

## NIJMEGEN 4EVERGREEN!

Indicator		Units	Annual data
Population	170,774	Inhabitants	2015
Surface area	57	Km <sup>2</sup>	2015
Population density	3,000	Inhab./km <sup>2</sup>	2015
GDP	28,100	€ / Capita	2010
Köppen climate classification	Cfb climate		Relatively mild winters and summers, precipitation all year round

The location at the river Waal, between hills, polders and forests, has made Nijmegen an attractive place for already more than 2,000 years. As the Netherlands' oldest city, it cherishes its history, while also realising that a sustainable future for its inhabitants is at least as important. Nijmegen experienced a period of decline after the Roman era. After the dark early Middle Ages, trade and culture flourished in Nijmegen, which was in the meantime surrounded by productive agriculture. With the Treaty of Nijmegen (1678) the city was briefly the centre of Europe. Nijmegen did not get permission to demolish the city rampart until 1875. Then Nijmegen flourished and decades of gradual growth followed. But in 1944, 800 inhabitants of Nijmegen perished in a bombing. The city centre was largely wiped out. The restoration lasted until the 1980s with the rebuilding of the lower city. After 1945, one of the Netherlands' largest inland ports was built in Nijmegen-West, where a lot of heavy industry started to develop. However, the proximity of densely populated districts led to lots of environmental damage and protest from society.

Since 1923 Nijmegen has accommodated Radboud University. Together with the HAN University of Applied Sciences it educates 40,000 students, which is very important for a youthful, modern culture in the city. Nijmegen is still growing. North of the Waal the city is developing a new district: 14,000 houses, energy efficient, largely connected to the residual heat network. In 2016 the civilian cooperative WindpowerNijmegen will be building four wind turbines (electricity for 7,000 households). In the year 2015 Nijmegen has 171,000 inhabitants, 75,000 houses, 80,000 cars and 250,000 bicycles.



Figure 1: View of Nijmegen centre, Waal and nature reserves

## Landscape Nijmegen

The location of the lateral moraine and river gives Nijmegen its unique charm and makes the city the ideal operating base for walks and cycling trips in the wonderful region. In ten minutes you can walk from the centre to the idyllic Ooijpolder, which was justly protected against urban growth in the 1960s and against the plan to straighten the Waal (1972) for the benefit of navigation. This is because the Waal takes a sharp, narrowing bend in Nijmegen. And due to climate change, the risk of flooding is increasing also in this area. In 1995 more than 250,000 inhabitants of Nijmegen and environs were evacuated due to an imminent flood. Since then a national plan was developed to give the rivers more space. The State obliged the creation of the four kilometre long secondary channel in Nijmegen. The city took this opportunity to realise unique quality: an island in the middle of the city, and an artery *through* the city for the river's wildlife; an area which was also opened for cyclists and pedestrians from the city centre and from the region.

## Nijmegen, healthy and sporty

The care sector (University Medical Centre Radboud, St.Maartens clinic and Canisius-Wilhemina hospital) is the main employer in Nijmegen. Health & innovation are high on the municipal agenda, explicitly linked to a healthy and sustainable living environment. Nijmegen also organises many runs: the annual international Four Day march ('Walk of the World' with 40,000 participants, 1.5 million visitors), the Zevenheuvelenloop and the Marikenloop (50,000 participants) are prominent on a national level because of its sustainable nature. In 2016 the Giro d'Italia will come to Nijmegen, Nijmegen will host the Special Olympics (for people with a mental handicap) and the Velocity International Cycling Conference in 2017.



Figure 2: Sustainable events

## Nijmegen, knowledge and culture

The knowledge institutes and the Regional Training Centre (ROC) attract many youngsters, also from abroad. Culture in Nijmegen is buzzing with the brand-new pop stage "Doornroosje", concert hall "De Vereniging" (restored to its former glory in a sustainable manner) and the municipal theatre. In addition, Nijmegen has a versatile film culture and a major music scene, such as the "Music Meeting" (world music) in Park Brakkenstein and large pop concerts in park De Goffert. Near the Valkhof (art) museum Nijmegen is now building "De Bastei", centre for nature, cultural history and environmental education.

