

STOP THE DIVIDE SHARE THE WEALTH.

**A MAASTRICHT FOR THE MANY,
NOT THE FEW.**

ELECTORAL PROGRAMME 2026 - 2030

SP. 

Maastricht



FOREWORD

Dear *Maastrichtenaar*,

Maastricht is a truly international city – many come here to study, work, love, and fresh starts. Yet politics often treats our internationals like they're 'temporary,' as if you don't really count until you've been here forever or speak perfect Dutch. We see it differently. If you live here, study here, or work here, Maastricht shapes your daily life: your rent, your commute, your safety, your healthcare access, your chances to build a future. Therefore, you deserve a voice in what this city becomes.

SP Maastricht is the local branch of the Dutch Socialist Party, and we are **democratic socialists**. We believe democracy should be more than voting once in a while. Real democracy means having real control over the basics that decide whether life feels stable or constantly stressful – housing, work, healthcare, education, and public services. We don't accept a city where essential needs are treated like luxury products, where "the market" gets the final say, and where public decisions quietly prioritize profit over people. We want Maastricht to work for the many – not for a small group that benefits from rising rents and unequal access.

Our politics starts with **solidarity**: nobody gets left behind – not students, not expats, not locals, not workers, not people on low incomes. Dignity isn't something you have to earn through perfect paperwork, the right accent, or the right connections. When people struggle with housing, insecure work, rising costs, or systems that feel closed and cold, that isn't personal failure – it's political choice. And political choices can be changed if we get together and rise up.

Affordable and high quality housing is key. Maastricht is beautiful, but beauty doesn't pay the rent. Too many people are squeezed into overpriced rooms, short-term contracts, and unsafe or overcrowded housing, while speculation drives prices up. We fight for strong tenant protection, real enforcement against bad landlords, and truly affordable homes – because a stable home is the foundation for everything else.

We also stand for **dignity and security in daily life**: fair pay, reliable contracts, accessible healthcare and mental health support, and public services that work – without the often humiliating bureaucracy. We're clear on **equal rights** too: discrimination in housing, work, nightlife, or public services is something a serious city confronts and fixes, not something newcomers should 'just deal with.' And we fight for true **climate justice that improves everyday life** – cleaner air, safer cycling, better and more affordable public transport, and fair energy policy – without pushing costs onto people already struggling.

If you want a Maastricht that's affordable, fair, and humane, you're more than welcome with us. We organize year-round, listen in neighborhoods, and push for concrete improvements. Whether you've been here for six weeks or six years, there's a place for you in building a city based on solidarity, fairness, and real democracy.

Jack van Geloooven
Lead Candidate, SP Maastricht

Stephanie Blom
Municipal Councillor, SP Maastricht

THESE ARE OUR KEY PRIORITIES

1. We will build for people like you and us again

In Maastricht, housing has increasingly been treated as a profit-making business – when it should be a basic right. For too long, the city has handed over control to developers and investors. The result is familiar: soaring prices, long waiting lists, and neighbourhoods shaped by return on investment rather than by what people actually need. The SP is choosing a different direction. We will stop selling off public land and take responsibility again – as a municipality – for what gets built, for whom, and at what price. Because only when the city takes the lead can we build for people instead of for the market.

That is why we will rebuild strong, public-minded housing policy. We will establish a Municipal Housing Company, non-profit and with a clear mandate: deliver good, genuinely affordable homes for starters, families, older residents, and middle-income earners who are currently being priced out. The housing company will build, buy, and rent out homes at cost price, in real consultation with neighbourhoods. This keeps housing in Maastricht hands, lowers rents, gives residents more say, and helps build stable neighbourhoods where people can stay, settle, and shape their future together. That is what “building for ordinary people” means in practice.

2. We will finally close the gap between rich and poor

In Maastricht, your postal code increasingly shapes your prospects. While some neighbourhoods are effectively protected from affordable housing and benefit disproportionately from investment, pressures keep piling up in areas such as Pottenberg, Malpertuis, Nazareth, Wittevrouwenveld, and Mariaberg. More people live in poverty, homes are in worse condition, unemployment is higher, and essential services disappear – exactly where they are most needed. This growing divide is neither a coincidence nor ‘just how things are’: it is the outcome of political choices over many years. Choices that allowed inequality to grow and made two-tier living seem normal. The SP refuses to accept that. Maastricht should not be designed for the happy few, but for everyone who lives here, works here, and is trying to build a life here.

A Maastricht without two-tier living demands clear decisions. We will invest more – structurally and seriously – where problems are greatest, with a long-term approach in vulnerable neighbourhoods. At the same time, we will end the one-sidedness elsewhere by also building social and affordable housing in places like Villapark, Sint Pieter and along the Groene Loper. Solidarity is not charity; it goes both ways, and it means every part of the city contributes to a fairer and more equal Maastricht. That is how we build mixed, liveable neighbourhoods where people meet each other instead of avoiding each other. This is not a convenient campaign line – it is a task. And it is the Maastricht the SP stands for: one city, shared by all, with equal opportunities for everyone.

