

VOLT FOR LEIDEN

Leiden Election Programme
Municipal Elections 2026

Volt

DEAR RESIDENTS OF LEIDEN,

We live in a beautiful city. With an enthusiastic municipal council.

Compliments for what has been achieved.

As a new party in Leiden, we are adding something new: an Executive member for European Affairs. An expert with European knowledge and experience who knows how to find the right people, the best practices and the right subsidies.

At Volt, we want to strengthen Leiden with good ideas, including those from Europe. Think of the way Vienna allocates housing. Or the measures that keep Helsinki safe. But also think of the many European funds that can be used to create space for healthcare professionals, for a Key Region Leiden, a Singelpark XL and many other relevant Leiden wishes.

In doing so, we believe in the residents of our Leiden streets and neighbourhoods. In neighbours, families and colleagues who together form the heart and soul of the city. From Cronesteyn to De Kooij, from the centre to Stevenshof.

We see how police officers, teachers and healthcare workers contribute to our collective well-being. Volt wants to give these forces every opportunity to do so. Sometimes by supporting neighbourhood initiatives, sometimes by learning from other cities, and sometimes with the help of European subsidies.

A lot can be achieved if you dare to look beyond your own city walls.

It takes courage. And cooperation.

That is why Volt is now here for Leiden!

We dare, and we want to. Do you?

Then vote for Volt Leiden.

You will be supported by Volters throughout the Netherlands and Europe.

From Amsterdam to Athens.

From Madrid to Berlin.

On behalf of the Volt Leiden team,

Party leader Ophir Waasdorp

3+1 CHALLENGES FOR LEIDEN

STEM

Volt



3+1 CHALLENGES FOR LEIDEN

1. A HUMAN CITY

Volt wants Leiden to remain the lovely city that it is. There is no place here for hardening, deterioration or exclusion. We want every unique Leiden resident to have the space (to live) to live, grow and contribute. With a government that removes obstacles, gives our residents more initiative and always has an eye for our human needs.

- **Living together without a permit**
- **Giving public space back to the people**
- **Health: care and prevention**

2. A SAFE CITY

Everyone should feel safe in our city. We are working on this together, government and citizens. With better lighting, resilience training, and smart heat plans. But also by switching to open-source technology as quickly as possible. So that we can continue to combat disinformation, violence, flooding, cybercrime, and poverty autonomously. And thus safeguard our well-being. Among other things, with European experience and resources.

- **Cyber-technical and physical resilience**
- **Connection and citizen deliberation**
- **Well-being and economy**

3. A LIVEABLE CITY

Leiden is alive. Sometimes to the point of creaking. In our opinion, a liveable city needs simple, quick agreements. With the aim of making it pleasant to live, study, work, go to the cinema or sit on a terrace. For every resident of Leiden. With more green spaces, good lighting and safe cycle paths, smart mobility and space to meet each other. We want an uncomplicated, accessible, pleasant Leiden. And in the meantime: don't stand still, but move forward together.

- **Homes 8,800 + 5,000 extra**
- **From a petrified city**
- **Public space and safety**

+1. A EUROPEAN CITY

Leiden was already European long before the EU. We are moving into the future with that same open, international outlook and an Executive member for European Affairs. We look at successful developments in other European cities and translate them into our Leiden practice. Not constantly reinventing the wheel, but new forms of Leiden entrepreneurship, Leiden living, Leiden parking, Leiden social involvement. With European subsidies, of course.

- **An Executive member for European Affairs**
- **Learning from European solutions**
- **Knowledge and subsidies**

3+1 CHALLENGES FOR LEIDEN

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OUR PROGRAMME IN A NUTSHELL

Think European. Act Leiden.

With Volt, you bring a new future to Leiden. You will see that European cooperation in the city council is not a distant dream, but offers great opportunities for Leiden. For example, with an Executive member for European Affairs who brings best practices from other cities and European subsidies to our city, improving our lives in Leiden.

That starts with housing. Leiden is growing, but first-time buyers, students and older people are struggling to find suitable housing. In addition to the 8,800 new homes currently planned, Volt wants to build at least 5,000 extra affordable and lifetime homes, together with residents and developers. This will create mobility and keep our city liveable.

We also want to set the tone in sustainability. Leiden can be energy neutral by 2035 and fully sustainable by 2040. With insulation projects, green roofs, shared transport, smart energy hubs and European support, we can make this feasible and affordable.

For us, safety means not only well-trained police on the streets, but also resilience. With resilience training and a cyber security plan, we ensure the protection of our people and institutions. We are also tackling climate risks in our urbanised city and polarisation in our neighbourhoods. In doing so, we learn from European leaders and apply the smartest solutions here.

