediate and adjudicate on disputes between tenants and landlords about rent levels, maintenance and service charges.

Buying a property

Property purchases are generally made through a real estate agent. There are many agents in the Maastricht Region, each with its own portfolio of properties. Real estate agents should be registered with a professional real estate association and reference to this should be listed on their website.

A property owner will enlist the services of a *verkoopmakelaar* (selling agent) to sell their property. For those interested in purchasing a property, there are *aankoopmakelaars* (purchasing agents) who can assist in getting the best price terms and guide vendors through the whole purchase process.



“La Fontaine Makelaardij has been an Expat Centre Maastricht Region Programme Partner for a long time. Not all newcomers are provided with assistance by their employer, so we inform them about the services that the Expat Centre provides to ensure they settle in smoothly and quickly.”

Michèle la Fontaine, La Fontaine Makelaardij



The following items need to be addressed once a suitable property is found:

- provisional arrangement of a mortgage, possibly with additional advice from a tax consultant;
- negotiations with the selling agent;
- securing independent advice about the state of the property;
- arrange a technical survey;
- understand the (legal) contents of the purchase agreement;
- collect the required documents for the mortgage;
- contact the civil law notary to set up the arrangement for handover;
- other legal matters such as translation of legal documents.

It is usual that a bank or lending facility will lend 4 times the amount of the individual or combined gross salary. There are many mortgage calculators online.

In order to start the mortgage process, the following documents are required:

- proof of income: most recent payslip or proof of income;
- proof of identification: a passport or identity card;
- proof of residency: *Burgerservicenummer* – BSN (citizen service number) as well as any necessary residency documents.

The mortgage provider or mortgage advisor will advise on the necessary documentation required throughout the purchase process.



Utilities

When moving into a new residence and then on a yearly basis, the electricity, gas and water meters need to be read and their readings recorded. Real estate agents can usually assist in completing the necessary information online or via email. Suppliers for electricity and gas are to be sourced by the tenant, however water in the province of Limburg is provided to each residence by Watermaatschappij Limburg (WML).

Internet and digital television are available through the telephone connection, the television connection or in some parts of the country via *glasvezel* (glass fibre). In each case, there are a number of different suppliers, and all take around three weeks to send the equipment and set up the connection.

All GSM mobile and smartphones will work in the Netherlands. It's not necessary to have a *vaste lijn* (land line). If a land line telephone is required, it is worth applying for one as soon as you know the residential address is confirmed as connection can take some time. There is no choice of supplier for the phone line itself – KPN was the Dutch state monopoly and owns nearly all the hardware.

TIP

Check with your rental provider or landlord if utilities are included in your rental contract. If it is, you are unable to change energy contracts yourself.

For more advice, contact our expert housing partners on page 147





Waste disposal

Each municipality has its own system for waste. Refer to the municipality's website for the most up to date information about waste collections, recycling and waste and recycling centres.

Waste is generally separated into two types: household waste and bulky waste.

Household waste

Household waste is waste that is part of domestic daily life and doesn't involve chemicals or electrical equipment. Household waste must be separated into *groente-, fruit- en tuinafval*:

- household waste must be separated into *groente- fruit- tuinafval* (vegetable, fruit and garden waste), recycling, or residual waste;
- vegetable, fruit and garden waste is collected in special bins (depending on the size of the residence) and has a separate collection schedule;
- recycling must be separated into glass, plastic, metal and paper and taken to local recycling bins;
- only residual waste that is placed in municipal bin bags is collected by the municipality, these bags can be purchased from local supermarkets.

Bulky waste

- bulky waste is waste that doesn't fit a standard bin bag, such as debris, plaster boards and broken furniture which can be brought to waste and recycling centres.



Nappies and incontinence products

This varies per municipality. Maastricht recycles nappies and incontinence products. You can dispose of both for free at a sorting station using your *milieupas* (waste disposal pass).

TIP

Check out the waste application
Milieu App (Waste disposal app)
besteuitafval.nl/milieu-app





SCHUNCK is a multidisciplinary cultural institution. They combine a museum for modern and contemporary art and architecture, a public library and a music and dance school. They do this from the Glaspaleis, a modernist national monument by architect Frits Peutz, and four other branches in Heerlen.



4

HEALTHCARE

The Ministerie van Volksgezondheid, Welzijn en Sport – VWS (The Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport), feels that every resident in the Netherlands should be able to consult their huisarts (General Practitioner, family doctor), a hospital, or other care providers whenever necessary. Alongside health insurers, care providers and patient organisations, the VWS oversees healthcare services and ensures that residents are offered choices in their own care.



Healthcare

The Maastricht Region plays host to some of the top healthcare facilities in the Netherlands. All residents in the Netherlands are obliged to take out a basic level of national health insurance regardless whether they have existing health insurance from another country. Once a health insurance policy has been taken out the next step is to register with a GP in the local area.

In the Netherlands, the GP plays an important role in accessing the healthcare system. The GP is the primary physician, compiling medical information and maintaining contact with specialised medical professionals. To secure an appointment with a medical specialist, a referral letter from the GP is required in most cases.

Prescriptions

In the Netherlands, medications are prescribed more cautiously than most countries, especially for antibiotics. As a result, a GP might wait a bit longer when prescribing them. The reason for this is to decrease the risk of antibiotic-resistant infections.

TIP

Ask neighbours or colleagues in the local area about their recommendations for GPs. Expat groups on social media are also good sources of information and opinions on these topics.

Hospitals

There are three types of hospitals in the Netherlands:

- academic/teaching hospitals;
- general hospitals; and
- specialized hospitals.

The GP will be able to give advice on which hospital will best suit the treatment of the existing medical condition.

Maastricht Universitaire Medisch Centrum (MUMC+)

P. Debyelaan 25
6229 HX Maastricht

Zuyderland Medisch Centrum Brunssum

Prins Hendriklaan 376
6443AE Brunssum

Zuyderland Medisch Centrum Heerlen

Henri Dunantstraat 5
6419 PC Heerlen

Zuyderland Medisch Centrum Kerkrade

Wijngracht 45
6461 AL Kerkrade

Zuyderland Medisch Centrum Sittard-Geleen

Dr. H. van der Hoffplein 1
6162 BG Sittard-Geleen



Urgent and Emergency medical care

In the Netherlands there is a difference between urgent medical care and emergency medical care.

If an urgent medical situation arises during office hours residents are advised to contact their GP.

If an urgent medical situation arises outside of office hours residents can contact the *huisartsenpost* (urgent care centre) who will assess the situation and either advise the patient to wait until the GP opens or make an appointment for the patient at the *huisartsenpost*.

Huisartsenpost Maastricht en Heuvelland: +31 (0)43 387 7777

Huisartsenpost Sittard-Geleen: +31 (0)46 400 9925

Huisartsenpost Heerlen: +31 (0)45 577 8844

NOTE: It is not possible to visit the huisartsenpost without an appointment.

Emergency situation? Call:

112

When you need urgent help, for instance when your life is in immediate danger, or if someone is seriously injured and needs prompt medical attention, or in case of a serious crime like assault, murder, robbery or a break-in.

Dentist

After registration, the dentist will generally schedule in a regular check-up every six months. The dentist will perform most routine procedures themselves. Anaesthesia will generally not be given automatically; it must be requested from the dentist before dental treatment (if required).

A tandarts (dentist) does not always have availability to accept new clients. An initial intake appointment must be made for all family members before treatment can commence. Not all dentists are covered by all national health insurance policies, check with both dentist and health insurance provider to ensure coverage. National health insurance covers children under 18 for all dental costs. Extra health insurance policies can be taken out to cover certain dental care expenses, but this is not included in the standard package for all people above 18 years.

Emergency dentist

In the event of an urgent/emergency dental situation, contact the dentist. Outside office hours, the dentist's voicemail will provide contact details for the local *spoedhulp tandarts* (emergency dentist).

Spoedhulp tandarts Maastricht +31 (0)900 424 3434

Spoedhulp tandarts Sittard-Geleen +31 (0)85 773 3577

Spoedhulp tandarts Heerlen +31 (0)45 405 2185

NOTE: It is not possible to visit the dentist without an appointment.





National health insurance

Everyone who works and lives in the Netherlands is obliged to take out a basic level of national health insurance within the first four months of arrival, regardless whether they have existing health insurance from another country. National health insurance is free for children up to 18 years of age, they are automatically insured under their parents, guardians or caregivers policy.

One way to compare the various types of policies on offer is to use a comparison website such as *Independer* or *Zorgkiezer*.

Businesses and organisations often provide collective health insurance for their employees; however these policies can be more expensive and may not suit specific medical requirements.

National health insurance providers can only be changed once a year. A letter will be sent by the current provider in November each year to confirm the policy details for the following year. If moving to another provider, the current provider needs to be informed before 1 January and a new provider must be confirmed by 1 February or a fine may be imposed.

TIP

The health care insurance provider will require a BSN in order to complete the registration process for each family member.

Welfare system / Social security

Social security in the Netherlands can be divided into schemes:

- National social security which applies to all residents of the Netherlands where benefits are not related to salary levels.
- Employee social security is restricted to employees; benefits are related to the level of pay earned, and are payable in the event of loss of income due to illness (after two years), permanent disability for work, and unemployment.

For more detailed information regarding Social security, head to expatcentremaastrichtregion.nl

Health screening

In the Netherlands, preventive health check-ups are arranged for a limited number of health problems and are nationally coordinated and free of charge. Invitations for taking part in health screening are sent by the Bevolkingsonderzoek Zuid.

National preventive health check-ups are carried out for:

- cervical cancer (once every five years for women aged 30-60);
- breast cancer (every two years for women aged 50-75);
- bowel cancer (every two years for those aged 55-75).





 Maastricht UMC+

HIC OPDINGANG



Pregnancy

As soon as you know that you are pregnant, you should make an appointment with the midwife or obstetrician as soon as possible. He or she will inform your GP. Your midwife or obstetrician will monitor the course of your pregnancy at regular intervals. Usually, you will be invited for a check-up every four weeks during the first half of the pregnancy. The frequency then increases to weekly appointments as the due date approaches. However, this is only a general indication: more or fewer appointments may be scheduled depending on your personal situation.

You can find more information on rivm.nl the website of the Dutch Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport.

After childbirth

It is very important for your baby to have the heel prick test. During the first week of life, some blood will be taken from your baby's heel and sent to the laboratory. It is then tested for a number of rare, serious diseases. Your baby's hearing will be tested shortly after birth, usually at home between four and seven days after birth.

If you are at home in the first few days after birth, the midwife and maternity nurse will provide the necessary care. After that, your local child healthcare centre will assume responsibility for providing all necessary care for your baby. No action is required on your part: someone from the centre will contact you for an introductory visit.

Dutch National Immunisation Programme

The Dutch government offers every child vaccinations against 12 infectious diseases. Young parents automatically receive an invitation for their baby. You can find the vaccination schedule on rijksvaccinatieprogramma.nl/english, a website from the Dutch Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport.

Vaccination

GGD Zuid Limburg is committed to monitoring the health and safety of all citizens of Zuid-Limburg. You can go here for vaccinations such as:

- Influenza vaccination (for vulnerable age groups);
- Coronavirus Covid-19;
- People aged up to and including 24 years can visit the GGD once a year, free of charge, for a STI-test 'just to be sure';
- HPV vaccination 19- to 26-year-olds;
- Travel vaccinations and company vaccinations.

Participation is on a voluntary basis. For those not wanting to participate, return the invitation which indicates an opt out.





5

TAXATION & INSURANCE

Whether you are interested in making a home purchase, deciding on tertiary education or arranging health insurance, making informed choices is easier with basic knowledge of rules and regulations in the Netherlands. Our team can provide access to information and advice on complex matters, and we also organise bespoke sessions with our partners where we can put you in contact with industry professionals in the Maastricht Region.



Taxation

The Dutch tax year runs from January to December. Tax returns are normally filled in during March or April. It is possible to request an extension until 1 September if necessary.

In the Netherlands, income is divided into three 'boxes'. Each category of income is assigned to a certain box, and different rates apply to each box. The tax for wage and income is calculated through four progressive tax brackets. The higher the income, the higher the tax bracket. The wage tax that is withheld from salaries is levied on the basis of the estimated annual salary, which is then calculated back to a monthly amount.

For the first year in the Netherlands, which is usually an incomplete tax year, the tax form to be used is an M-form. This form often has to be specifically requested from the tax office.

Everyone has to fill in the tax form as an individual. Please be aware that all tax forms are in Dutch and the Dutch tax office is legally only allowed to officially communicate in Dutch.

However, you can find English-language information on belastingdienst.nl the website of the Dutch Tax and Customs Administration.

TIP

The *Toeslagen* website is in Dutch so if assistance is required ask a colleague, a friend or the team at Expat Centre Maastricht Region.

Tax benefits

To compensate specific groups of people, particularly those with lower incomes, the tax administration office offers a number of benefits. Applying for benefits and submitting amendments is carried out via the belastingdienst.nl website, choose 'toeslagen'.

It is important to take note of the conditions required for eligibility and adjust details via the website when changes in situation occur, otherwise repayment of contributions back to the tax authority may be required.

The following benefits are offered for those eligible:

- *Huurtoeslag* (rent benefit);
- *Zorgtoeslag* (health care benefit);
- *Kinderopvangtoeslag* (childcare benefit);
- *Kinderbijslag* (child benefit).

The 30% Tax Facility

Recognising that highly skilled migrants and researchers are needed to further strengthen the Dutch economy, culture, and research fields, alongside the fast tracked registration process, the Dutch government offers the 30% Tax Facility, which covers up to 30% of an employee's remuneration as a tax-free expense allowance in compensation for extra-territorial costs, without having to provide evidence for these costs.





The 30% Tax Facility applies if the employee was recruited outside of the Netherlands or seconded from a country other than the Netherlands to work in the Netherlands. Conditions for making use of the 30% facility include the following:

- A valid employment relationship.
- The employee is recruited from another country by the employer or is sent from another country to the employer.
- Of the two years before the first working day in the Netherlands, the employee lived outside the Netherlands for more than 16 months, at a distance of more than 150 kilometres from the Dutch border.
- The employee has specific expertise that is not or is only barely available on the Dutch employment market.
- The employee has a valid decision.

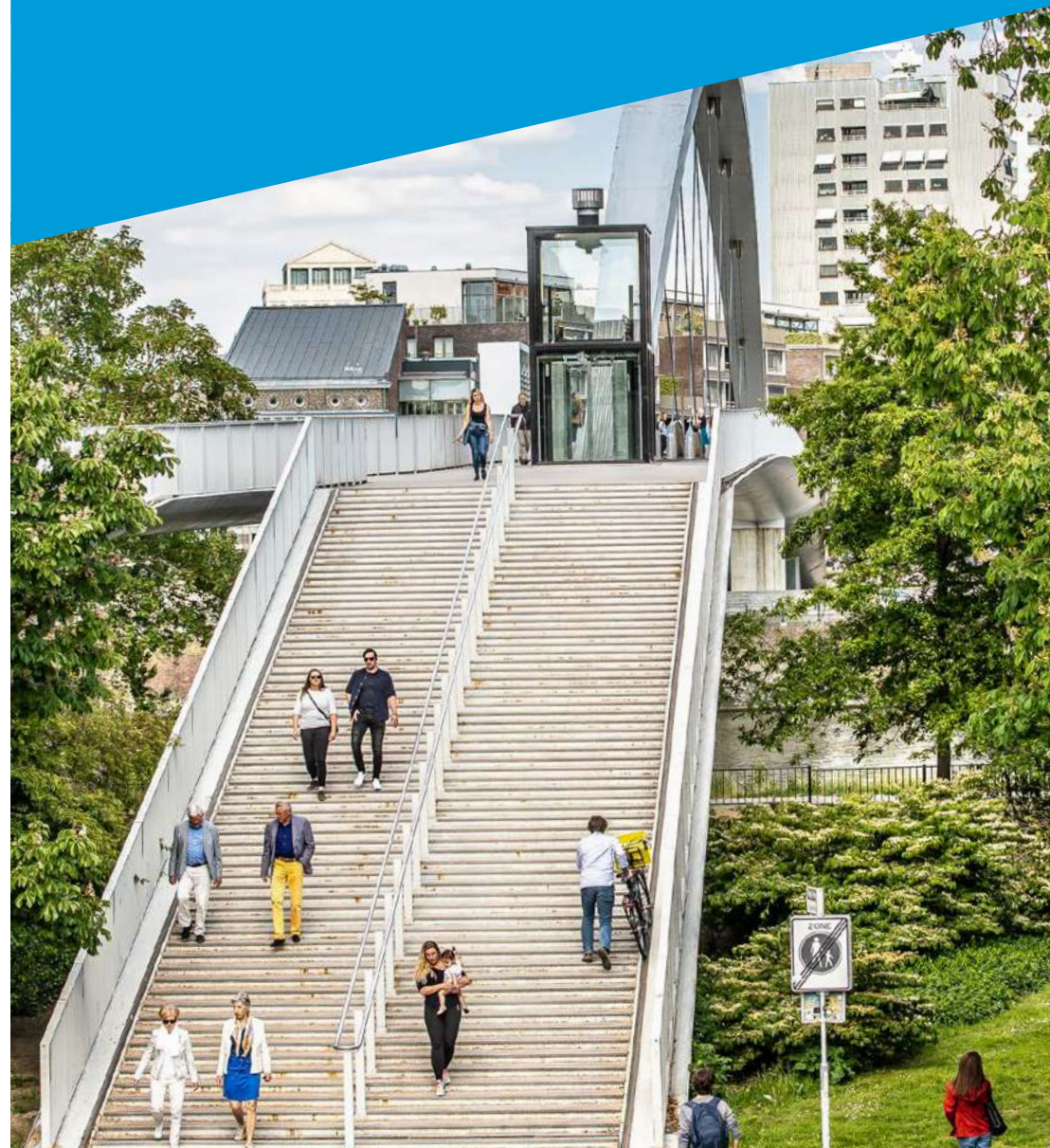
The 30% Tax Facility for employees from abroad has a maximum term of five years.