### Nijmegen, green and sustainable

Nijmegen bases its development on the Ecopolis concept, based on three pillars: streams, areas, participants, coinciding with a responsible, living and participating city. How does this look specifically? All residential areas are limited traffic and traffic safe (maximum speed 30 km/h). Most residents go to work by bike or public transport. All city/regional buses ride on green gas. Houses alongside arterial roads are extra (sound) insulated. In districts built after 1965 rain and drainage water remain separated. Households separate a very high amount of their waste, which becomes raw material. The gradual development of the urban residual heat network is supplying an increasing number of houses and is thus reducing the use of fossil energy. The 'Groen Verbindt' campaign links social cohesion to green districts: residents present projects, design and help to maintain these. The Spatial Structural Vision (2013) indicates how Nijmegen wants to develop in the future with sustainability as the basic principle: municipal junctions are especially easy to reach by public transport and room for sustainable energy. With the Sustainability Agenda (2011) Nijmegen is focusing on energy neutrality by 2045. Companies and residents are very active in our networks that concentrate on saving energy and sustainable energy production.

[Sustainable urban development, Existing green areas, Waal and Maas-Waal canal, Designated areas municipal green, Investment in green in and around the city, Investment in blue structures, Water safety, Designated areas wind energy, District heating route, Areas of special interest for the climate (heat and flooding), High-grade public transport, Bicycle superhighway, Transferium Development area Waalfront/Waalsprong]

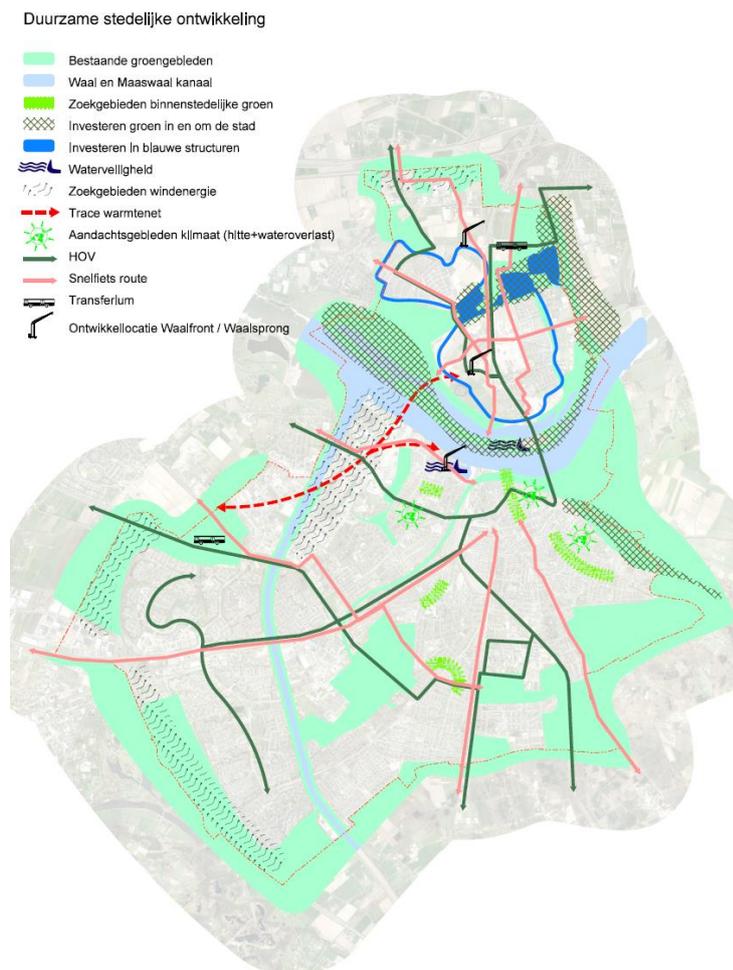


Figure 3: Sustainable Urban Development (Spatial Structural vision 2013)

### Nijmegen cooperates on a regional, national and a European level

The development of circular economy is increasingly taking shape in the eastern Netherlands, of which Nijmegen is the largest city, in a number of initiatives of universities, companies and cities. Also because Nijmegen has relatively high unemployment (12%) this subject is very important to the city. With twinned city Arnhem we are linking businesses networks 'Energy made in Arnhem' and 'Power2Nijmegen', both focused on accelerating a sustainable economy. The Gelderland cities are cooperating on innovative strength of the energy and the green technology sector. The national government indicated Nijmegen to serve as a shining example of energy transition over the next few years. With German and other European cities we are now working on various environmental projects, such as air quality and navigation. Nijmegen was the Netherlands' most sustainable city (Local Sustainability Indicator, figure 4).