Education remains the key to equal opportunities. From healthy school breakfasts to making our often outdated school buildings more sustainable and international exchanges through Erasmus+. We give young people the space they need to develop and actively contribute to our democracy.

Digitalisation must make Leiden stronger, not more dependent. That is why we are opting for open-source software, digital independence by 2030 and a municipality that always remains personal and human.

We are going to build a city where well-being, health, culture and science come together. With Leiden University, our educational institutions, the Bio Science Park, SMEs and start-ups and scale-ups as inspiring engines of innovation, well-being and culture. This is how we will make Leiden resilient and future-proof. Together with you.

1. EUROPE



1. EUROPE

AN EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

Leiden has everything it needs to take on a pioneering role in Europe. There are so many opportunities in our city and in our cooperation with Europe. That is why we want Leiden to be the first city ever to have an Executive member for European Affairs. An expert who is fully committed to capitalising on European best practices, cooperation and subsidies for our city.

Executive member for European Affairs in brief

1. An Executive member for European Affairs makes Leiden visible in Europe and Europe visible in Leiden.
2. We seek out, learn from and utilise the best solutions from European cities for Leiden's challenges.
3. We use subsidies to help make those solutions possible.
4. We are the first city in the Netherlands to structurally embed Europe in local government.

MORE IN DETAIL

1. Leiden visible in Europe

With an Executive member for European Affairs, our city has a clear voice in Brussels and other European networks. This ensures that our university, businesses, museums and social organisations can find their way to European programmes and collaborations. This increases our influence and strengthens our position as an international city of knowledge.

2. European solutions in Leiden

In our European cities, we find excellent solutions to problems that also exist in Leiden. These are wonderful examples that we can benefit from. Our Executive member for European Affairs finds, researches and promotes them. Think, for example, of smart tourism in Copenhagen, sustainable mobility in Paris, citizen participation in Barcelona and Lille via the Decidim platform, and zero traffic fatalities in Helsinki.