In order to apply for the 30% Tax Facility for incoming employees, the applicant must have permission from the *Belastingdienst* (Tax and Customs Administration). The request has to be submitted jointly, by employer (IND recognised) and employee, to the Tax and Customs Administration, which will make a decision.

For more advice, find out who our expert partners are on page 149

"One of the things you will encounter as an expat or international is the Dutch Tax Return. Unfortunately the program for filing your Tax Return is only available in the Dutch language. This is something you can assist you with. And of course we can advise you in other matters. For instance if you are an employee we can help you with the application for the 30% Ruling."

Fiona Vinck, Baat accountants & adviseurs





6

MOBILITY & TRANSPORT

The Maastricht Region transportation system facilitates not just the requirements of the Netherlands, but also its neighbours Germany and Belgium. There are numerous ways to travel across the region, and whether your preferred means of transportation is car, train or bicycle, the Maastricht Region provides easily accessible services accompanied by live travel information provided in English both via app and online.



Public transport

Bus

Bus lines in the Maastricht Region are operated by Arriva. The buses are cashless, which means that tickets must be purchased online in advance via a registered or unregistered *OV-chipkaart* (public transport pass) in the bus, or via debit card payment in the bus. Some Arriva buses operate with a fixed timetable across the border to Germany and Belgian bus operator De Lijn has routes which cross the Dutch – Belgian borders.

International coach

Flixbus operates an extensive network of coaches across Europe, and the IC bus (Deutsche Bahn Personenverkehr) has direct links to Liège and Düsseldorf. There is an International busstop located behind Maastricht central station on Meerssenerweg and at de Geusselt.

Train

Train lines in the Maastricht Region are operated by Arriva and Nederlandse Spoorwegen (NS). The trains are cashless, which means that tickets must be purchased online in advance (e-tickets) via a ticket machine at a train station. You can also travel with an *OV-chipkaart* (public transport pass) or check in and out using OVPay with your contactless debit card, credit card or mobile phone.

TIP

There are regular special deals made in collaboration with Dutch retailers such as Kruidvat and HEMA that offer reduced prices on day tickets and recreational travel on public transport in the Netherlands. Keep an eye out at local retailers and online for offer details.



Cross-border trains

Train operator NMBS/SNCB has routes which cross the Dutch – Belgian borders. The Aachener Straßenbahn und Energieversorgungs-AG (ASEAG) operates local transport in the city and municipal region of Aachen, Germany.

International trains

The Maastricht Region provides connections to high speed rail networks by providing passengers with easily accessible connections within the Euregio Meuse-Rhine:

- to Germany (ICE) at Liège Guillemins station and Aachen station;
- to Paris (Thalys) at Liège Guillemins station and Brussels;
- to London (Eurostar) at Brussels;
- to Vienna and Berlin with the Nightjet, overnight train at Liège Guillemins station or Brussels.

Taxis

In the Netherlands some regulations regarding taxis differ to those in other countries, including:

- authorised taxi vehicles are recognisable by their blue registration/number plates;
- taxis are not allowed to pick up a passenger that hails from the street;
- taxis must be contacted directly via phone or online to arrange a pick-up, or they can take passengers who are waiting at a taxi rank, which are located at bus and train stations and town squares.

NS also provides a door-to-door service for business rail passengers with the NS-Businesscard.



Check out 9292.nl a source of live travel information across all public transport in the Netherlands.





Cycling in the Netherlands

Cyclists are excellently catered for in the Maastricht Region. There are dedicated cycle paths, lanes, bridges, tunnels, secure parking areas and sharing schemes to suit every cyclists' need.

Helmet

Cyclists are not obliged to wear a helmet while cycling, it is however advisable for less-experienced cyclists to wear one when becoming acclimatised to the traffic conditions.

Cycling rules

It is forbidden to cycle while holding your mobile phone, this can be dangerous and you risk a fine. You are also not allowed to park your bike everywhere. In Maastricht e.g. cycling through the pedestrianised shopping area is only allowed from 18:00 till 23:00 (on shopping nights from 21:00).

Buying a bicycle

There are many bike shops in the Maastricht Region that sell new and used bicycles. In addition, there are a large range of second-hand bikes offered for sale on Facebook and Marktplaats.nl, an online auction site similar to eBay. Be aware of buying second hand bicycles from sellers on social media.



Be aware of buying second-hand bicycles on social media. Local bicycle retailers often have second-hand bicycles for sale, these are legal to purchase and serviced for safety.



Renting a bicycle

There are a number of ways to rent a bicycle in the Maastricht Region like *OV-fiets* - provided by de Nederlandse Spoorwegen (NS) to use for the last leg of a rail journey - and Swapfiets.

Bicycle parking

Bicycles should always be parked in the allocated bicycle parking areas/racks, not along the pavement and not attached to lamp posts or fences. The *Handhaving* (council enforcement officers) regularly remove illegally parked and abandoned bicycles.

There are a number of secure bicycle parking areas provided by the municipalities in the Maastricht Region and these should be utilised. They are usually under cover, close to city centres or public transport and are often guarded. However these areas sometimes incur a fee or need to be accessed using the OV-chipkaart e.g. NS bicycle parking.

By car

Driving license

Holders of an EU/EFTA driving licence can drive in the Netherlands for a period of 15 years or until the expiration date, whichever is sooner. When due to expire, the EU/EFTA licence can be exchanged for a Dutch licence at the municipality.

Driving licences issued by non-EU/EFTA need to be exchanged within six months of registering in the Netherlands, if they are valid for the categories listed.



If the applicant is benefiting from the 30% Tax Facility, then the applicant and family members can exchange their driving licence(s) for a Dutch driving licence regardless of the licence's country of issue, under the condition that the applicant or their partner has been registered at the municipality for at least 185 days, and the non-EU drivers licence has not expired within that 185-days period.

All other licence holders will need to apply for a Dutch licence. This involves taking a theory test and a practical driving exam. In the Netherlands this process is facilitated by accredited driving instructors.

Importing a car

When importing a car to the Netherlands there are three main organisations involved:

- the *RDW* (Netherlands Vehicle Authority) is responsible for the registration of cars in the Dutch system, issuing vehicle registration numbers, and issuing certificates of vehicle roadworthiness;
- the *Belastingdienst* (Tax and Customs Administration); and
- *Douane* (Customs) who are both responsible for the paperwork to do with importation, including exemption from import duties, and collecting road tax.

How long you can drive a car with foreign registration plates depends on the country where you are registered. More information can be found at: netherlandsworldwide.nl.



For detailed information about importing a vehicle and to start the process go to Importing a Vehicle on the RDW website rdw.nl.



Car-sharing

There are a number of car-sharing and rental schemes in the Maastricht Region, including Greenwheels and Enterprise. Car-sharing companies have a fleet of shared cars parked in accessible locations throughout the Netherlands. Members can pick up and return a car to the same location whenever it suits, paying per hour and kilometre. The cars are maintained and re-fueled by the organisation and organisations such as Greenwheels offer an option to be an individual member or link the membership to an NS-Business Card.

Environmental zones

The City of Aachen introduced an *Umweltzone* (Environmental Zone or Low-Emission Zone). Only vehicles with a Green Sticker or a special permit are allowed to enter the Environmental Zone in the city centre. For the most part, the boundary of the Environmental Zone follows Aachen's outer ring road and includes all the streets and roads within the designated area.

Many other cities in Germany, and some in the Netherlands and Belgium also have environmental zones. Rules for access vary.

Electric charging

Locations in Maastricht to charge your electric car can be found at maastrichtbereikbaar.nl



Airports

A number of airports are accessible by car from the Maastricht Region. The regional airport of the Maastricht Region is Maastricht Aachen Airport (MAA), from which a range of European destinations can be reached.

Charleroi, Eindhoven, Cologne, and Weeze airports are ideal for flights within Europe. For intercontinental flights, Brussels and Düsseldorf are also within easy reach. Liège Airport is especially strong in air freight.



For passengers in the Maastricht Region flying KLM from Schiphol, there is a free KLM shuttle service to and from Maastricht Station to Schiphol airport. Check the KLM website for terms and conditions.

For more advice, ask our related partners on page 150



Maastricht Aachen Airport

BUS



7

EDUCATION & CAREERS

The Maastricht Region offers a wide range of education choices and provides parents with access to quality childcare, primary education, secondary education and our tertiary education institutions are among the best and most international in the world.



Childcare

The Netherlands formal educational provision for children starts at the age of four, compulsory education is from the age of five. The region offers plenty of choice in regards to childcare, and even though it is not free, it can be subsidised in the form of *Kinderopvangtoeslag* (childcare benefit).

- *Crèche* (Day care)
- *Gastouder* (host parents)
- *Peuterspeelzaal* (nursery / preschool)
- *Buitenschoolse opvang* – *BSO* (Before and After School Care)
- *Au-Pair*
- *Oppassen* (babysitting)

Dutch Primary Education

Basisonderwijs (primary education) is divided over eight *groepen* (years).

The school week is normally from around 08:30 to around 15:15 on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday; and from 08:30-12:30 on Wednesdays. Children in *groep 1* and *groep 2* often have a half or even a whole day off on Fridays. Dutch primary school students are often allowed to go home at lunchtime, however some primary schools have a *continurooster* which means that the students stay on school premises and remain in the care of the school or *overblijfouders* (parents that volunteer to help at lunchtime).

At the United World College in Maastricht Lessons run from 08:10 to 15:00. Younger classes have half-days on Fridays. After school, students can participate in various activities, such as dance, arts and crafts, sports, language or music lessons.



TIP

Everyone working and living in the Netherlands with a child or children under 18 receives quarterly *Kinderbijslag* (child benefit). It is money from the Dutch government towards the expenses of raising a child and is paid by the *Sociale Verzekeringsbank* – *SVB* (Social Insurance Bank). Apply for *Kinderbijslag* online at svb.nl/en/child-benefit.



Secondary Education

Voortgezet Onderwijs (secondary education) starts after completion of primary education, usually at age 12, and generally continues to the age of 18. In the final year of primary school (*groep 8*), the most appropriate type of secondary school is advised.

There are three levels determined by the outcome:

- *Vorbereidend middelbaar beroepsonderwijs* – VMBO is a four year programme that provides preparation for a more practical career (via MBO) or is a stepping stone to HAVO education;
- *Hoger algemeen voortgezet onderwijs* – HAVO is a five year programme and prepares for HBO (University of Applied Sciences) or a transfer to VWO education;
- *Vorbereidend wetenschappelijk onderwijs* – VWO is a six year programme and is the admission level for Universities.

Children are obliged to go to school until the school year in which they become 16. They must attend school until they obtain a starting qualification.

TIP

Open days are held annually where students and their families can learn about the many programmes and make an informed choice as to the course of study.



Tweetalig onderwijs – TTO (Bilingual Education) in the Maastricht Region

In order to be eligible for this a student needs to be reasonably fluent in Dutch as well as in English. Each subject is taught in just one language, but both languages are used across the curriculum, and the subject/language combinations will vary from one year to the next.

- **Porta Mosana College** – Maastricht
- **Sint-Janscollege** – Hoensbroek
- **Charlemagne College** – Landgraaf
- **Sintermeertencollege** – Heerlen

International secondary schools in the Maastricht Region

United World College Maastricht – offers the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme, Diploma Programme and Career-related Programme curricula in English. UWC Maastricht welcomes young people from all over the world, fostering collaboration towards peace and a sustainable future. Although it is a fee-paying school, it is subsidized by the Dutch government. For students aged 16-18, UWC Maastricht also provides residential options.

Afnorth International School – offering the curriculum requirements of four nations (UK, Canada, Germany and US) from kindergarten to high school graduation. The school is for children of active duty military personnel from the above four nations, a NATO or US Department of Defense background stationed in the area.

UStudy Academy Watersley Sittard – UStudy Academy is a relatively new international school for students aged 8 to 20. An innovative international school both globally and in the Netherlands that offers an alternative pathway to the existing landscape of traditional national and international schools.



Tertiary Education

Technical college (vocational education)

Middelbaar beroepsonderwijs – MBO is available for students from the age of 16. The programme takes three or four years and offers practical qualifications at a variety of levels. Following this programme some students will be eligible to continue the education at *hoger beroepsonderwijs – HBO* (Bachelor) level. Others will go into employment.

The technical colleges based in the Maastricht Region are:

- **Vista College** in Heerlen, Maastricht and Sittard
- **Yuverta** in Heerlen

University (higher education)

Higher education in the Netherlands is offered at two types of institutions:

- *hogescholen* (universities of applied sciences)
- *universiteiten* (universities)

A great deal of the courses taught at the tertiary institutions in the Maastricht Region are taught in English, however not all are. Refer to the respective websites for detailed and up-to-date information.



The universities based in the Maastricht Region are:

- **Maastricht University:**
 - University college Maastricht
 - Maastricht School of Management
- **Zuyd University of Applied Sciences:** (Maastricht, Heerlen and Sittard-Geleen)
 - Hotel Management School Maastricht
 - Kunstacademie Maastricht (Academy of Fine Arts and Design)
 - Toneelacademie Maastricht (Institute of Performing Arts)
 - Conservatorium Maastricht (Conservatory of Music)
- **United Nations University**
- **Open Universiteit Heerlen (Open University)**

Also potentially of interest to residents of the Maastricht Region are the universities in the Euregion Meuse-Rhine, all accessible via public transport.

- **Hasselt University**
- **Aachen University**
- **Liège University**



Brightlands

The four innovation campuses are home to state-of-the-art facilities, fundamental and applied research offered to scientists, entrepreneurs, students and investors. Together they are creating new chances and solutions in circularity, health, nutrition and data that are environmentally sound, business wise and socially positive.

Brightlands consists of four campuses embracing the following areas of expertise:

- **Brightlands Chemelot Campus** in Sittard-Geleen focuses on circular materials, biomedical innovations and sustainable processes;
- **Brightlands Maastricht Health Campus** Brightlands Maastricht Health Campus focuses on innovations in healthcare, medicine and life sciences;
- **Brightlands Smart Services Campus** in Heerlen focuses on artificial intelligence, data science and smart digital services;
- **Brightlands Campus Greenport Venlo** (outside of the Maastricht Region) focuses on healthy and sustainable nutrition, future farming and bio-circular economy.

"South-Limburg is the chosen location for three knowledge campuses, together hosting more than 300 knowledge-based companies, drawing in the world's experts in technology, data, medical, research, entrepreneurship and innovation. I want to encourage you to discover it yourself."

Wim Hillenaar, Mayor of Maastricht





Mature/Adult Education and Life-long Learning

- *Open Universiteit Nederland* – OU is an independent government-funded institute for distance learning at university level.
- Future Learn is a portal offering a wide range of free courses as distance learning courses. These are provided in English by a number of universities throughout the world.
- Syntra, a Belgian institute offers a wide range of practical qualifications, some of which can be followed as full-time, part-time or evening classes, in Dutch.

"Professionally, I would never want to work anywhere else than in the Netherlands. You are very direct and I like that. That also prevents misperception. It's really not like that everywhere and at such times I am immensely happy that I get to work here and build my career."

Kristine Paseka, Latvia

Working in the Maastricht Region

The Maastricht Region plays host to a number of international organisations. For internationals these companies can be the first step in securing employment. However, always ensure you have the correct work visa before starting any job search.

It is sensible to request an employment contract in a language both employee/employer understands. The employer needs to check identity documents (passport, personal identity card or residence permit) and keep a copy in their administration.

Employment conditions

Many Dutch companies and branches have a *Collectieve Arbeidsovereenkomst* – CAO (Collective Labour Agreement). This is a written agreement covering working conditions and benefits. A CAO contains supplementary rules for all employees on wages, working hours, supplementary pension, payment during illness, etc.



A driving licence is not a valid identity document for this purpose because it does not indicate nationality and provides no information about residence status.



Seconded employees

The terms and conditions in contracts for seconded employees must comply with the legal rules in their home country however, because the work is carried out in the Netherlands, some Dutch rules will also apply.

For more specific queries about seconded employees in the Netherlands, or queries about cross-border working, contact:

- *Grensarbeid* (cross-border employment services) in Maastricht and Kerkrade
- *GrensInfoPunt* (cross-border information point) Maastricht and Aachen-Eurode

Freelance / Self-employed

Zelfstandige zonder personeel – ZZP (independent with no staff) are self-employed persons who are not committed to any single long-term client or employer.