THESE ARE OUR KEY PRIORITIES

3. We will secure the future of the Landbouwbelang (LBB)

A city is not built on prestige projects alone. A city lives through the people who give it character, energy and imagination. That requires places where not everything is pre-scripted—where there is room to experiment, create and come together. These are the city's free spaces: cultural hubs where creativity thrives, communities form, and people can be themselves without a commercial straitjacket. The Landbouwbelang is exactly such a place. For decades it has been a home for makers, musicians, artists and volunteers—a unique free space that makes Maastricht richer, not poorer.

Yet again and again, the current city leadership chooses to 'smooth out' these places. Free spaces are pushed aside for luxury apartments, city villas, and prestige developments aimed at a small, affluent group. The Landbouwbelang, too, risks being sacrificed to 'The M', where even the cheapest homes are close to €400,000. For the SP, that is unacceptable. We resisted eviction from the current site for as long as it was possible—and we continue to stand with the people who built this community. Now that it is clear that staying on this site is no longer realistic, the municipality must take responsibility: provide a full-fledged new home for the Landbouwbelang – affordable, permanent, and sustainable, where this community can continue and grow. Until that is secured, our position is simple: no eviction without a real alternative. Because a city without free spaces is not a living city.

4. We will end tick-box consultation and backroom favouritism

The city belongs to US, its residents, yet too often decisions are still made over people's heads. In Maastricht, residents are regularly brought in only when plans are already fixed—when most choices have effectively been made. Participation becomes a formality: one meeting, a report, a tick in a box. Meanwhile, people mainly hear what cannot be done. That erodes trust in politics and pushes engaged residents away. If you repeatedly learn that your voice changes nothing, eventually you disengage. That is damaging—not just for democracy, but for the strength of the city itself.

The SP is choosing a fundamentally different approach. Citizens' influence is not a luxury; it is a fundamental right. People must be able to help decide from the start what happens in their street, neighbourhood and city – not afterwards, but upfront. That is why we will invest in real democratic instruments: citizens' assemblies, referendums, and bottom-up neighbourhood plans with their own budgets and decision-making power. No symbolic participation, no backroom deals, no favouritism – just making plans together, weighing choices together, and deciding together where public money goes. Because democracy is not an administrative hobby. Democracy belongs to the people – or it is nothing.

THESE ARE OUR KEY PRIORITIES

5. Economic security: solid ground under your feet again.

In Maastricht, everyone should be able to live without constant anxiety about tomorrow – without fear of an empty fridge, a pile of bills, or a letter that suddenly pulls the rug out from under you. For the SP, economic security is not a favour and not a temporary scheme: it is a fundamental right. That is why we want a municipality built on trust rather than suspicion. Support and benefits people are entitled to should be granted automatically. Income thresholds must be raised, so working people no longer fall through the cracks.

We will actively tackle energy and housing insecurity, provide free school meals, and address hidden poverty by reaching out in neighbourhoods proactively and respectfully. Because poverty is not solved from behind a desk – it is solved by standing alongside people, and backing them up. We are building a city where security is the norm and insecurity the exception: with one consistent point of contact per household, serious debt prevention, and neighbourhood service points you can simply walk into. We will invest in children, support people with chronic illnesses, and ensure nobody has to choose between care, food or warmth. That is how we restore solid ground under people's feet in Maastricht – not through control and punishment, but through solidarity and a city that refuses to let anyone fall.

AFTERWORD - THE CITY BELONGS TO US.

You've just read about our key priorities for Maastricht – a plan born not in City Hall backrooms, but out on the streets, in cafés, at community meetings, and around kitchen tables. It grew from real conversations with people who live, study, and work here – from lifelong Maastrichteners to the students and newcomers who now call this city home. What you're holding is therefore more than some flashy talking points for the elections. It's a choice – about the kind of future we want, and about the soul of our city.

Because the question before us is simple: do we continue down the same road – one where affordable housing becomes a distant dream, where the city bends to investors instead of its residents, and where those who come here to learn, work or start a life are priced out before they even begin? Or do we change course, and build a city that puts people before profit, belonging before branding, and community before concrete?

The SP chooses that second path – wholeheartedly. We choose a Maastricht that builds affordable homes again, so that young people can actually stay after graduation instead of moving away. A city that brings care and energy back into public hands, so that what's essential isn't sold off to whoever offers the highest bid. A city that shares power with its neighbourhoods and communities – because you know best what your street, your campus, your block needs. A city that invests in clean air, accessible public transport, fair work, and culture that's open to everyone, not just those who can afford a ticket. A city that values creativity, diversity, and solidarity as the heartbeat of urban life.

Real change never happens automatically. It takes courage – the courage to break with old habits, to challenge the idea that 'this is just how things are,' and to believe that Maastricht can be fairer, greener, and more inclusive. Your vote on **18 March 2026** matters. It's more than a mark on a ballot – it's a message. A message that this city belongs to **ALL** of us – students and workers, locals and newcomers alike.

Above all, it's a choice for solidarity, for justice, and for a Maastricht that everyone – from Wyck to Wittevrouwenveld, from the Vrijthof to the university library – can truly call **home**.

For our *sjoen Mestreech* – and for everyone who dares to believe that a fundamentally fair city is possible.



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