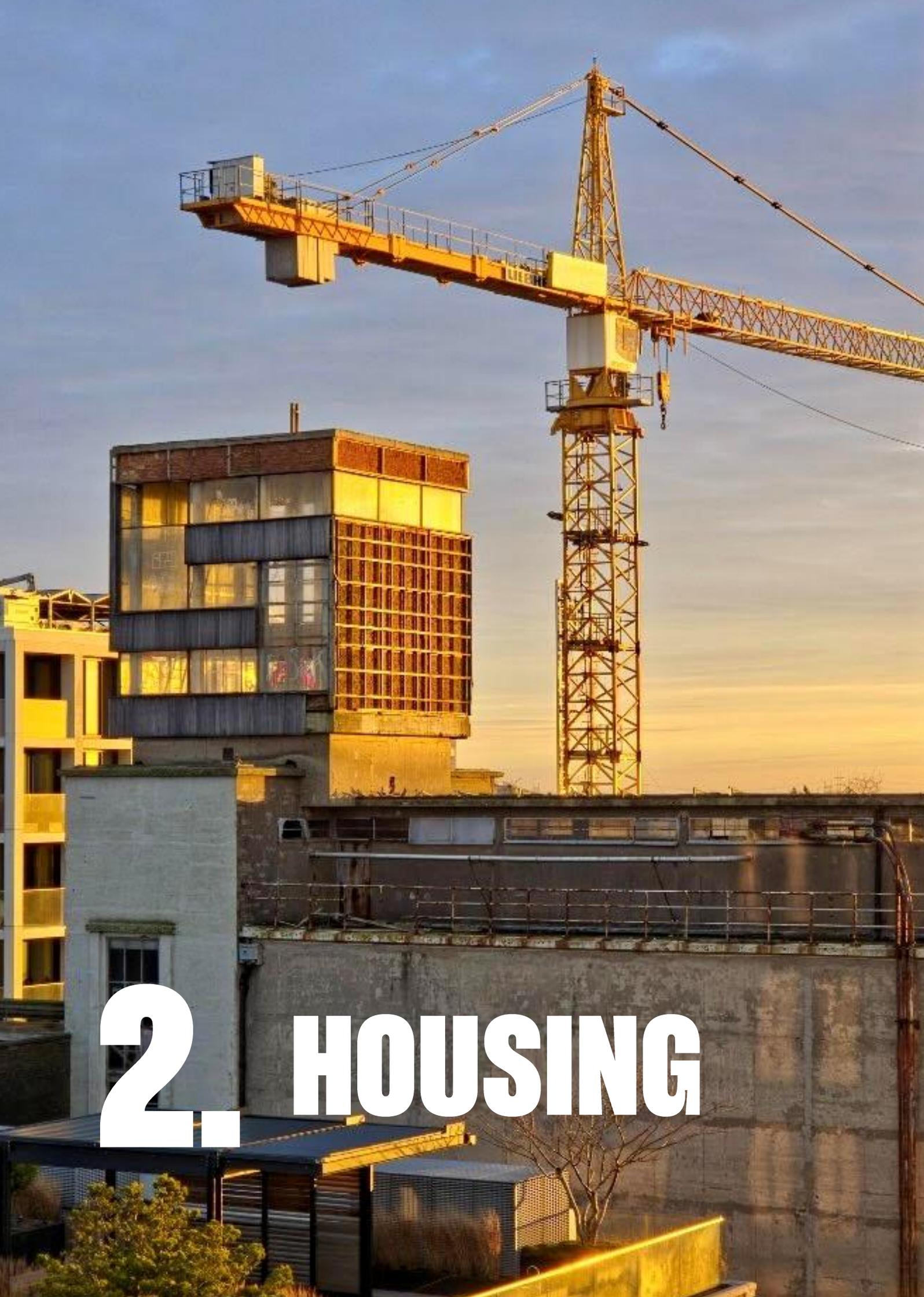
3. Utilising subsidies

Europe is making billions available for sustainability, innovation, culture, heritage and education. Our Executive member for European Affairs, who is familiar with European organisations, will make the most of these opportunities for Leiden. Examples include:

- Research and innovation: through Horizon Europe, the LUMC and the Bio Science Park can raise millions of euros for medical and biotechnological research.
- Education and young people: Erasmus+ gives students, pupils and teachers opportunities to gain knowledge and experience in Europe.
- Culture and heritage: through Creative Europe and Europe for Citizens, museums, festivals and cultural institutions receive additional resources to promote Leiden's rich heritage internationally.
- Sustainability and climate: with NextGenerationEU and the Just Transition Fund, Leiden can receive support for making homes, energy hubs and green mobility more sustainable.

4. Leiden as a pioneer once again

With an Executive member for European Affairs, we are the first municipality in the Netherlands to make Europe part of local government. Pioneering has always brought prosperity to Leiden. We show how European thinking leads to Leiden action and how our European cooperation creates new jobs in innovative and existing sectors, affordable sustainability and better opportunities for young people/students.



2. HOUSING

2. HOUSING

OFFERED: 13,800 X LIVING SPACE IN LEIDEN

Leiden is popular. The Bio Science Park, Leiden University and the LUMC alone attract many house hunters every year. As a result, more and more people are missing out. Often, it is the younger and older residents of Leiden. So we are going to make some changes and work together to create a larger, more suitable housing stock for first-time buyers, students and older people. The result: greater mobility. It's quite a puzzle, but we think it can be done.

Housing in brief

1. We are building more social and affordable housing, preferably on the basis of public-private partnerships.
2. We are aiming for more lifetime homes for first-time buyers, students and older people.
3. We will ensure genuine participation in restructuring or construction plans.

MORE IN DETAIL

1. 8,800 + 5,000 extra homes

We want to build at least 8,800 additional homes in Leiden by 2030. We have already laid down in our current long-term vision that we will add another 5,000 homes to Leiden's housing stock by 2035. This will be a nice mix of social housing, mid-range rental properties and affordable owner-occupied homes, with space for local businesses and neighbourhood facilities.

We are also considering human-scale high-rise buildings, rooftop villages, infill development and cooperation with other municipalities.

How will we do this?

We want to build with public-private funds, because of the financial and social security they offer, but also because this has proven to be the most efficient, smart and sustainable way. And because of the European subsidy opportunities that are available. Any return on investment made by the municipality will go back into Leiden's municipal coffers.

2. Living together without a permit

We are fully committed to lifetime homes. But not just for senior citizens. We are investigating flexible housing options for students, senior citizens, single-parent families, etc. Tiny houses also offer opportunities.

55% of Leiden residents live alone. From their twenties to their nineties. Living together should be easier, for example in a so-called 'friends' house'. Just renting without the permits that are currently required.

Students belong in Leiden, the City of Knowledge. Being on the waiting list for a room for almost five years? Unacceptable. That is why we want to increase the number of student rooms in Leiden by at least 1,000 by 2030.

We are also committed to building additional student houses with communal areas, known as 'fusion' in Leiden. Simply put: more fun and less loneliness.

Bye bye ban on room rental. We are looking (also within Europe) for the nicest, best type of housing for students.

3. Deciding together

Volt will encourage public consultation on construction and housing needs.