To register as a freelancer in the Netherlands, the applicant must first ensure that they are in possession of a valid residence permit that allows them to live and work in the Netherlands.

For cross-border workers, when performing freelance activities in the Netherlands, taxes are paid in the home country on the income earned on those activities unless there is a permanent establishment in the Netherlands. Such as a shop, a factory, a studio.

Social security contributions must be paid in the Netherlands when the self-employed activities are carried out in the Netherlands.



Starting a business

If you are eligible to work in the Netherlands you may also be able to start your own business. There are several services that can guide you through the process of starting your own business, maintaining your business entity and dealing with taxation and cross-border questions. All companies and legal entities in the Netherlands must be registered in the handelsregister (Business Register) via the *Kamer van Koophandel* – KvK (Chamber of Commerce).

Starters Centre (*StartersCentrum Limburg*)

Is a starting point for those who want to learn more about starting a business in the Maastricht Region.

Maastricht Business Team (*Team Ondernemen Maastricht*)

Gemeente Maastricht established the Maastricht Business Team to help entrepreneurs navigate their way through the process and procedure of starting and running a business in the Maastricht Region.

Volunteering

Volunteering is another way to further one's education and come into contact with potential employers. If just arrived in the Netherlands, it is a productive way to become acquainted with or improve the knowledge of the Dutch language and can increase chances of prospective employment.

For more advice, ask our related partners on page 151





8

PERSONAL & SOCIAL

The Maastricht Region thoroughly embraces its location at the heart of Europe, providing international standard childcare options and a wide range of community groups both active and social. The region openly welcomes international residents and is a preferred choice for expats as it accommodates their language, religious, personal and social requirements.



Childcare

The Netherlands' formal educational provision for children starts at the age of four. There are various childcare facilities for infants and toddlers in the Maastricht Region. The region offers plenty of choice, including agencies for in home childcare, day care centres. Childcare is not free in the Netherlands, however it can be subsidised in the form of *Kinderopvangtoeslag* (childcare benefit).

Head to our Education & Careers section in this manual or to our website for more information about childcare.

Religion

In the Netherlands every individual has a right to practice their own religion or conviction. Traditionally, the Maastricht Region was strongly Roman Catholic. Although there has been a big decrease in the number of people who attend church, the traditions are still part of the culture. For instance, Carnaval. Today, a growing number of residents practice Islam and other religions.

Volunteering

Volunteering is another way to further one's education and come into contact with potential employers. It can also be a enjoyable, challenging, educational, and good for personal development.

"We have been an Expat Centre partner for a long time. We try to make all our information available in English where possible so non-Dutch speaking residents can settle in nicely and engage with culture without the language barrier."

Paul Pinxten, Week In Week Uit





Language courses

For those that are eager to learn Dutch there are several locations in the Maastricht Region offering lessons for Dutch as a foreign language. To obtain official recognition of your Dutch language skills (eg: to increase employability) you can follow a course that offers Nederlands als *Tweede Taal* – NT2 (Dutch as a second language) certification.

At our Personal & Social section of our website you'll find a list of Language courses in Maastricht Region.

Dialects

As well as the Dutch language, the Maastricht Region is home to a number of different dialects that aren't heard anywhere else in the Netherlands. Depending on the distance to the Belgian and German borders, the dialects can sound distinctly German, Flemish or even French.

Residents of the Maastricht Region often speak their own dialect, Dutch and either French or German as well as English, which makes things easier for newcomers. For those eager to learn, there are many language classes and courses to follow as well as meet-up groups where you can practice your rolling r's and guttural g's and become acquainted with a few words and phrases that will put you in good stead with your new fellow residents.

Social Groups & Social Clubs

What better way to get to know this vibrant region than to meet up with other Internationals or people who share the same hobby or interest in sport.

To get you started, we have listed a few social groups for you on the Personal & Social section of our website. Most of them in English. We continue to update this list.

News in English

Stay informed with dutchnews.nl, the Holland Times, NL Times, RTV Maastricht / News in English.

Pets

It is possible to bring a pet from another country to the Netherlands, if all the conditions are met. For example, dogs, cats and ferrets must have been vaccinated against rabies. The conditions depend on the kind of animal and the country it is coming from.

Register your dog

When planning to import a dog, it must be microchipped and registered with the municipality within 2 weeks of its arrival in the Netherlands. The microchip is normally implanted by a vet, who can also advise on how to register the animal. Once registered the owner has to pay a dog tax to *Belastingsamenwerking Gemeenten en Waterschappen (BsGW)*. The amount varies greatly from one municipality to another and it may vary depending on how many dogs are registered.

Animal ambulance +31 (0)88 811 3510

Help with missing pet / Dierenambulance Limburg Zuid
+31 (0)900 443 3224

For more advice, ask our related partners on page 154







9

CULTURE & LEISURE

The Maastricht Region is different from other parts of the Netherlands. French and German are commonly heard due to the proximity of neighbouring countries Germany and Belgium. Visitors from other countries are quick to feel at home. The reason for this is the vast multitude of events, extensive cultural offerings and a variety of restaurants and cuisine.

"Naturally, work and career are important. But besides that, it is valuable that the city or region you live in provides crucial aspects of life, like sports and culture. Classical music is a "language no problem" cultural event, so I think our orchestra fulfils some of these needs. As one of the leading Dutch professional symphony orchestras we will definitely deliver to the highest standards."

Erwin Pellemans, Philzuid

Events & Festivals

The Maastricht region plays host to events that draw visitors and famous artists from all across the planet: Pinkpop is the world's first and longest running annual music festival; Cultura Nova boasts unconventional forms of theatre, dance, music, film and visual arts and TEFAF is the world's largest art fair.

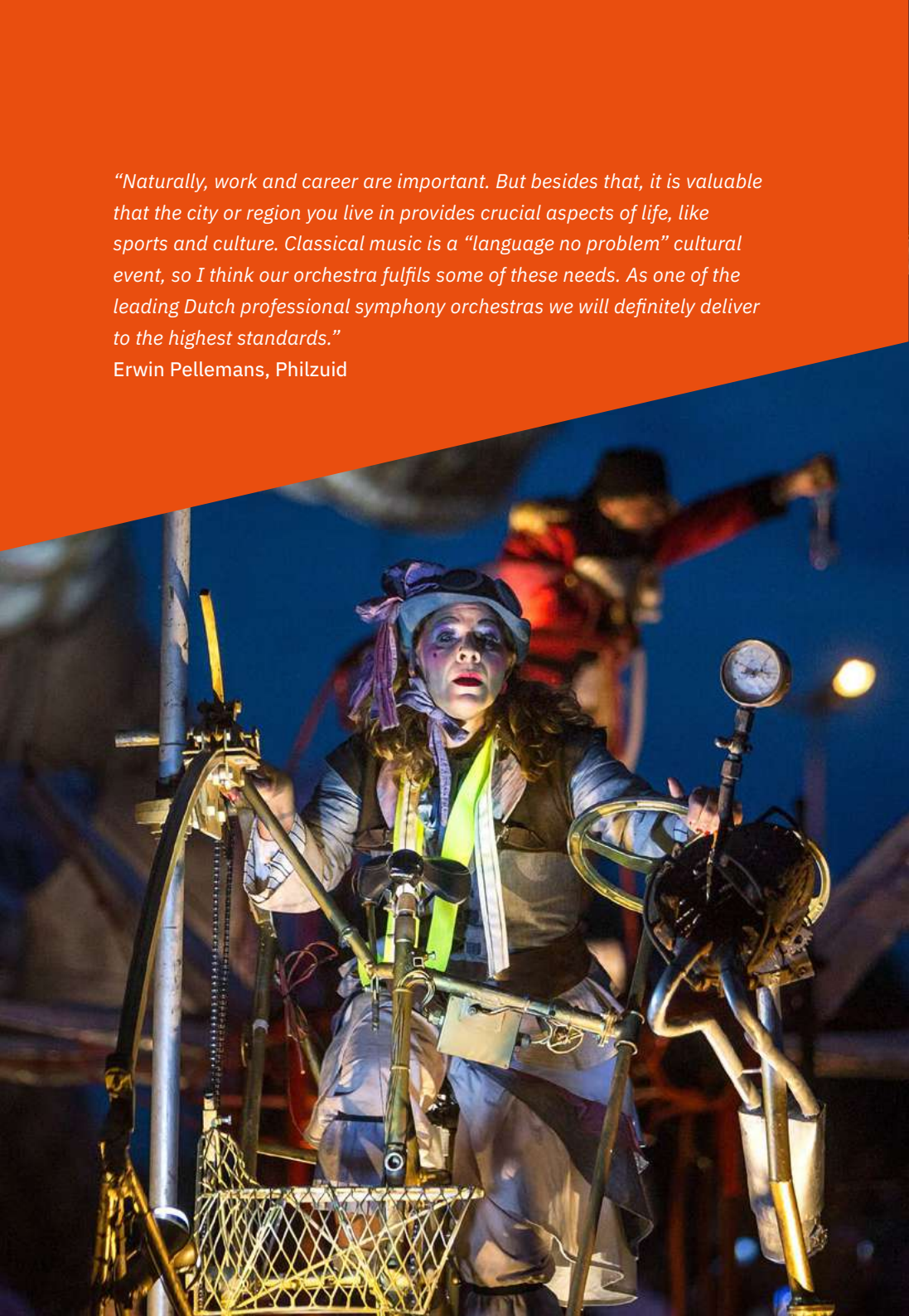
The region hosts a great many events that are broadcast across the country and around the world; the Amstel Gold cycling race, the three-day equestrian event Jumping in Maastricht (JIM) and of course the world famous André Rieu concerts and the Dutch Mountain Film Festival.

Sport

In terms of sport, the region has a great deal to offer, with Europe's largest indoor ski village Snowworld; group activities, rafting and XL games at Fun Valley; and a world of climbing at Adventure Valley Landgraaf. For families and children there are indoor and outdoor child-friendly facilities at Kinderstad Heerlen, DrieLandenPunt and Kasteelpark Born to name just a few.

Outdoors

For nature lovers looking to explore, the Maastricht Region has the richest and most varied flora and fauna in the Netherlands. Natural attractions such as Brunssummerheide nature reserves, the caves under Sint Pietersberg, and the rolling hills of Bovenste Bos, all offer landscapes that differ greatly from the rest of the Netherlands. Ideal for cycling and hiking. Also located in the Maastricht Region is Gaia Zoo, which has been voted 'Best Trip of the Netherlands' three times.



Culinary

There are an incredible number of high-quality restaurants in the Maastricht region, we boast a number of restaurants who have been awarded the Bib Gourmand, and for those with a few more euros to spend we are not short on Michelin starred restaurants either.

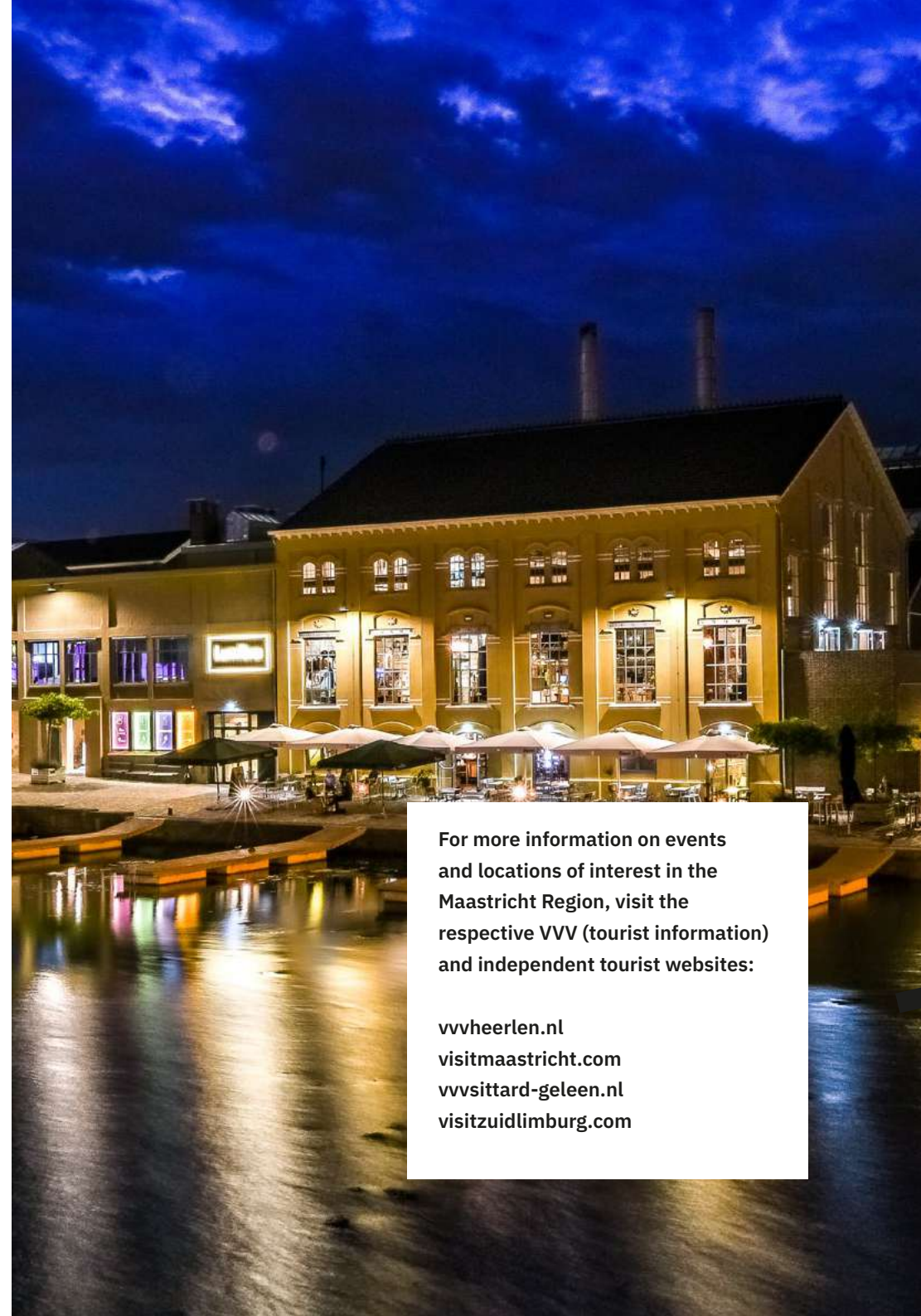
There are many culinary festivals throughout the year culminating in Preuvenemint in August which is the annual culinary highlight of the region.

Culture

On top of this there is a plethora of museums and galleries that are waiting to be visited, such as: the world famous Bonnefantenmuseum in Maastricht which hosts an impressive collection of old masters and modern art; the Natural History Museum of Maastricht where visitors can scour through fossils dating back hundreds of millions of years, see the remains of our local mosasaur and even witness live excavations; the Maastricht Museum on the 1st floor of Centre Céramique where the hidden stories of this special city are told.

The Thermenmuseum (Roman Baths Museum) in Heerlen is located around the excavations of a Roman public bath from 100 AD; SCHUNCK, a museum, library and dance school in one, that houses both modern and contemporary Dutch art with both permanent and visiting exhibitions and het Toon Hermans theater in Sittard which illustrates the rich history of the region.

The Maastricht Region is unique in every sense of the word.



For more information on events and locations of interest in the Maastricht Region, visit the respective VVV (tourist information) and independent tourist websites:

vvvheerlen.nl
visitmaastricht.com
vvsittard-geleen.nl
visitzuidlimburg.com

Language

You may have seen them around, the name signs at Limburg villages with the name in 2 languages. As well as the Dutch language, the Maastricht Region is home to a number of different dialects that are not heard anywhere else in the Netherlands. Depending on the distance to the Belgian and German borders, the dialects can sound distinctly German, Flemish or even French. Residents of the Maastricht Region often speak their own dialect, Dutch and either French or German as well as English, which makes things easier for newcomers.

Public holidays

Public sector holidays

Nieuwjaar (New Year's Day) – 1 January

Pasen (Easter Sunday and Easter Monday) – according to the Catholic calendar

Koningsdag (King's Day) – 27 April (26 April if 27 April falls on a Sunday)

Dodenherdenking (National Remembrance Day) – 4 May

Hemelvaart (Ascension) – in May - according to the Catholic calendar

Pinksteren (Whitsun) – in May - according to the Catholic calendar

Eerste Kerstdag (Christmas Day) – 25 December

Tweede Kerstdag (Boxing Day) – 26 December

Private sector holidays

Goede Vrijdag (Good Friday) – according to the Catholic calendar

Bevrijdingsdag (Liberation Day) – 5 May (official holiday only every five years)

School holidays

School holidays in the Netherlands vary depending on where you live. The Netherlands is split into three geographical regions - north, central and south - pertaining to school holidays, with each area following their own holiday calendar.

All Dutch schools have five holidays throughout the year. These are autumn (one week), Christmas (two weeks), spring (one week), May (two weeks, usually spread across April/May) and summer (six weeks).