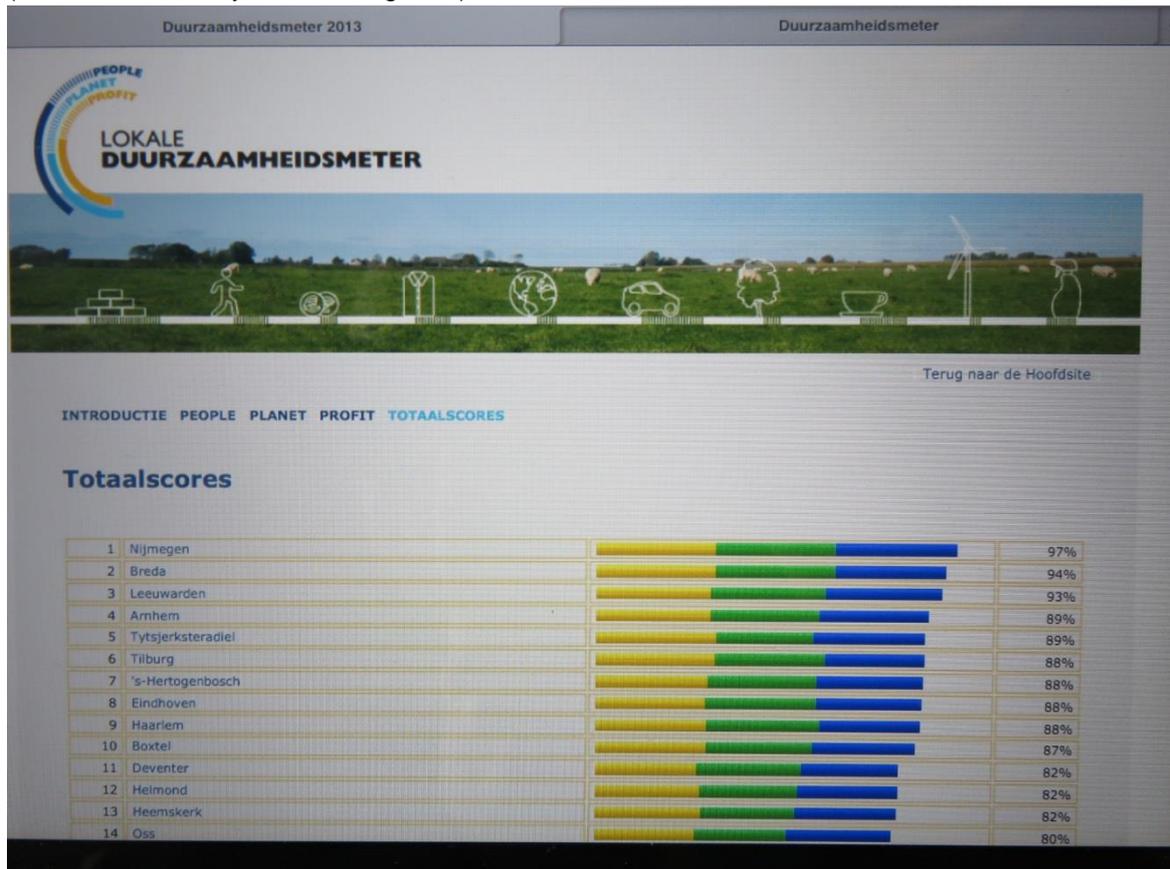


Figure 4: National Sustainability Indicator for municipalities 2014

### Nijmegen Always Sustainable

The living environment in Nijmegen has strongly improved this past century: for instance, there was no sewer system or drinking water network around 1880. The past century many ecological problems arose and were solved. Currently, Nijmegen is working on a city that is energy neutral, manages raw material sustainably and is designed and functions ecologically responsible, healthy and sociably. Nijmegen is a preeminent urban lab for sustainability, full of expertise and inspiration among residents, companies and institutes. Participation in the European Green Capital competition has a uniting and catalysing effect on our city. Nijmegen gladly offers to continue to play a pioneering role in the network of European cities.

**Nijmegen and Europe: 4Evergreen!**