Participation in various construction projects in Leiden has not gone well. That needs to improve. If a restructuring or construction project has an impact on someone's immediate living situation, it must be possible for them to be involved. Citizen consultation ensures maximum involvement.

We want more regional and provincial cooperation with social partners in housing construction. We want to set up projects that transcend municipal boundaries in order to realise construction capacity and contribute to the ambitions of the province of South Holland.

3. CITY OF KNOWLEDGE



3. CITY OF KNOWLEDGE, NOW AND IN THE FUTURE

We are a rich city with our Leiden educational institutions, the LUMC, the Bio Science Park, museums, cultural activities, the Leiden market and tourism. They provide employment and higher incomes for local businesses. Volt values this and invests in it sustainably. People, the environment and nature in harmony; we are committed to this.

Leiden Knowledge City is an international knowledge and student city with a progressive profile. We want to approach migration as both an opportunity and a responsibility. We want to further expand our distinctive position. For example, by strengthening the knowledge axis of the Leiden region, Katwijk and Noordwijk. Just like the Bio Science Park and the Key Region Leiden, particularly for SMEs. These are complex ambitions that require choices to be made. Volt will make those choices, together with other municipalities involved. And we will realise the plans with the help of our subsidy specialists.

Welfare in brief

1. We are committed to regional cooperation 'Key Region Leiden', 'Science for life' and the further development of the knowledge economy.
2. We are setting up 'work landscapes of the future' to promote cooperation between education and business. Space-intensive SMEs, which are important for a vibrant city, will be given space.
3. We want simpler poverty regulations and want to expand the 'basic income for vulnerable young people' project.
4. We believe that appreciation for foreign workers is self-evident and do not want any exploitation.
5. We are committed to providing humane reception facilities for asylum seekers and status holders.

MORE IN DETAIL

1. Working and growing together

To realise Leiden as a city of knowledge, we will work closely with our neighbouring municipalities and jointly develop the knowledge axis of the Leiden region, Katwijk and Noordwijk. It is important that the innovation clusters of Leiden Bio Science Park, the NL Space Campus in Noordwijk and Unmanned Valley (drone technology) in Valkenburg can continue to grow. Volt wants the municipality of Leiden to take responsibility for this at the municipal level and to advocate for structural reinforcement and a favourable business climate at the provincial, national and European levels. We will deploy our (EU) subsidy specialists to provide financial support for the region.

Existing SMEs can also be better served with a regional approach. That is why Volt supports the existing 'Key Region Leiden' collaboration with the surrounding municipalities. New industry cannot exist without existing industry.

2. Working landscapes of the future

Volt wants more cooperation between education and business and is committed to 'working landscapes of the future'. Landscapes in which young people from Leiden gain work experience while making the environment more beautiful, enabling the transition to sustainable energy or protecting neighbourhoods and people from the nuisance of excessive heat or water. We want to stimulate cross-fertilisation between educational institutions and companies working on similar transitions. Think: Bio Science Park, Energy Park, PLNT and the redevelopment of business parks.

Volt would like to warm things up by attracting large and small entrepreneurs and wants to create a balance between social cohesion, economy and ecology. This includes a vibrant centre with many different shops, restaurants and cultural activities. To renew and make the local economy more sustainable, Leiden's economy must literally be given space, including in business parks. This applies in particular to SMEs that are space-intensive, such as those involved in the maintenance, furnishing and sustainability of homes. But we are also focusing on innovative start-ups and innovative SMEs in the manufacturing industry.

We are looking for opportunities within Leiden, but also in the wider region.

3. Towards a basic income

Well-being and economic opportunities are not currently distributed fairly. That is why we want Leiden to further expand the 'Het Bouwdepot' trial, which provides living expenses for vulnerable young people. Young people who are at risk of becoming homeless can get their lives back on track. 'Het Bouwdepot' provides for their basic needs and enables them to gain work experience. It is a good local pilot project in preparation for the renewal of the Participation Act or a basic income.

4. Appreciation for migrant workers, no to exploitation

Migrant workers are mainly found in shortage occupations. They contribute to the local economy and facilities. That is why we want the municipality to work with employers to guarantee decent working conditions and housing. We want quality requirements for the housing of migrant workers (licensing system with criteria for living space, managers, etc.) and enforcement to prevent abuses.

5. Humane reception, small-scale within the city

Leiden has a long tradition of providing shelter and sees it as a moral duty to protect war refugees. We therefore support small-scale shelters spread across the city, as this promotes integration.

In terms of policy, this means: timely preparation for the national target (the Distribution Act – and YES, it will remain in place!) and searching for sustainable reception locations, so that emergency accommodation in sports halls becomes a thing of the past.