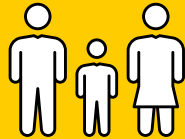
In the southern region of the Netherlands Carnaval is celebrated seven weeks before Easter and many schools hold their spring holidays during this time. International schools may have holiday dates that are slightly different from public schools in their region. Be sure to check with your child's school for a full list of holiday dates.



1 international school



2 universities



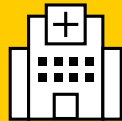
600,000
residents



40,435
internationals living
and working



17 municipalities



5 hospitals



60,665 companies



4 universities
of applied sciences



The largest art fair
in the world



Foundation of
the Euro

10

LIVING AND WORKING IN THE MAASTRICHT REGION

A unique juxtaposition of ground-breaking technological and medical innovation, academic excellence, entrepreneurial opportunity with rolling landscapes, haute culture, diverse recreational facilities as well as endless culinary adventures – the Maastricht Region offers a work / life experience like nowhere else.



The Maastricht Region

The Maastricht Region (South Limburg) borders the Netherlands for only 6 kilometres and other countries for 220 kilometres: the Belgian regions of Flanders and Wallonia and the German federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia.

The Maastricht Region is made up of seventeen municipalities, each with their own character and all uniquely Limburgs. Relocating to the Maastricht Region means that you have a plethora of culture and natural wonder on your doorstep, along with access to a booming job market, affordable housing and a solid range of education choices. Each of the municipalities are openly accessible, offer excellent recreational and sporting facilities and have good quality national and international connections. The hard part is choosing where to live...

Beek

Living in Beek

Life is good in Beek. The municipality encompasses beautiful recreation areas where you can enjoy cycling and walking. When it comes to shopping and dining out, Beek has a high-quality range of shops and a wide variety of restaurants. When it is time to get active Sportlandgoed de Haamen is the place to be for athletics, handball, swimming and softball.

Working in Beek

Beek is an enterprising municipality. Every day more than 9,500 people come to work in Beek. Maastricht Aachen Airport (MAA) is located here. MAA has grown into an international air freight centre with the Aviation Valley business park on the north side, and many businesses and organisations operate out of the business park adjacent to the airfields.

Education in Beek

Primary school students in Beek do not have to go far for their education. No fewer than five primary schools are located in the municipality. There are two secondary schools within a short distance; Groenewald in Stein and Graaf Huyn college in Geleen. Tertiary education is offered in Beek, Sittard-Geleen, Maastricht and Heerlen.

Council offices

Raadhuisstraat 9

6191 KA Beek

+31 (0)46 438 9222

gemeentebeek.nl



Beekdaelen

Living in Beekdaelen

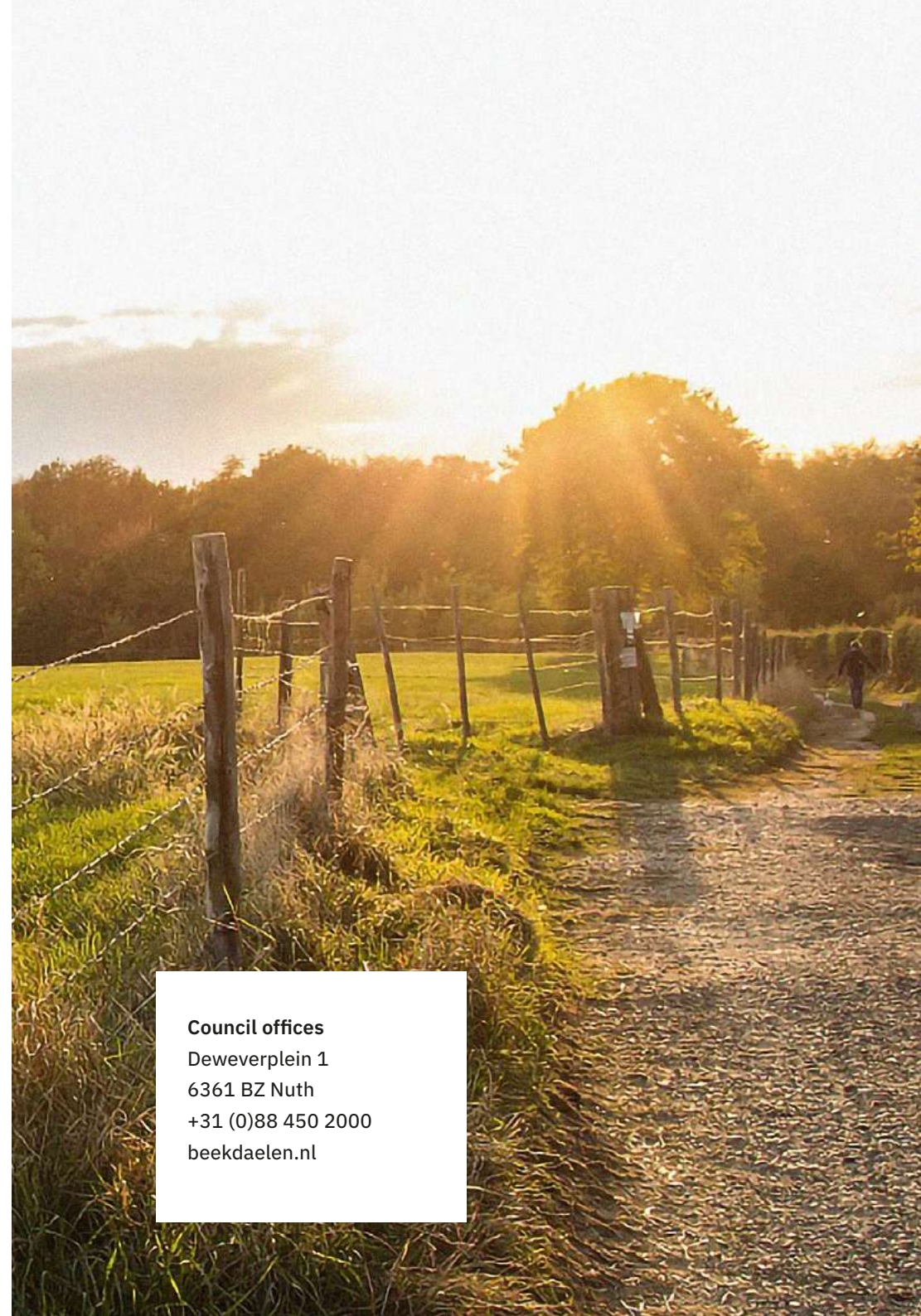
Beekdaelen is the largest rural municipality in South Limburg boasting 15 village centres in beautiful, lush green surroundings. An area where there are plenty of recreational possibilities, rich in national monuments such as quaint farmsteads, sprawling estates and traditional village churches. Beekdaelen also has a vibrant social life offering Carnaval associations, sports clubs, scout groups and more. Everyone is welcome to join in.

Working in Beekdaelen

The many companies and organisations in Beekdaelen are located in the business parks, town centres and outlying areas. Think of shops, restaurants, hairdressers, production and transport companies, construction companies and farmers. Beekdaelen also has many small-scale tourist-recreational activities. Beekdaelen is easily accessible via the A76, A79 and Buitenring, two train stations and several bus lines.

Education in Beekdaelen

With 12 primary schools, education for 4-12 year olds is always close by, mostly in the village centres. Children from 12-18 years of age do not have to travel far either, in the directly surrounding municipalities there is a good range of secondary schools.



Council offices

Deweeverplein 1

6361 BZ Nuth

+31 (0)88 450 2000

beekdaelen.nl

Brunssum

Living in Brunssum

Brunssum has traditionally offered a home to countless nationalities. It offers pleasant living, working and recreation possibilities. Brunssum has a wide range of amenities, with various shopping centres, an attractive range of homes and many sports facilities, from an indoor swimming pool to a 45-hole golf course. The many parks and the extensive Brunssummerheide nature reserve give Brunssum its green character.

Working in Brunssum

Thanks to solid roadway frameworks, Heerlen, Sittard, Maastricht or Aachen can be reached within minutes. Brunssum offers an interesting business environment and a very extensive range of hotel and restaurant services. The surrounding region has enormous potential with highly innovative companies, research centres, car factories and logistics companies.

Education in Brunssum

Brunssum has 11 primary schools and one international school. There are also ten secondary schools within a 10km radius. In the vicinity of Brunssum are the best colleges, the most international university in the Netherlands and one of the best technical universities in Europe.

Council offices

Lindeplein 1

6444 AT Brunssum

+31 (0)45 527 8555

brunssum.nl



Echt-Susteren

Living in Echt-Susteren

Lovely and relaxed living. Relax in natural surroundings, yet less than half an hour's drive from work. A schnitzel in Germany, a glorious glass of special beer in Belgium and along the way relaxing by the Maasplassen, the largest interconnected water sports area in the Netherlands. And all in the same afternoon! Echt-Susteren is also called "The Narrowest Part of the Netherlands", because here you are just 4.8 kilometres from Belgium, via the Netherlands, already in Germany. The municipality of Echt-Susteren has a population of approximately 32,000.

Working in Echt-Susteren

You can reach a number of larger cities in the German Ruhr area or in Dusseldorf, Cologne and Aachen. Belgium is also not far with Brussels, Antwerp, Liège or Hasselt within an hour's drive. Echt-Susteren is not only centrally located in Limburg; it is also perfectly accessible by the two motorways and two train stations with fast connections to Maastricht and Eindhoven. This also means that large companies such as DSM, Chemelot, Philips, etc. are within easy reach.

Education in Echt-Susteren

Whether it's about schooling for little ones or young adults, the first steps towards a glorious future can be taken in Echt-Susteren. There is a good offering of quality education within the municipality, so that children up to the age of 18 do not have to cycle more than ten minutes to get to school. Thanks to the excellent train connections, the Eindhoven University of Technology, Maastricht University, the RWTH Aachen University in Aachen, Cologne University or the University of Hasselt are also within easy reach.



Council offices

Nieuwe Markt 55

6101 CV Echt

+31 (0)47 547 8478

echt-susteren.nl

Eijsden-Margraten

Living in Eijsden-Margraten

Eijsden-Margraten is a spacious municipality which is home to about 25,000 residents. It is made up of 15 villages surrounded by many hamlets in the southernmost tip of the Netherlands.

In this Cittaslow municipality you can enjoy the landscape, the local products, a healthy environment, the rich cultural and historical heritage as well as the local traditions in a relaxed and welcoming way, making Eijsden-Margraten also a popular tourist destination. The municipality also houses “The Netherlands American Cemetery and Memorial”, the only US military cemetery in the Netherlands. The cemetery site has a rich historical background.

Working in Eijsden-Margraten

Eijsden-Margraten mainly houses small, local companies. Many residents travel for work to surrounding cities such as Maastricht, Sittard or Heerlen or to cross-border cities in Belgium and Germany.

Education in Eijsden-Margraten

There are several Dutch-speaking primary schools in the municipality. For secondary schools, universities and international schools, please refer to the surrounding larger cities.



Council offices

Amerikaplein 1

6269 DA Margraten

+31 (0)43 458 8488

eijsden-margraten.nl

Gulpen-Wittem

Living in Gulpen-Wittem

Gulpen-Wittem is the beating heart of the South Limburg Heuvelland. Known for its undulating landscape, its half-timbered architecture, its peace and quiet and its space. Loved for its quaintness, hospitality and committed residents in ten neighbourhoods, 12 hamlets, connected by the rivers Gulp and Geul.

With almost 300 national monuments, more than 850 monumental buildings, four heritage-listed town- and villagescapes and five heritage-listed country estates, Gulpen-Wittem is rich in cultural heritage. Various cultural and musical events provide moments of connection and community for our residents. The cultivation and preservation of traditions is of paramount importance in Gulpen-Wittem.

Working in Gulpen-Wittem

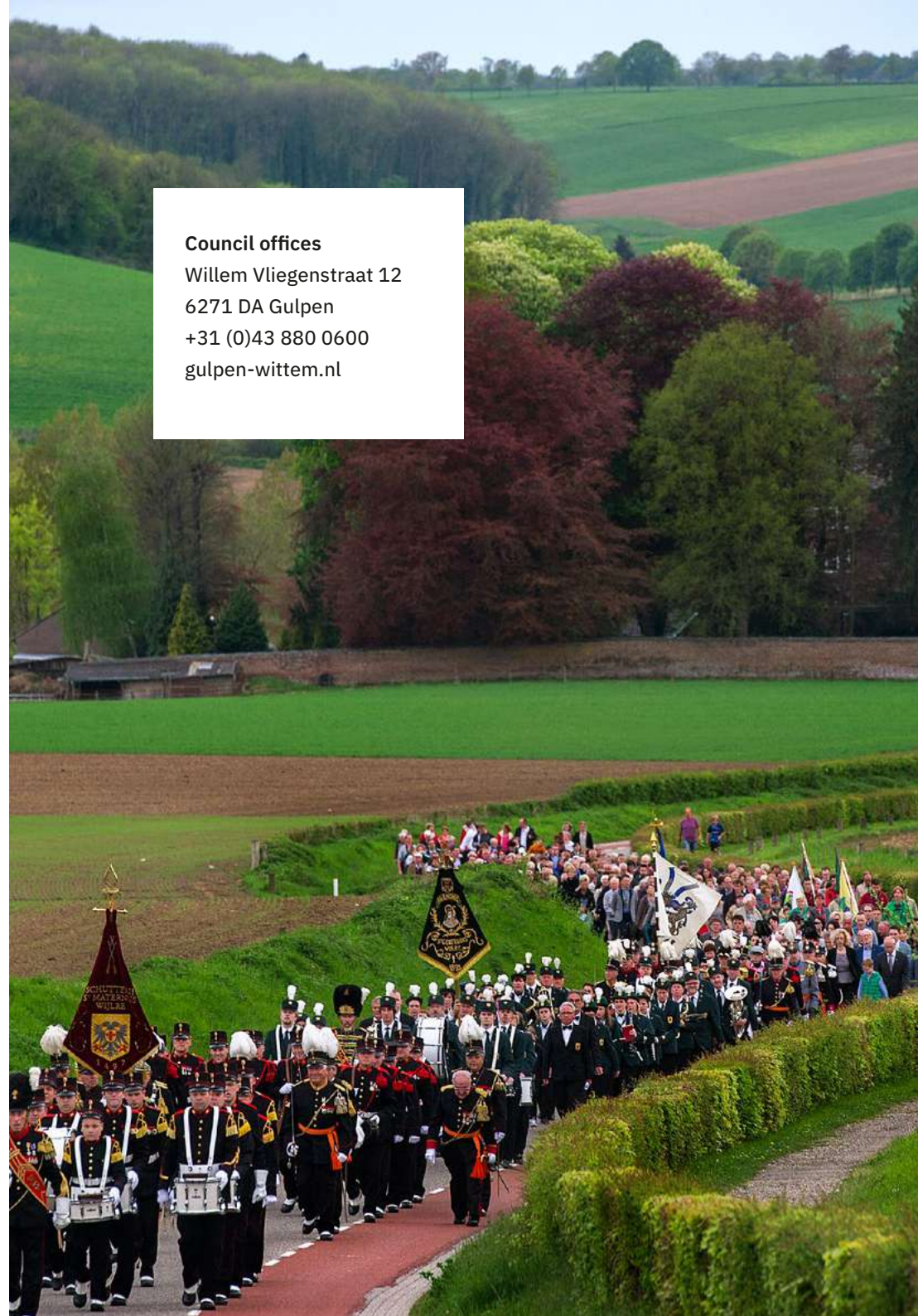
Gulpen-Wittem is supported by a number of initiatives and organisations on both local and provincial levels in order to promote entrepreneurship and innovation in the municipality. Its spaciousness has enabled it to become the location for a number of globally successful businesses and producers and at the same time retain its quaint and picturesque character.

Education in Gulpen-Wittem

Gulpen-Wittem has six primary schools of which one provides special needs education. Scholengemeenschap Sophianum is located in Gulpen and provides secondary education for the area.

Council offices

Willem Vliegenstraat 12
6271 DA Gulpen
+31 (0)43 880 0600
gulpen-wittem.nl



Heerlen

Heerlen: pioneer in citymaking

Heerlen is a city that keeps reinventing itself. Once a flourishing Roman settlement, then a booming coal mining town, and now a creative and cultural pioneer in the heart of the Maastricht Region. Heerlen is a place of contrasts – and that's exactly where its strength lies. Raw yet refined, compact yet full of space.

A city that dares to be different

Heerlen is not your average Dutch city. It's a place for people who like to colour outside the lines. Known as the underdog of the Netherlands, the city has transformed its industrial past into a vibrant breeding ground for culture, innovation and new ways of living.

The city invests heavily in culture and it shows. From international festivals to its buzzing street art scene and landmark architecture, creativity is everywhere. Heerlen is also home to Parkstad Limburg Theatres, attracting audiences from Aachen to Maastricht.