4 ENERGY 4 WATER 4 CLIMATE



4. ENERGY, WATER AND CLIMATE

LEADING THE WAY IN SUSTAINABILITY

Energy neutral by 2035 and completely sustainable economically by 2040. Yes, even in the poorly insulated Slaaghwijk and Noorderkwartier neighbourhoods. As a city of knowledge with so many young residents, we must strive for a leading position. Insulation, ivy roofs, shared transport, charging stations for electric boats, energy hubs, wadis, water buffers, cycle highways; we are going for it. Together with residents, businesses, knowledge institutions and our European knowledge, experience and subsidies. For example, from NextGenerationEU.

Energy, water and climate in brief

1. We are accelerating the transition to sustainable energy, keeping energy bills affordable through home insulation and reducing our dependence on fossil fuels.
2. We are making Leiden greener and more water-resistant, so that we are better able to withstand heat, drought and heavy rain.
3. We are investigating how to optimise our drinking water supply and how to safely and intelligently manage our heavily polluted subsoil.

MORE IN DETAIL

1. New energy for everyone

We are aiming for energy neutrality by 2035 and zero natural gas by 2050 at the latest. We are making this achievable and affordable for everyone. This means large-scale home insulation, with extra money for households that need it, such as in Slaaghwijk and Noorderkwartier, which are currently facing high energy bills.

New energy and good insulation for all our monuments should be made a little easier. And new construction must be emission-free by 2030. So we will help with that.

Grid congestion is a problem, for example due to the solar panels and charging stations in Stevenshof and Professorenwijk. We want to encourage energy efficiency and flexibility. With Home Energy Management Systems (HEMS) and with local energy hubs in business parks. We are also developing future scenarios; the demand for energy will continue to grow. We are connecting Leiden with other European communities (KICs) that are experimenting with small-scale heat networks and local heat storage. European programmes such as ELENA and NextGenerationEU will help us achieve our energy ambitions.

2. From a concrete city to a green sponge

Leiden must become a green sponge that collects water and combats heat stress. How cool would an ivy roof above shoppers in Haarlemmerstraat be? We are going for it, just like more trees, more shade, green roofs, climate squares, wadis, water-permeable paving, smart buffers to prevent flooding, for example in the Merenwijk and Lage Mors neighbourhoods.

3. Solid ground under our feet

Volt wants attention for our drinking water supply. This is under pressure because our subsoil is under severe strain from new homes, heating networks, sewer systems and cables. In Stevenshof and Roomburg, the heating network and drinking water supply are already coming into conflict. We want to work closely with water companies and knowledge institutions on this. What are other European cities doing? Of course, we participate in the Resilient Cities Network.



5. HEALTH

5. HEALTH

CARE FOR THE YOUNG, OLD, VULNERABLE AND ILLEGAL

Volt wants mental and physical healthcare that is affordable and accessible to everyone. If nothing changes, this will soon be unaffordable, including in Leiden. That is why we are focusing on prevention: we are making prevention much more pleasant than cure. To limit staff shortages in our healthcare system, we want to give healthcare professionals every opportunity, both in terms of housing and learning, as well as mobility. In addition, we see an interesting role for digital assistance, also in connection with long waiting lists. And we look at best practices, not only in Leiden, but also in the region and other places in the Netherlands and Europe.

Health in brief

1. We are committed to prevention.
2. We advocate accessible mental and physical healthcare for everyone.
3. We give healthcare professionals space in all parts of the city, including the centre.
4. We encourage digital assistance, from 'domotics' to 'smart glass'.

MORE IN DETAIL

1. Prevention is better

We want healthcare to remain affordable, even as we grow older, so we are focusing on prevention. We support programmes and courses that promote a healthy lifestyle for everyone. We will ensure that we can walk and cycle safely on the streets and we offer courses on healthy ageing, such as fall prevention and senior yoga. We also want to help parents with parenting questions and we are developing a programme to prevent suicide in collaboration with the LUMC.

Furthermore, we advocate for more places where young and old can play sports or train, either alone or in groups. For young people, Leiden could join the URBACT Re-Gen Network, a European network of nine cities that involves young people between the ages of 10 and 18 in the development of sports hubs.

2. The duty to care

Volt wants good and accessible care for everyone. Tailored care for children, for students with mental health issues, for elderly city residents, for people with disabilities, for the chronically ill and for people who are struggling. How? We are working on a direct separation between complex and simple issues when it comes to requests for help, and we prevent simple requests for help from becoming complex. We are learning from Veendam, which has eliminated waiting lists for youth care by discontinuing market forces. We listen to professionals from, among others, GGZ Rivierduinen, Topaz, Centrum voor Jeugd en Gezin (CJG), De Binnenvest, Activite Humanitas DMH, we learn from their insights and apply them.