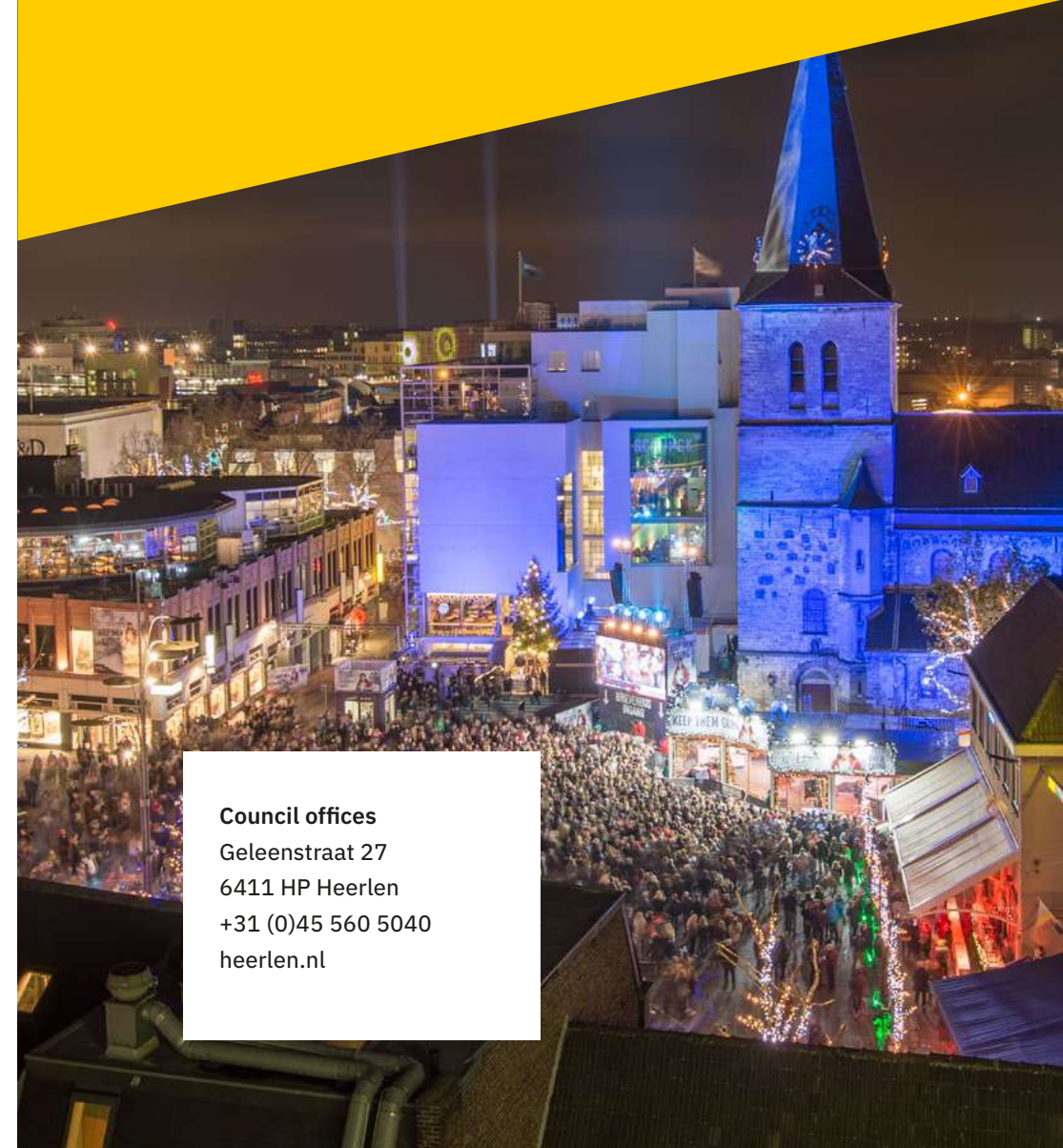
Space to live, work and create

Heerlen offers exceptional value for housing: more space, more green, more quality for your budget – with a strong focus on future-proof urban renewal. Whether you're looking for a place to raise your family, start a company, or simply breathe, Heerlen gives you room to grow. It's a city with a hands-on mentality and a strong foundation in education and research. From high-quality childcare and bilingual secondary education to vocational (MBO), applied sciences (HBO) and academic (WO) options. Institutions like Zuyd University of Applied Sciences, Vista College, Yuverta, the Open University, and partnerships with Maastricht University and RWTH Aachen make Heerlen a real knowledge hub within the region.

The city also plays a leading role in the Brightlands Smart Services Campus, where AI, care innovation and data science come together to solve global wicked challenges.

"Though I'm an Amsterdammer born and bred, I have enjoyed living in Heerlen for almost 30 years now. In those 3 decades I have seen the city change for the better. There is the typical Peutz architecture, which looks beautiful again after the renovation of the Glaspaleis, the theatre, the Royal and very recently the Raadhuis. The Maankwartier has turned the area around Heerlen station into a voyage of discovery and there are now many events with international allure associated with the city."

Roel Wever, Mayor of Heerlen



Council offices

Geleenstraat 27
6411 HP Heerlen
+31 (0)45 560 5040
heerlen.nl

Kerkrade

Living in Kerkrade

Kerkrade is home to 46,000 residents, a green and peaceful community close to the German border. It has a lot to offer as a residential town. From a green oasis of tranquility to a lively town centre, in Kerkrade, the warm 'gemütliche' character of a village goes hand in hand with the energy of a vibrant city. Kerkrade has many facilities in the cultural, sports and recreation sectors. Various cultural attractions including Discovery Museum, the Leisure Dome, Rolduc Abbey and Gaia ZOO make Kerkrade a popular destination. Kerkrade is in easy reach of Aachen, Maastricht and Liège and for further exploration the nature reserves Ardennes (BE) and Eifel (DE) aren't far away.

Working in Kerkrade

Kerkrade has well-equipped business parks which at present are facilitating numerous international organisations as well as the Eurode Business Center, a cross-border business complex, housing international services for employers and employees. Entrepreneurs are supported by the municipality to establish and further develop healthy businesses in Kerkrade. This policy, which is based on the idea that people achieve more together, bears much fruit.

Education in Kerkrade

There are two options for international primary and secondary education within reach of Kerkrade, both also accessible by public transport.

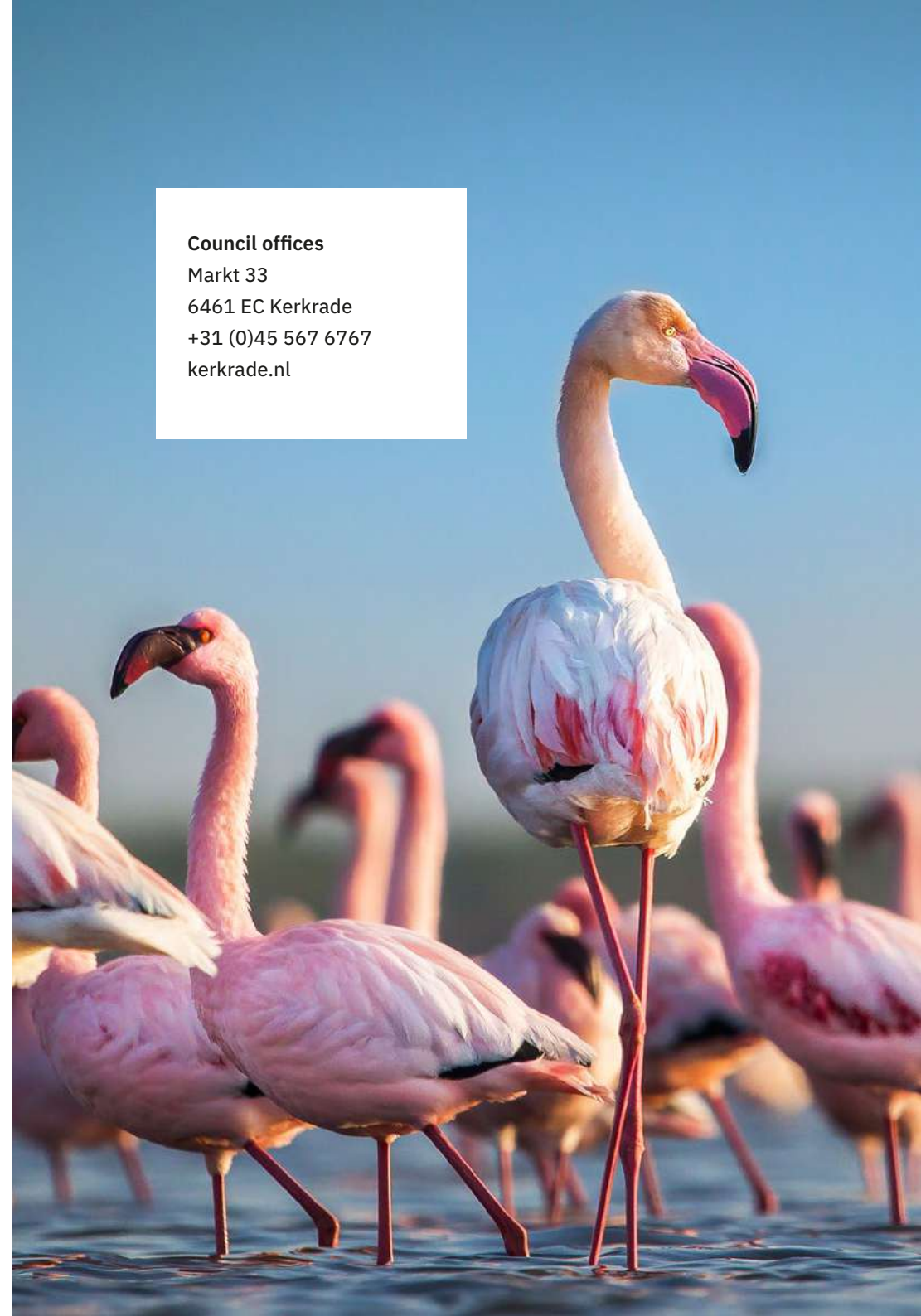
Council offices

Markt 33

6461 EC Kerkrade

+31 (0)45 567 6767

kerkrade.nl



Landgraaf

Living in Landgraaf

The municipality of Landgraaf was formed in 1982 from the municipalities of Ubach over Worms, Nieuwenhagen and Schaesberg. After the mining industry disappeared, the former mining sites were transformed into business parks and recreation areas where the Mondo Verde family park and the Pinkpop festival site now stand. Wilhelminaberg is a special landmark, with SnowWorld, the largest indoor indoor ski slope in Europe, being located on top of this gigantic former spoilheap. If you want a beautiful view of the region, you can climb the Wilhelminaberg via the longest open-air stairway in the Netherlands.

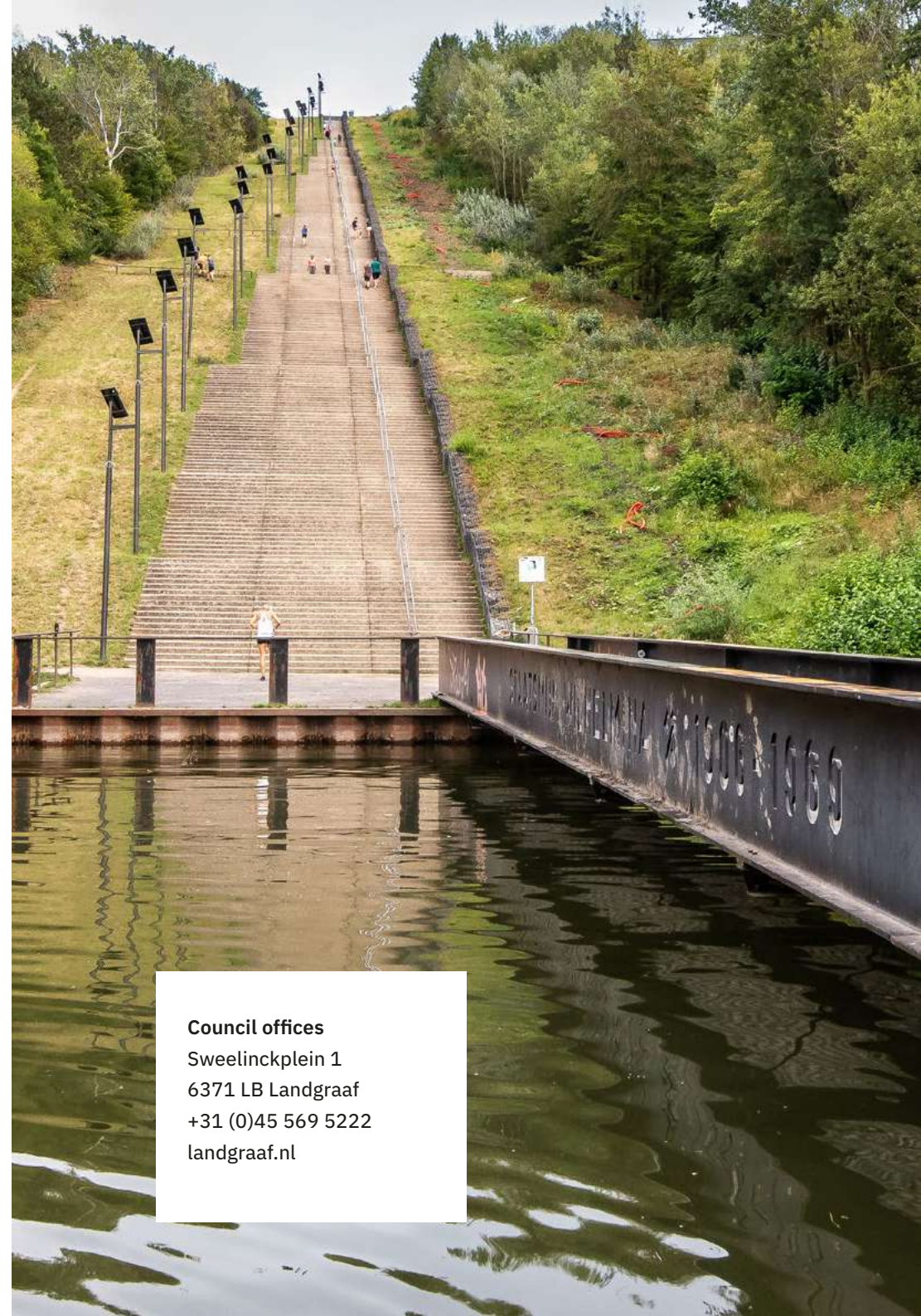
In addition to these attractions, Landgraaf has a wealth of cultural-historical heritage and beautiful nature reserves such as Strijthagerbeek valley and Worm valley. Brunssummerheide and Teverener Heide nature reserves are also within easy reach. Wherever you are in the municipality: schools, shops and other facilities are always close by. All this means that you can live, work and relax in Landgraaf.

Working in Landgraaf

Although a relatively young municipality, Landgraaf has a lot to offer international residents. Its proximity to the German border means that cross-border working can be a part of every day life here. Access to nearby tertiary institutions and knowledge campuses enable career progression and flexibility.

Education in Landgraaf

With eight primary schools, as well as three high schools, one that offers a bilingual curriculum - Eijkhagen College, Landgraaf offers every family, both local and international a solid variety when it comes to educating your children.



Council offices

Sweelinckplein 1
6371 LB Landgraaf
+31 (0)45 569 5222
landgraaf.nl

Maastricht

Living in Maastricht

Maastricht is widely known as the heart of Europe. Its unique location, bountiful natural resources and resilient people has placed it at the centre of great battles as well as wonderous discoveries and now elevates it to the forefront of global innovation, education and culture.

A city with a reputation for its “bourgondische” way of life Maastricht strives to be the new breeding ground for modern culture. Bringing professionals and amateurs together with a view to becoming the epicentre for residents and visitors to partake of, participate in and even co-create new cultural experiences and happenings.

Working in Maastricht

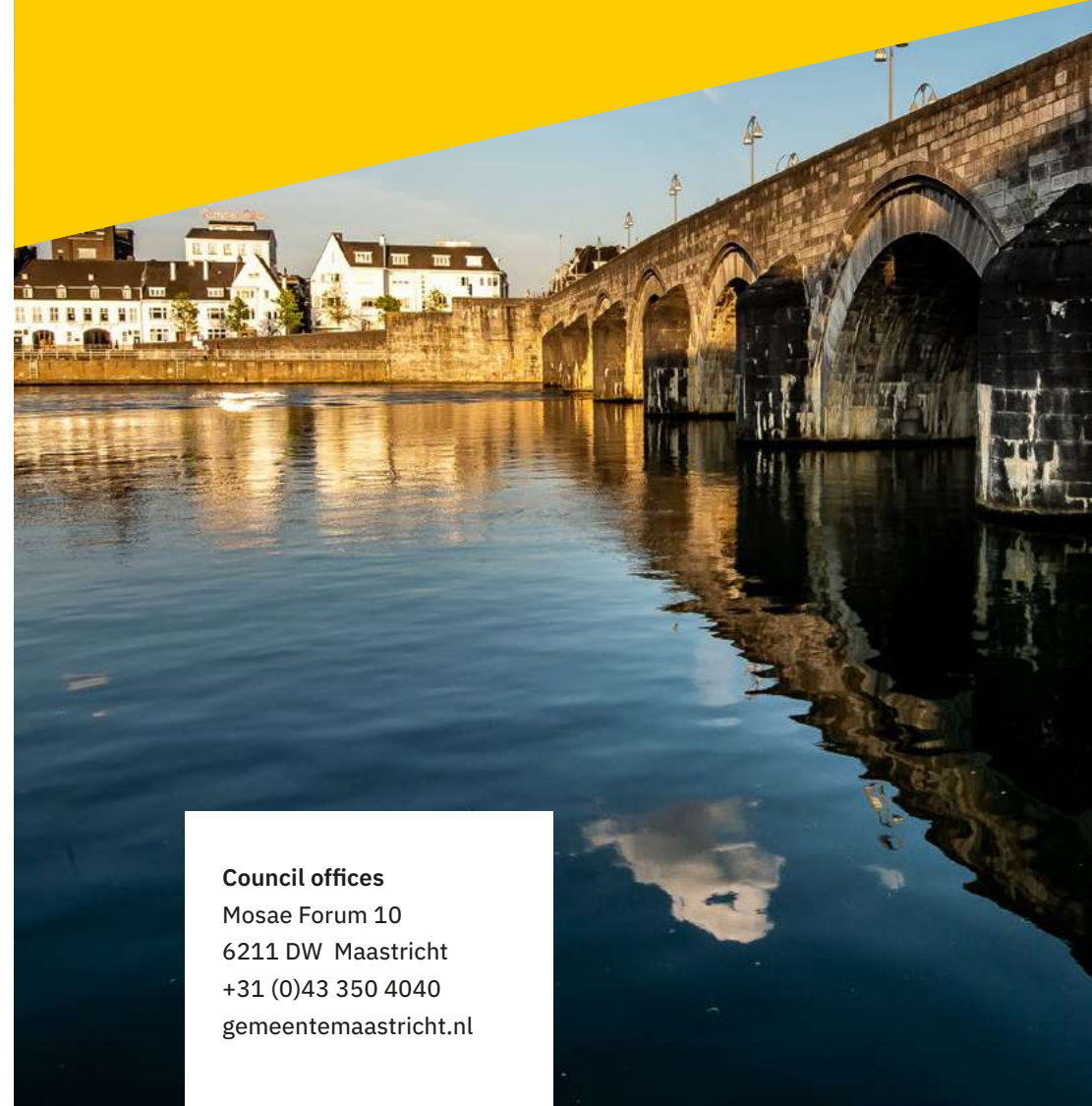
With a thriving business community, established international investment and a prolific entrepreneurial population, Maastricht offers extensive professional opportunities for knowledge migrants, researchers and professional artists. Collaborations between institutions and organisations cater for career paths for accompanying spouses, ensuring the unique professional needs of international families are met. A plethora of knowledge campuses provide access to the technology, funding and advice required by start-ups and international investors.

Education in Maastricht

One of the youngest cities in the Netherlands in terms of tertiary education and currently the most international in regard to its student population, Maastricht prides itself on offering a diverse range of courses that caters to the demanding requirements of today's future workforce. Both primary and secondary international schooling is available in central Maastricht, as well as bilingual choices and immersion options at local schools offering Dutch curriculum.

Maastricht offers new residents and knowledge workers plenty of opportunities for development. The knowledge economy is booming. Maastricht is nestled in the economic heartland of South East Netherlands. Due to our unique location in the heart of the Euregion Meuse-Rhine the number of jobs within a radius of one hour drive's of Maastricht is more than 2.2 million. Discover the city and the Maastricht Region. It's worth it!

Wim Hillenaar, Mayor of Maastricht



Council offices

Mosae Forum 10
6211 DW Maastricht
+31 (0)43 350 4040
gemeentemaastricht.nl

Meerssen

Living in Meerssen

Those looking for peace and quiet are in the right place in Meerssen. A municipality with a lot of natural beauty. The stunning landscapes, panoramas and vistas, lots of hidden charm, monumental buildings, a rich treasure of cultural and historical heritage and tranquil town centres ensure that life in Meerssen is an enjoyable one.

The municipality of Meerssen is centrally located between the provincial capital of Maastricht and the Valkenburg aan de Geul. From here you can also easily make numerous trips to, for example, the South Limburg Heuvelland, the Belgian Ardennes and the German Eifel mountain ranges.

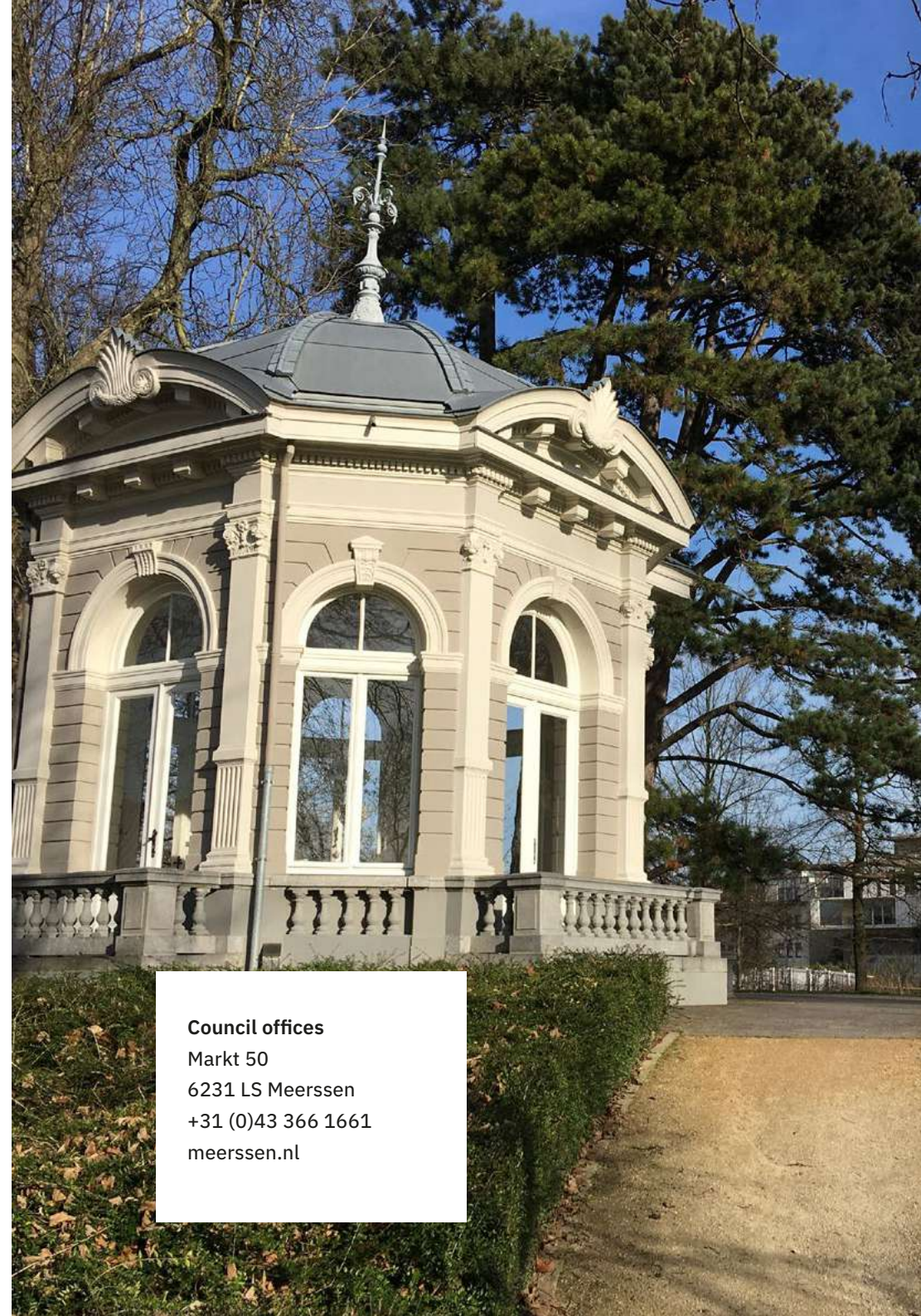
The Bunde, Geulle, Ulestraten, Rothem and Meerssen town centres are in themselves hidden pearls in the Limburg countryside. Hikers and cyclists can totally immerse themselves in the alluring natural landscapes of the area, then relax in the various cafés and restaurants along the route, which are so characteristic of Limburg culture.

Working in Meerssen

With two train stations (Meerssen and Bunde), two motorways (A2 and A79) and easy proximity to Maastricht Aachen Airport achieving a successful work-life balance in Meerssen is an absolute certainty.

Education in Meerssen

Meerssen has six primary schools and is home to a campus of Stella Maris College, known for its modern approach to education by applying alternative teaching methods such as “flip the classroom” and the use of technology during the lessons and at home.



Council offices

Markt 50

6231 LS Meerssen

+31 (0)43 366 1661

meerssen.nl

Simpelveld

Living in Simpelveld

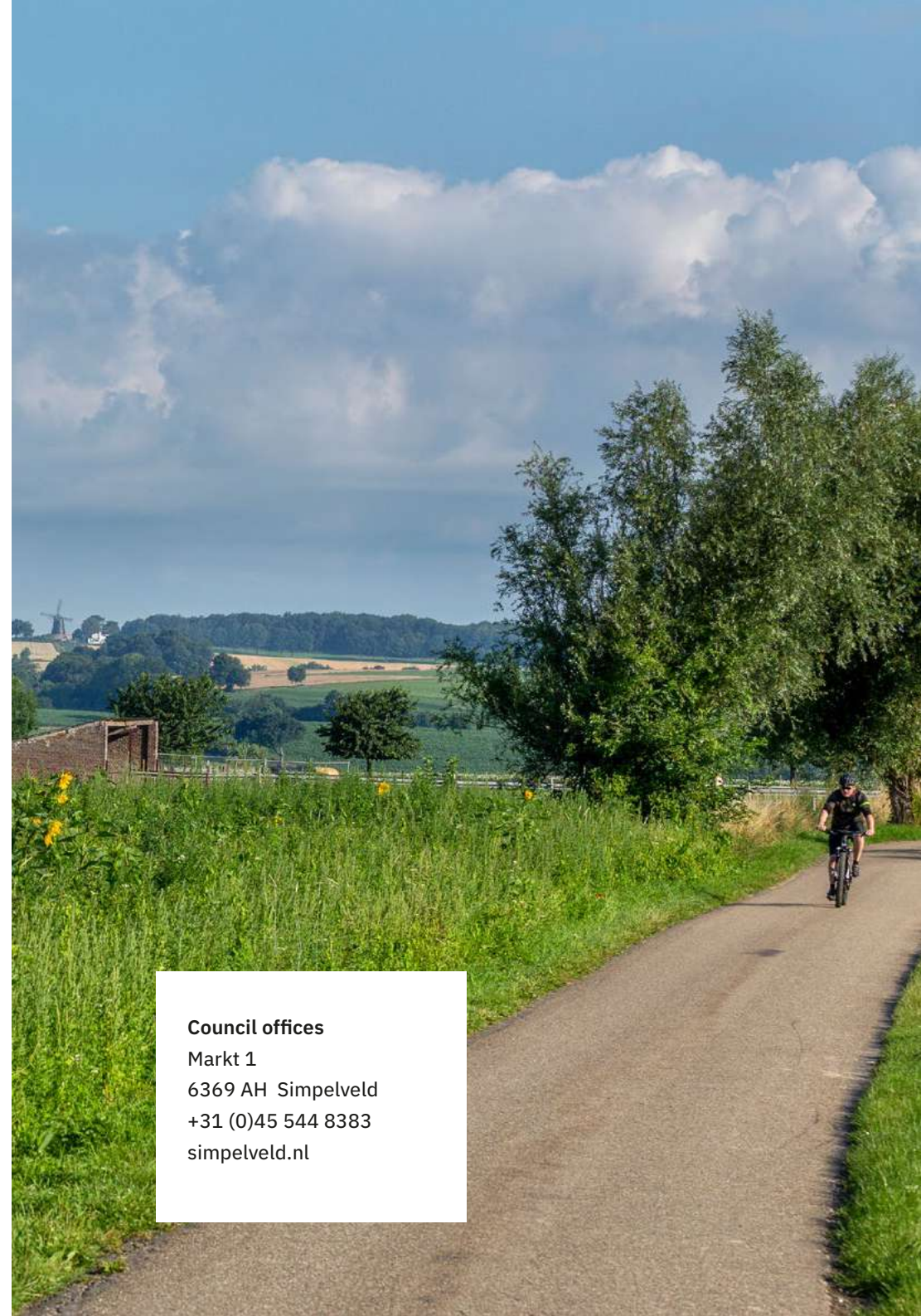
In Simpelveld and Bocholtz you can still find that real village feeling, where people know each other and make time for each other. The municipality has many thriving sports and cultural associations, however the beautiful surroundings and welcoming catering facilities also offer numerous options for recreation and relaxation. After a productive working day – inside or outside the municipal boundaries – it is wonderful to come home in the soothing ambiance of Simpelveld. Surrounded by a wide range of facilities and the rolling Limburg landscape, it is wonderful to live here.

Working in Simpelveld

Simpelveld has a varied range of shops. There is plenty of free parking in front of the door. Every Friday there is a bustling weekly market with fresh local produce. There is a small-scale business park between Simpelveld and Bocholtz with good access via the A76. There is always room for activity.

Education in Simpelveld

Both villages have a primary school with a playgroup and childcare. Further education is within cycling distance and is also easily accessible via direct bus connections.



Council offices

Markt 1

6369 AH Simpelveld

+31 (0)45 544 8383

simpelveld.nl

Sittard-Geleen

Living in Sittard-Geleen

Sittard-Geleen is the third largest municipality in Limburg with a population of over 92,000. The city has a great deal to offer to its residents. An enjoyable lifestyle is possible in the historic and bustling city centre with a contemporary range of shops, but also in one of the many adjacent villages amid the sprawling greenery. The city itself is easily accessible by car and public transport.

Working in Sittard-Geleen

Sittard-Geleen is centrally located in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine and is an ideal base for international business. As a business city and home to many innovative companies in the fields of logistics, chemistry, automotive, healthcare and sports with a reputation that extends far beyond national borders, it is no coincidence that more and more high-tech companies are discovering Sittard-Geleen as an excellent location.

Education in Sittard-Geleen

Sittard-Geleen has excellent educational institutions at all levels. Fontys and Zuyd University of Applied Sciences are known nationally as top educators where high-quality education and personal attention for their students is the standard.

"Our city is a vibrant hub of culture, business, and education. We take pride in our welcoming community and the opportunities we offer to our residents and businesses. Sittard-Geleen is a place where tradition meets innovation, and we are committed to creating a bright future for our citizens"

Hans Verheijen, Mayor of Sittard-Geleen



Council offices

Hub Dassenplein 1

6131 LB Sittard

+31 (0)46 477 7777

sittard-geleen.nl

Stein

Living in Stein

Stein is both a city and a municipality, located directly along the river Maas, nestled between Sittard-Geleen to the west and Belgian Maasmechelen across the river to the east. With Maastricht and Valkenburg just a stone's throw away and other Dutch cities easily reachable by the A2 motorway, Stein is conveniently located. In comparison to other cities and villages in the area, Stein is fairly sizeable, and the municipality is home to nine town centres. Stein's past can be discovered at the Streekmuseum Elsloo and Stichting Erfgoed Stein, and the municipality is home to a number of national monuments, its own original windmill built in 1805 and about 140 small monuments. Many of these small monuments can be found along the many walking and cycling routes that make their way through the municipality.