We encourage cooperation, such as between LUMC and ROC, which jointly train people for the care sector, with special teaching programmes for status holders, enabling them to enter the workforce more quickly.

3. A climate for good care

Volt wants full support for healthcare professionals. For example, for nursing specialists in elderly care, such as Marente, or carers for the homeless at De Binnenvest and De Bakkerij, but also GGD doctors and mental health nurses. These are often qualified experts who can provide useful inside information about administrative burdens, schedules, training, working conditions and job satisfaction, but who are rarely heard because they are too busy with their work. Volt wants to listen to them and involve them in policy decisions. In addition, we want to make Leiden more attractive to them by making housing, learning, working and mobility more accessible.

4. Digital where possible

We are committed to providing smart, digital mental health care services for both young and old. Many young people have mental health problems, for example due to the aftermath of the coronavirus crisis and the increasing pressure to perform in a time of excessive stimulation. As a result, mental health care services have long waiting lists and it is difficult to find help from a psychologist or psychiatrist due to increased administrative requirements. More and more people are becoming adept at using the internet. For them, immediate digital care without a waiting list could be the right solution.

Digital care will in any case help to limit shortages in healthcare. Think of home monitoring by healthcare providers such as Luscii.com, home automation such as 'domotics' in elderly care and the use of 'smart glass' for wound care. This is also being done with the help of the Leiden Healthy Society Centre, experts by experience, think tanks and subsidies from Europe.



6. SAFETY

6. SAFETY

A SAFE, OPEN LEIDEN

Leiden is a welcoming city; there is no place here for intimidation, violence and crime. We want you to feel safe – as an innocent teenager on social media, as a bird of paradise in the Merenwijk neighbourhood, as a young girl out on the town, as a citizen facing impersonal systems or as a senior citizen on the cycle path.

That safety does not stop at the Haagsche Schouw or the A4 motorway. Cyber threats, crime, climate risks and polarisation cross every border. And so we want the best, innovative solutions, with the help of Europe. Helsinki scores highly every year on road safety, partly thanks to its 30 km policy. Barcelona and Copenhagen have optimally protected the digital rights of their residents. With our European knowledge, networks and subsidies, we are strong.

Safety in a nutshell

1. We are committed to connecting citizens' councils and bubbles.
2. We want respect and well-trained enforcers.
3. We are committed to resilience training.
4. We want to green and cool neighbourhoods.

MORE IN DETAIL

1. Connecting citizens and bubbles

Leiden has many people who find their way around the city without any problems. But there is also a group that views all developments with suspicion and harbours mistrust towards those who think differently and the government. Volt wants to connect the different bubbles. By investing in initiatives where residents and, for example, students from different neighbourhoods consult and collaborate with each other, for example through neighbourhood meals and other neighbourhood initiatives and residential consultation platforms.

We would like to involve people in shaping their city through citizens' assemblies. These are groups of people chosen by lottery who, with the help of experts, consider and advise on important issues, such as our housing and our sustainable urban transition. We do this with subsidies from the European Social Fund (ESF+).

We want to better support the neighbourhood teams and neighbourhood police officers who do such great work in our city, for example in the Merenwijk and Slaaghwijk neighbourhoods. Furthermore, we are implementing neighbourhood-oriented youth work, multilingual communication and preventive dialogue programmes.

Working together for a better way of living together.

2. Respect for and from every resident of Leiden

Whether you are a bricklayer, pensioner, ambulance worker, e-biker, scientist, student, taxi driver or entrepreneur, together we make the city. Theft, fraud, violence: not in our Leiden.

That is why we want more well-trained law enforcement officers who know the streets and neighbourhoods, who can intervene and take de-escalating measures where necessary.

We inform everyone about safety aspects and how we can work together to improve them. We also support smart camera surveillance at high-risk locations and close cooperation between the security services.

Meanwhile, we want to prevent online hate speech and bullying through discussions in schools, clubs, etc. We are intensifying enforcement and providing information about the consequences. We would like to pay special attention to vulnerable groups such as young people, the elderly and LGBTQI individuals. In this case, we are looking at the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV Programme) and associated funds.

3. Cyber and physical resilience

We are developing local campaigns on phishing, passwords and data privacy. We are going for cyber resilience training for healthcare institutions and SMEs. We are also putting digital first aid workshops in libraries and community centres on the agenda. And together with Leiden University and the Netherlands Cybersecurity Centre (NCSC), we are designing an urban cybersecurity plan.