Working in Stein

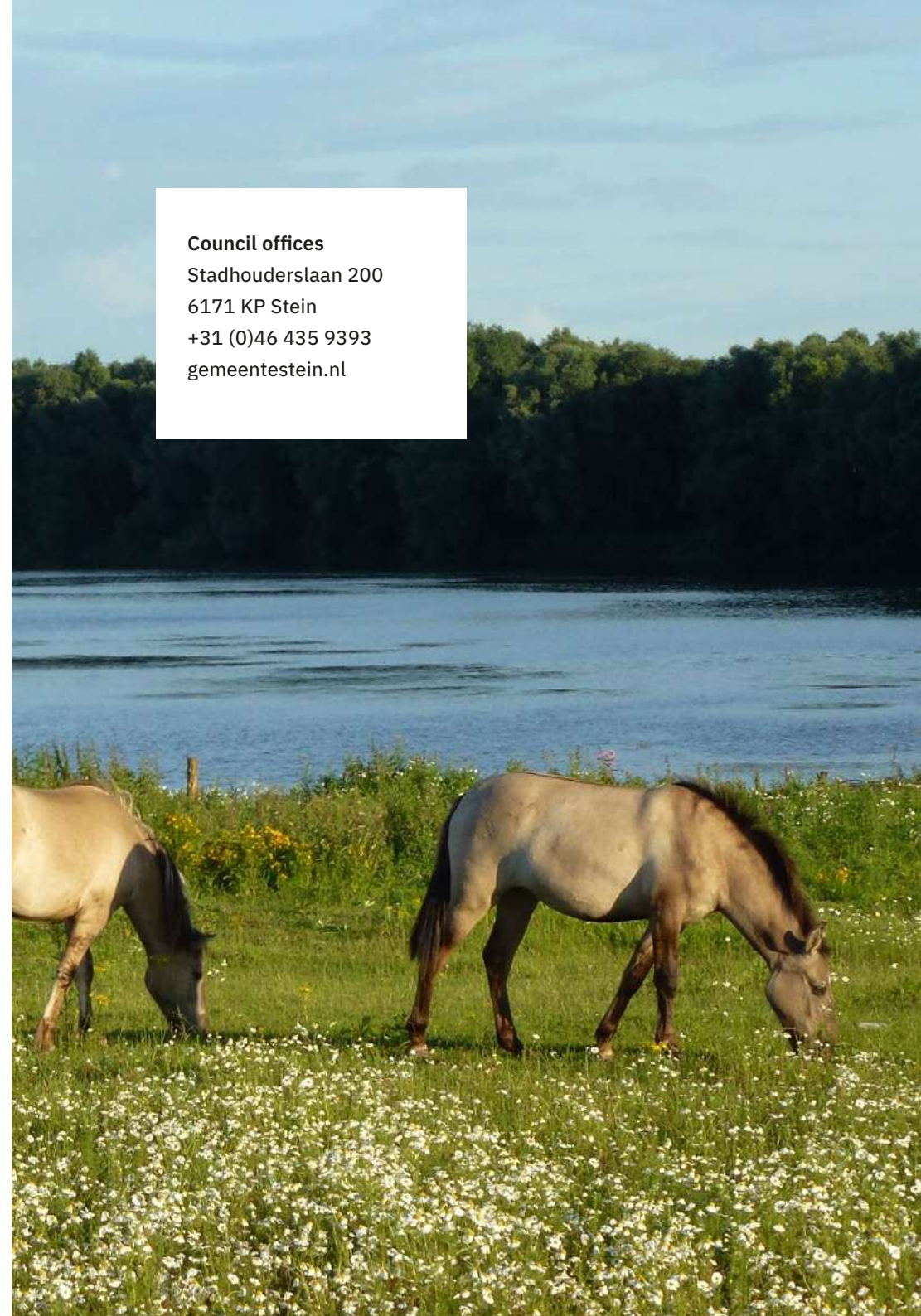
Alongside its vicinity to knowledge campuses, tertiary institutions and international organisations in the Maastricht Region, Stein has five industrial areas which are the locations of numerous successful undertakings in the entrepreneurial sector: Businesspark Stein, Haven Stein, Paalweg, Kerensheide and Schutterstraat. The municipality has a number of projects supporting entrepreneurs including an "Open For Business" which enables starters to get to know one another, share experiences and advice and enable them to grow their networks and businesses.

Education in Stein

Stein has five primary schools and one secondary school, accommodating the educational needs for their residents. International families are welcome to enrol their children in primary schools, however secondary school-aged students have the choice of four bilingual schools in the Maastricht Region and one international school.

Council offices

Stadhouderslaan 200
6171 KP Stein
+31 (0)46 435 9393
gemeentestein.nl



Vaals

Living in Vaals

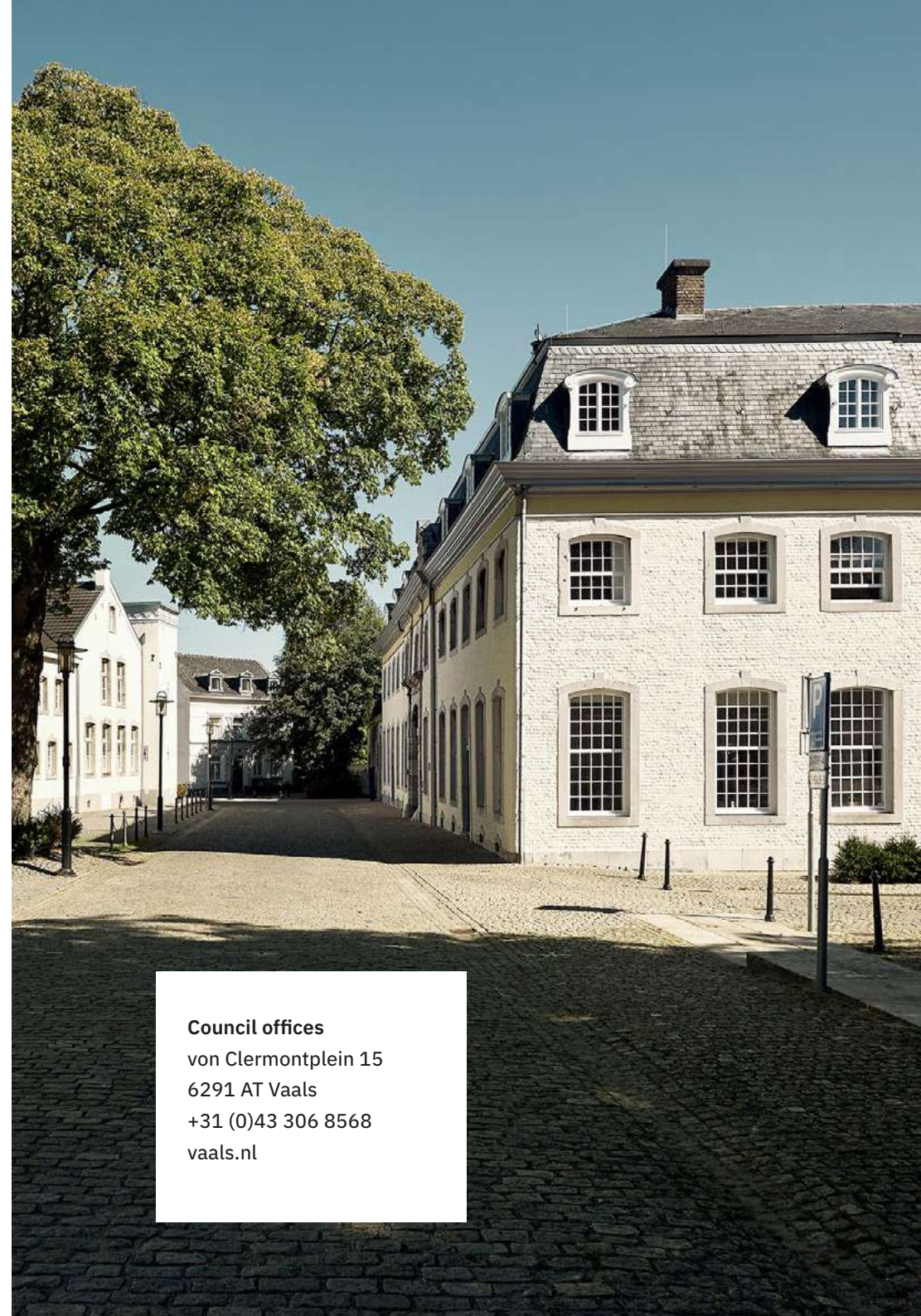
Vaals is located in a unique geographical position. It is situated in the border triangle of the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany, in the direct vicinity of the city of Aachen (BE) and just over 20km from the provincial capital of Maastricht (NL). With its impressive buildings, exceptional location and its beautiful countryside, it also offers a living environment that provides residents with a multitude of housing and accommodation options in addition to extensive recreational areas right at the door. Let yourself be surprised by the many facets of Vaals.

Working in Vaals

Nowhere else in the Netherlands is a municipality located so close to a foreign city. Of course, this puts Vaals in a special position with a lot career opportunities, and approximately a third of our residents work or offer services abroad. In the municipality, we endeavour to coordinate cross-border administration and organisation, so that our residents can make the most of the opportunities offered by the Meuse-Rhine Euregion.

Education in Vaals

RWTH Aachen, the largest technical university in Germany, is a research university located in Aachen (DE), just over 2km from Vaals. The “Katzensprung” student community in Vaals originates from countries all over the world and comes together in this one city to share their unique values and customs.



Council offices

von Clermontplein 15
6291 AT Vaals
+31 (0)43 306 8568
vaals.nl

Valkenburg aan de Geul

Living in Valkenburg aan de Geul

The fortified city of Valkenburg aan de Geul is hidden between the green hills of South Limburg. A limestone city with many faces; charming, vibrant and above all versatile. Not just a tourist destination, the residents of Valkenburg aan de Geul also enjoy the lifestyle here, thanks to the combination of close-knit communities, an active network of social clubs, stunning natural surroundings and the many facilities that the city offers.

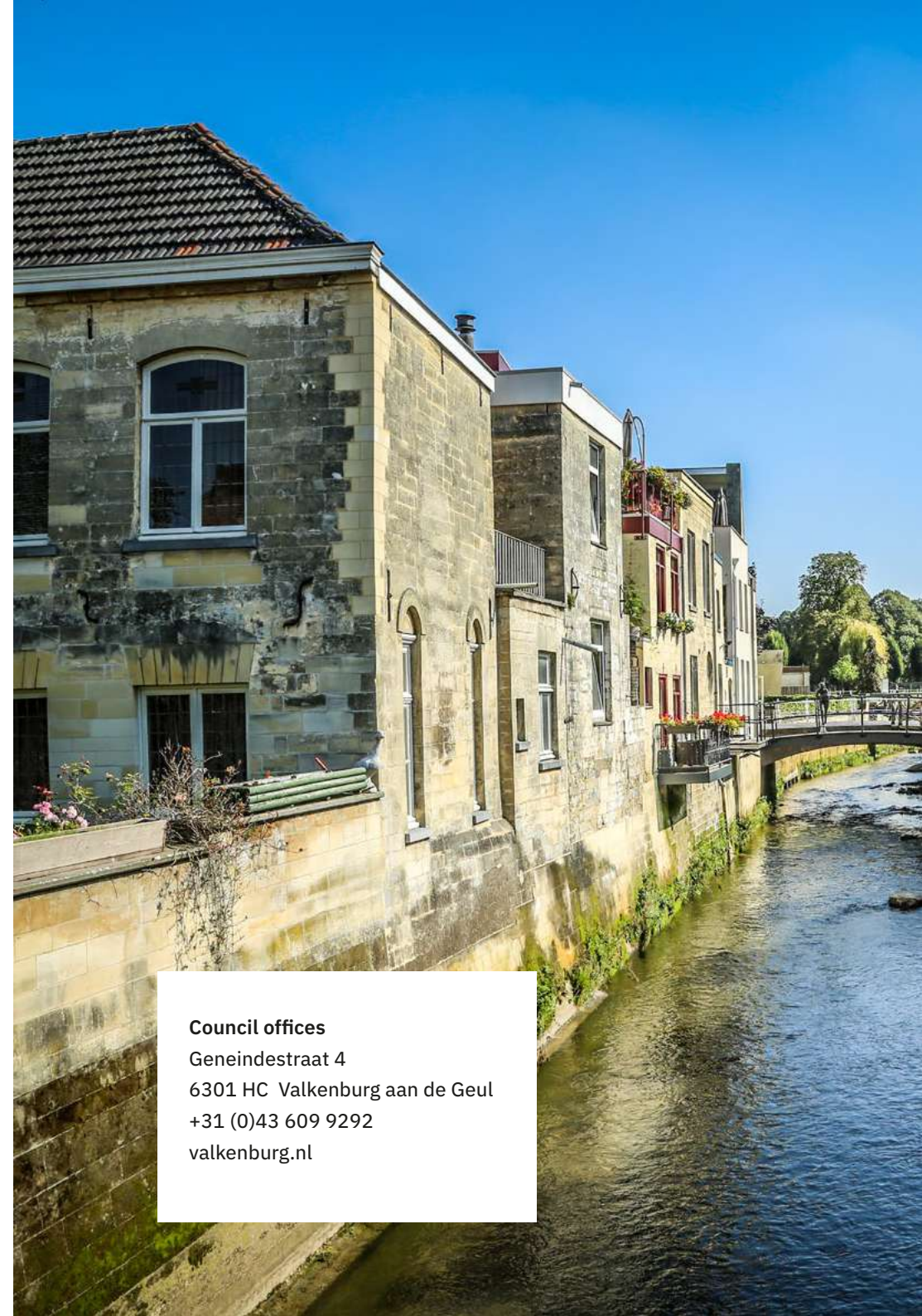
More than 50 percent of Valkenburgers work in tourism and recreation. There are various local attractions. You will find the Holland Casino, wellness centre Thermae 2000, limestone caves and flint mines, a cable and toboggan run and a thriving café culture in the city centre. Valkenburg aan de Geul is a city where everyone is welcome. A city where you would like to live.

Working in Valkenburg aan de Geul

Any area rich in tourism provides many an opportunity for new business ideas and career choices for both the working partner and spouse. With solid public transport connections to the whole of the Maastricht region and beyond, work life is achievable and enjoyable in Valkenburg aan de Geul.

Education in Valkenburg aan de Geul

Valkenburg aan de Geul has four primary schools. The nearest secondary school is in Meerssen within cycling distance. By public transport, secondary schools in Maastricht and Heerlen are also within easy reach. The mytyschool Adelante in Valkenburg offers education to students with a physical and/or multiple disability and to students who are ill for a long time.



Council offices
Geneindestraat 4
6301 HC Valkenburg aan de Geul
+31 (0)43 609 9292
valkenburg.nl

Voerendaal

Living in Voerendaal

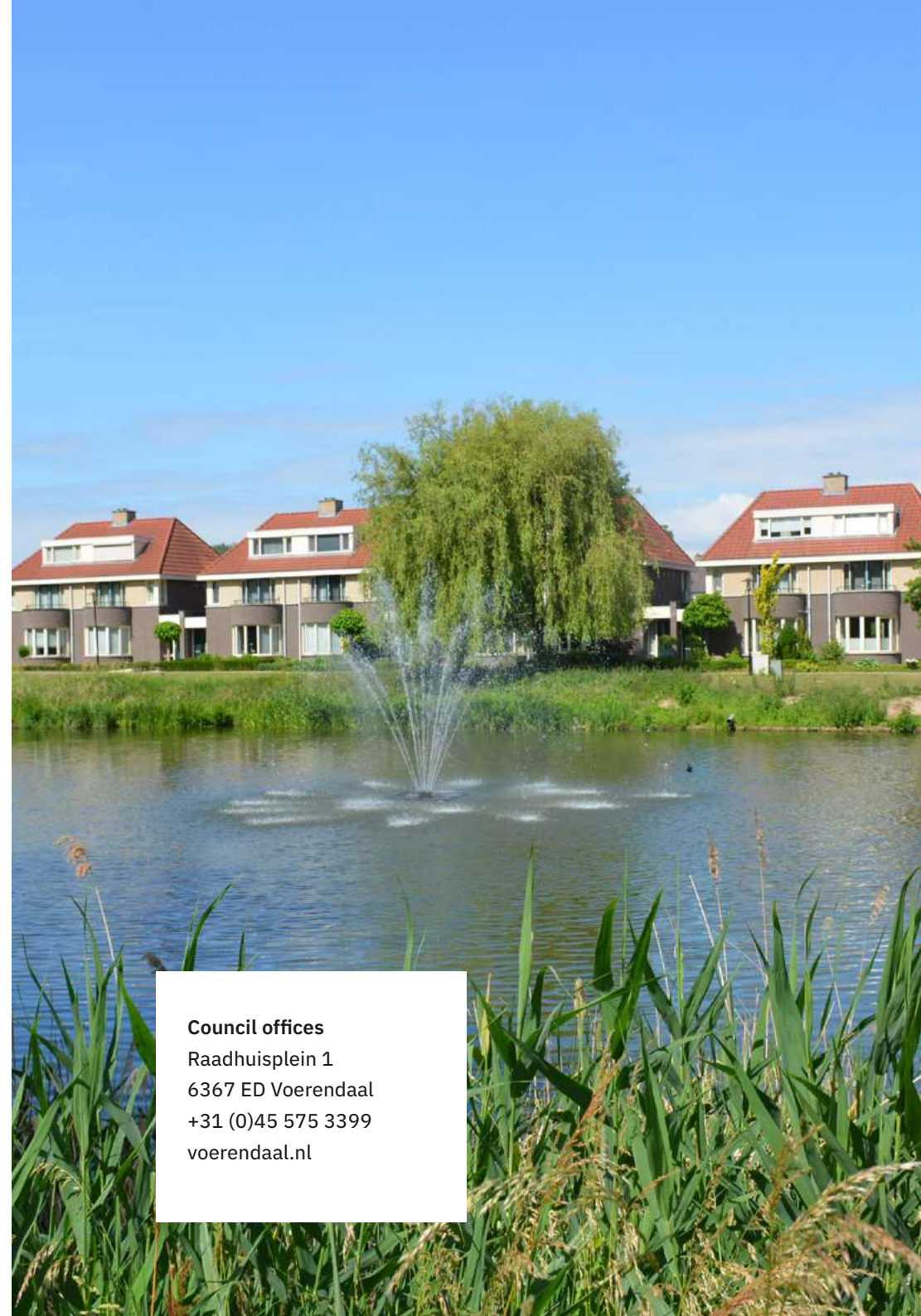
The South Limburg municipality of Voerendaal is exceptionally green. A walk or cycle ride through our beautiful undulating landscape promotes feelings of peace and prosperity. Here one can enjoy the beautiful parks in the village centres, the fantastic view of the plateau, the meandering water in the brook valleys, the unique flora and fauna in the protected nature areas or the characteristic, buildings built from the unique kunrader stone. Our residents appreciate the peaceful environment, and the rural, village character of Voerendaal.