We are investigating whether our car parks in Leiden can be converted into shelters and how we can use European subsidies for cybersecurity in our city.

As a low-lying city, we are vulnerable to extreme rainfall and flooding. That is why we want to make paved neighbourhoods greener and cooler. Through citizen consultations and the Resilient Cities Network for water management and crisis preparedness, we can develop sustainable plans.

7 - PUBLIC SPACE



7. PUBLIC SPACE

GIVING EACH OTHER SPACE

Public space is not necessarily open, fair or safe. Our cars in Leiden take up a lot of space. Our children want and need to play safely. Our shopkeepers are caught between environmental measures and accessibility. Our quality of life and our monuments require lower emissions and further greening. Not everyone feels at home in the digital space. And all this in a compact city with quite a few urbanised neighbourhoods such as De Kooi, Stevenshof, Transvaal, Binnenstad-Zuid and Noord.

We opt for a public space that is inclusive, liveable and future-proof. That is why we want to build on the excellent policy of the previous coalition and supplement it with innovative solutions that have proven their worth in Europe. This can be achieved with the support of European funds such as Horizon Europe, URBACT, LIFE, the Just Transition Fund and the Digital Europe Programme. And by learning from cities such as Copenhagen, Ghent and Ljubljana.

Public space in brief

1. We are giving space back to people.
2. We are making space greener and healthier.
3. We are making space accessible, including for our small businesses.
4. We are making space digitally strong.
5. We are creating space for European cooperation.

MORE IN DETAIL

1. Giving space back to people

We want to introduce a 30 km/h speed limit for the entire city within the ring roads. We will also expand low-traffic zones, inspired by the model in Ghent (car-free city centre with logistics rings). We believe in smart logistics hubs on the outskirts of the city, such as Barcelona's 'superblocks' for local traffic. We want more space for pedestrians and cyclists, with support from the EU's EIT Urban Mobility programme. And we believe that more public toilets in the city are a matter of civility and hospitality, and therefore a necessity.

2. Making space greener and healthier

We want to green our paved neighbourhoods by replacing stone with gravel. By creating wadis, rain gardens and green buffers in schoolyards and squares. With a tree policy for heat stress areas.

We are in favour of a second, larger green belt around Leiden: Singelpark XL. And of many more safe, clean public toilets. We also want to participate in the Resilient Cities Network and projects such as Clever Cities (Hamburg, Milan).

3. Keeping space accessible and liveable

Small businesses and e-commerce are important economic pillars in our city. They also need space. We want logistics rings around (shopping) centres and at important traffic junctions that can supply the shops. This will reduce (freight) traffic in the city, which will result in fewer traffic jams, lower emissions and less noise pollution. We want to create extra space for deliveries by electric vehicles and encourage the use of shared cars.

4. Making space digitally strong

We can also meet each other in the digital space. It's great when everyone is comfortable using it. That's why we want to further expand digital consultation hours and training courses in community centres and libraries. Together with the NCSC, we want to make and keep these spaces as safe as possible. Digital libraries and educational platforms such as BplusC have our support. In addition, we want to investigate whether we can create online citizen platforms where residents can vote, submit ideas and consult – such as Barcelona and Lille participating in the Decidim platform. This will be done with the help of the European e-Government Action Plan.

5. Room for European cooperation

Volt believes in a city that participates, contributes ideas and communicates. That is why we will actively involve our city in European city programmes such as Eurocities, Green City Accord and Climate-Neutral & Smart Cities Mission. We also want to establish a strong subsidy team within the municipality to make better use of EU funds, led by the Executive member for European Affairs.

As far as we are concerned, Leiden will become a pioneer in inclusive, green public space.

8. EDUCATION AND SCIENCE



8. EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

TURNING MIRRORS INTO WINDOWS

'The whole purpose of education is to turn mirrors into windows'. It is written on a window at Leiden University. It is exactly what Volt stands for. Acquiring basic and specialist knowledge, developing surprising insights, getting to know other cultures; we want every child to have this opportunity, regardless of their background or ability. The University has been an important player in our city for centuries. We benefit from its knowledge and expertise, so we cherish it. In addition, we want to emphasise inclusivity, a roadmap to activate children who are not attending school, and healthy school buildings that are fit for the 21st century. Good education is the best foundation for equal opportunities for all. Erasmus+, the European subsidy programme for education, also contributes to this. This programme promotes social inclusion, the green and digital transition and, just as importantly, the participation of young people in democratic decision-making.

Education in brief

1. We are committed to equal opportunities, diversity, inclusion and education in which we learn from each other's differences.
2. We leave no one behind; a roadmap for staying at home.
3. We are committed to healthy 21st-century school buildings.
4. We are committed to schools as social anchors in the neighbourhood, with green schoolyards for a healthy learning and living environment.