Working in Voerendaal

The municipality focuses on the strength of the residents and the many entrepreneurs who have settled here. Initiatives of associations, neighbourhoods and communities are welcomed. In addition, our municipality is centrally located between the cities of Heerlen and Maastricht.

Education in Voerendaal

Voerendaal has two primary schools in the municipality. Its unique location nestled between Heerlen and Valkenburg ensure that students are given a choice of quality education within cycling distance and public transport provisions.



Council offices

Raadhuisplein 1

6367 ED Voerendaal

+31 (0)45 575 3399

voerendaal.nl



Informative events

Expat Centre Maastricht Region organises, together with expert partners and service providers in the region, specialised one-off and regular events. Events that educate and inform our international residents and give them the opportunity to meet other people in an offbeat setting. Strategically planned informal meet-ups give expats a chance to relax into the “*bourgondische*” atmosphere of the Maastricht Region and feel at home more quickly. This also supports the aim to not only attract more talent, but to also retain the specialised professionals that have started a new life in the area, contributing to a more international and expertise-rich region.

From Buying a house in the Netherlands to Tax Return Sessions, the team at Expat Centre Maastricht Region utilises their broad networks and exclusive partner programme to bring residents the most up-to-date and relevant information and advice when relocating to the Maastricht Region.

Whether you're here for the short term or the long haul, there will always be something interesting to attend.

Check our website for the latest events:
expatcentremaastrichtregion.nl/events

“Living in the Maastricht Region. Let me give you a big compliment, and it is not about the Dutch weather as you can imagine, but your mind-set. I know that in the northern part of the country the people are even more open. But I actually appreciate the Limburg vibe. You are more ‘rustig’ (relaxed), cosy and friendly. And just the location is fabulous. How close you are to Belgium and Germany. I have friends in both countries.”

Noushin Norouzian, Persian



PARTNERS

PER THEME



Formalities

Our partners in Formalities are experienced in assisting with queries and concerns regarding the legalities of moving to the Netherlands, the regulations that must be adhered to upon arrival and formalities in relation to employment situations.



ABN Amro

For over 25 years, ABN AMRO has been a trusted financial partner and specialist for expats. We handle all your financial wishes with products and advice on payments, loans, investments and tailor-made Expat mortgages. We offer you professionals, documentation and mobile banking in English.

abnamro.nl



LexQuire Tax & Law

LexQuire Tax & Law offers a wide range of legal and tax advisory services to individuals, businesses, and organizations. Our specialists, consisting of lawyers, a public notary and tax advisers provide services covering various fields of law, including tax law, corporate law, employment law and immigration law.

lexquire.nl/en



Expat Management Group

Expat Management Group offers a wide range of immigration, relocation, and settling-in solutions for HR, expats and their dependents in the Euregion and beyond – always with care and commitment

expatmanagementgroup.com



Housing

Utilising their local knowledge and industry expertise our partners in Housing assist families, individuals and employers to find suitable housing for everyone regardless of duration of stay or employment conditions.



123Wonen

123wonen Limburg rents out private housing and also offers relocation service for expats. We guide them throughout the process of finding a suitable home, during the contract phase and in the key transfer.

123wonen.nl



Expat Mortgages South

Are you finding the Dutch housing market a bit overwhelming or are you just curious about it as an expat? At Expat Mortgages South, we specialize in guiding expats to their ideal homes.

expatmortgagessouth.nl



La Fontaine Makelaardij

La Fontaine Makelaardij offers a variety of furnished or decorated rental family houses, apartments & studio's in Maastricht and surroundings. We also assist newcomers in finding a home.

lafontaine.nl/en-gb



Pro Housing en Pooters Makelaardij

Together we offer a complete range of housing services, both for the rental market or if you want to buy or sell a house throughout the Maastricht and South Limburg areas.

pooters-makelaardij.nl



Taxation & Insurance

Providing expert assistance in filing tax returns for individuals and businesses and advising on complex banking and insurance matters are the foundations of what our partners in Taxation & Insurance can offer.



Baat accountants & adviseurs

Your local partner local partner in accounting, administration, payroll and taxation in Limburg. We are specialized in tax and social security issues related to cross-border labour.

baat.nl/en



Brothers Consultants

We are a Dutch tax and accounting firm with many years of experience located in Maastricht. We can help you with private and business tax declarations and tax questions.

brothersconsultants.nl



Mobility & Transport



Mengelers Automotive Maastricht

In need of a car? Short or long term, buying, leasing, finance and rent, maintenance, insurance and buyback. Official supplier of Toyota and Suzuki, we provide personal advice that best suits your situation.

mengelers.nl/expat



Driving School Maastricht

Driving school Maastricht is specialized in driving lessons in English for (international) students and expats in Maastricht and surrounding areas.

drivingschoolmaastricht.com



Education & Careers

Our Education & Careers partners can offer assistance and guidance in selecting the most suitable tertiary education routes, securing research positions and advising on individual and staff training and development.



Maastricht University

Maastricht University

Maastricht University (UM) is the most international university in the Netherlands and is, with 18,000 students and 4,400 employees, still growing. The university stands out for its innovative education model, international character and multidisciplinary approach to research and education.

maastrichtuniversity.nl



Open Dutch Doors

Open Dutch Doors

Open Dutch Doors is a career and settling in services company that helps highly educated internationals find interesting work in the Netherlands and that connects them to Dutch employers that want to find and keep talented employees. Finding a job can be a great way to become part of Dutch society and to feel you belong. But where do you start ... and what are the written and unwritten rules of applying for work in The Netherlands?

opendutchdoors.com



UWC Maastricht

UWC Maastricht brings together young people from all walks of life to work together towards peace and a sustainable future. It offers international education to students (aged 4-19) in the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (as of September 2024), Middle Years Programme, Diploma Programme and Career-related Programme. For students aged 16-18, UWC Maastricht also provides residential options.

uwcmaastricht.nl



Zuyd

Zuyd University of Applied Sciences is an open knowledge institute where professionals in every phase of their development cross the borders of disciplines and organizations to collaborate on the development, transfer, and application of high-quality, practically-oriented knowledge. Zuyd is involved in applied research that is relevant for our society in several sectors. Research aims to stimulate the innovation of knowledge in higher education and regional companies.

zuyd.nl



Personal & Social

Adapting to life in the Netherlands is made easier and more enjoyable via our Personal & Social partners.



Internations

InterNations is the largest global network and information site for people who live and work abroad, with about 3.4 million members in 420 cities around the world. Our Maastricht community has about 4000 members coming from more than 140 different nationalities.

internations.org





Culture & Leisure

Offering a plethora of activities that shows off the best that the region has to offer, our Culture & Leisure partners often collaborate on our fabulous social events. Our media partners provide news and information in English.

BONNEFANTEN

Bonnefantenmuseum

The leading art museum of Limburg and the Euregion. It presents both permanent collections of old masters and contemporary art, as well as temporary exhibitions of influential artists.

bonnefanten.nl

Centre Céramique

Centre Céramique

Libraries, exhibitions and cultural heritage, Kumulus School of Arts and the Natural History Museum of Maastricht together form one organization and are part of the municipality of Maastricht.

centreceramique.nl



De bibliotheek Maastricht

Maastricht has three libraries: Centrum, Heer and Malpertuis. The Library has an extensive English-language collection and you can also borrow e-books.

bibliotheek.centreceramique.nl



Lumière

Lumière is known for its high quality selection of movies, inviting atmosphere, and international orientation. The ideal place for tasty lunches and dinners surrounded by the beautifully refurbished industrial interior.

lumiere.nl



Maastricht Museum

On the 1st floor of Centre Céramique, the hidden stories of this special city are told. This is done in Dutch and English, but also in Maastrichts.

maastrichtmuseum.nl



Muziekgieterij

Muziekgieterij is a music venue located in Maastricht and offers a weekly program with (inter)national big names, new talents and some fine dancing.

muziekgieterij.nl



Natuur Historisch Museum Maastricht

Travel through time and through the nature of the beautiful province of Limburg. Check out the big mosasaur, take a walk in the lovely garden, watch how fossils are being prepared in the Science Lab or visit exhibitions.

nhmmaastricht.nl/english



South Netherlands Philharmonic

is a worthy and flexible symphony orchestra that has been lauded for its quality, its tight ensemble play and the radiant enthusiasm of its musicians.

philzuid.nl



Theater aan het Vrijthof

As one of the leading theatres in the Netherlands, Theater aan het Vrijthof is Maastricht's cultural hub to stimulate cultural debate by presenting (inter)national companies from all genres.

theateraanhetvrijthof.nl



weekinweekuit.info

What to do today, tomorrow or this week? weekinweekuit.info is a simple and clear cultural calendar for Maastricht. Check the website and social media channels to stay informed of all cultural activities in and around Maastricht.

weekinweekuit.info



News in English – RTV Maastricht

A reliable source of news, current affairs, cultural event coverage and local information relevant to the Maastricht Region's "not-yet-Dutch-speaking" residents as they adjust to life in their new home.

english.rtvmaastricht.nl/news

About

Welcome to Maastricht Region focuses on representing and promoting the Maastricht Region as an area where knowledge knows no borders. It offers a platform where employers, international employees, cross-border workers and international students are kept informed of the latest developments regarding working (and living) in our international region. Welcome to Maastricht Region facilitates the following services for residents in the Maastricht Region:

Expat Centre Maastricht Region (ECMR)

Expert advice, services and guidance for expats and international organizations in the Maastricht Region.

expatcentremaastrichtregion.nl

Cross Border Information Point Maastricht & Cross Border Information Point Aachen-Eurode (GrensInfoPunt/GIP)

Advice regarding living or working cross-border for both residents and people from neighboring countries, specifically concerning topics such as tax, social security, pensions, benefits and legislation.

Maastricht: grenzinfo.eu/emrm/en Aachen-Eurode: grenzinfo.eu/emra/en

Cross Border Mobility Service Maastricht & Cross Border Mobility Service Kerkrade (Grensarbeid)

Mediation and advice for residents looking to work cross-border; how to find work, interviewing techniques, available training programmes and employment networking events.

grensarbeid.eu

Supported by

Institute for Transnational and Euregional cross border cooperation and Mobility (ITEM)

ITEM operates at the convergence of research, counseling, knowledge exchange and training activities in the domain of cross-border mobility and cooperation in the Maastricht Region.

maastrichtuniversity.nl/item

European Employment Service EURES

European cooperation network of employment services, designed to facilitate the free movement of workers.

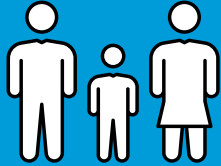
eures.ec.europa.eu

Talent Coalition

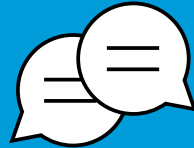
A partnership between regions in the Netherlands under the coordination of the Netherlands Point of Entry (part of Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend Nederland) focussing on attracting and retaining international talent to, and within, the Netherlands. Prompted by structural labour market shortages for so-called STEM profiles/ HBO/ WO shortages.

https://eures.europa.eu/index_nl

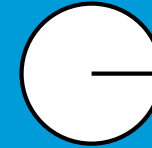




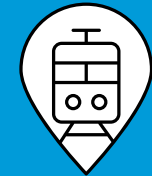
4 million
residents



3 official languages
(Dutch, German, French)



11,000 km²



High Speed connections
Liege, Aachen and
Brussels



5 partner regions:

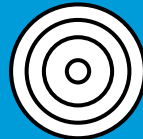
Provincie Limburg
(the Netherlands)

Regio Aachen
(Germany)

Provincie Limburg
(Belgium)

Province de Liège
(Belgium)

Deutschsprachige
Gemeinschaft
(Belgium)



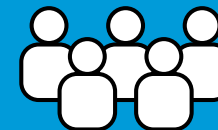
Connectivity to
densely populated
areas such
as Düsseldorf,
Cologne-Bonn,
Brussels within
a radius of **100 km**



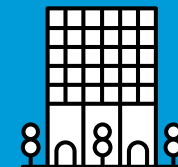
More than **250**
museums and
theatres



8 international
airports



More than **15,000**
cross-border
workers

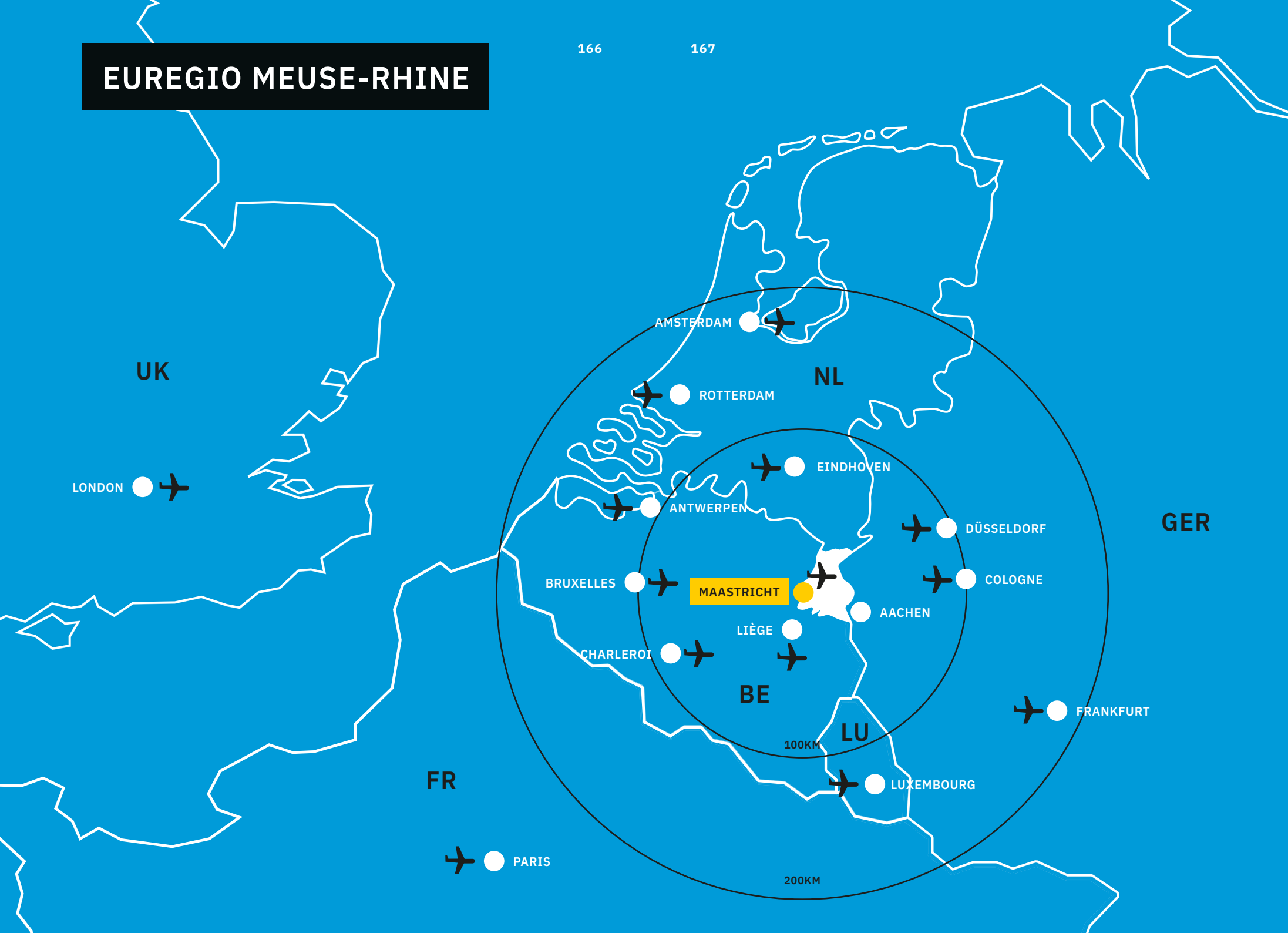


300 research
and excellence
centres

EUREGIO MEUSE-RHINE

166

167



UK

LONDON

FR

PARIS

NL

AMSTERDAM

ROTTERDAM

EINDHOVEN

ANTWERPEN

BRUXELLES

MAASTRICHT

LIÈGE

CHARLEROI

BE

LU

LUXEMBOURG

GER

DÜSSELDORF

COLOGNE

AACHEN

FRANKFURT

100KM

200KM

Colofon and contact details

The Maastricht Region Manual is a publication of
Expat Centre Maastricht Region.

Design Zuiderlicht

Photographers Massimo Marigo, Luc Lodder, Philip Driessen,
Jean-Pierre Geusens, Aron Nijs, Provincie Limburg

Print Impreso

Text Empowered & Expat Centre Maastricht Region

Expat Centre Maastricht Region
Mosae Forum 10
6211 DW Maastricht
+31 43 350 5010

expatcentremaastrichtregion.nl

Disclaimer

Various sources have been consulted in the compilation of this manual and a number of organisations have lent their cooperation and provided information. Expat Centre Maastricht Region has verified this information as far as possible with authorities and experts. Nevertheless, we remain dependent on external sources. Therefore, we cannot accept any liability for any errors and their consequences. We advise you at all times to get advice from your HR department or the relevant official bodies.