MORE IN DETAIL

1. Equal, diverse, inclusive

The current education system is primarily designed for children who develop at roughly the same pace. We want equal opportunities by tailoring education to the development of each pupil and student and offering them a wide range of appropriate development opportunities. That is why we want cooperation in Leiden between pre-school care, primary education, secondary education, vocational education and higher education. It is precisely by actively working together that we can offer children and young people optimal development opportunities. With a vocational college, a university of applied sciences and a university, Leiden has a unique educational offering that can be strengthened even further through cooperation.

BplusC, museums, music, technology and sports clubs can also collaborate. Differences can be enriching. We facilitate contacts between mainstream schools and schools with many newcomers. By getting to know each other and each other's cultures, understanding is created and we can help each other. A children's or youth advisory council that advises the school, both when asked and on its own initiative? We are in favour.

2. Leave no one behind

In the Netherlands, and also in Leiden, too many pupils are left behind due to a lack of appropriate education. Volt wants early identification of pupils at risk of dropping out and wants to work with educational organisations and parent panels to develop a roadmap for appropriate education and monitor the results. We encourage the relevant authorities to actively contact those who are staying at home and their parents and to identify the causes of this. During these regular meetings, parents and pupils themselves can discuss appropriate education for the child with the schools and responsible authorities.

3. Future-proof school buildings in Leiden

Many school buildings in Leiden are owned by the municipality and are in urgent need of renovation. The buildings are outdated, suffer from poor air circulation and are often not sustainable, which leads to high energy costs. This creates an unhealthy working environment for teachers and hinders pupils' learning performance. Volt wants all schools in Leiden to have access to buildings that are fit for the 21st century. This requires substantial investment, but will lead to structural savings in the long term, for example on heating costs. If the municipality is unable to make the necessary investments immediately, we propose supporting schools with municipal guarantees. This will enable school boards to take out loans on more favourable terms to make their buildings more sustainable. In this way, we are investing now in a healthy learning environment and in lower energy bills later.

4. The school as a physical hub

Schools are often located in the heart of the neighbourhood. This is a great opportunity to involve residents in the school by inviting them to certain events or sharing knowledge and experience with them. In addition, Volt wants to focus on increasing the value of school playgrounds for the surrounding area. For example, we want to focus more on green school playgrounds, preferably with the involvement of the neighbourhood. Green schoolyards contribute to better physical and mental health for children and simultaneously improve the quality of life for the entire neighbourhood. Green schoolyards can become a new social value and a place where young and old can learn about a healthy green city.

SCIENCE IN LEIDEN

Leiden is a city of knowledge, and we want to keep it that way. Leiden has the oldest university in the Netherlands and, together with the LUMC and the Leiden Bio Science Park, has a unique scientific network within the city limits. But in the field of science, there is also collaboration with institutes outside the city, within the Netherlands, in Europe and worldwide. Volt cherishes the scientists and students in Leiden and is happy to offer a healthy working and living environment to those connected to science in Leiden.

Leiden science in brief

1. We are continuing to work on collaboration and knowledge sharing with Leiden University.
2. We are fully committed to student welfare and housing.

MORE IN DETAIL

1. Broad cooperation and knowledge sharing must be improved

Volt wants the municipality to maintain and further develop its ties with the university. This means collaborating in many areas, not only education and research, but also in areas such as culture, sustainability, health and safety. Leiden's strength as a city of knowledge lies in connecting different knowledge institutions and sectors. Collaboration with all levels of education – from vocational to university – therefore remains important, so that knowledge truly reaches everyone. The municipality and the university must continue to invest in joint initiatives (such as Leiden City of Knowledge) and new forms of knowledge exchange. This will enable the university to fulfil its role as a network university and Leiden to benefit from scientific insights in policy-making and innovation. Concrete examples include appointing city academics (e.g. a city criminologist in collaboration with the police) or involving researchers in climate and mobility plans – open knowledge sharing makes the city smarter and more liveable.

2. Student welfare and housing

An important focus for the coming years is the welfare and housing of students in Leiden. The municipality and Leiden University are already working together to promote equality and student welfare. Volt advocates intensifying this collaboration, for example through joint programmes for mental health, prevention of loneliness among students and support for study associations in welfare initiatives. In addition, affordable student housing is crucial. We want sufficient living space and a pleasant living environment for all Leiden students, both Dutch and international. Volt wants to keep Leiden attractive as a student city.

9. CULTURE



9. CULTURE

ATTRACTING WITH QUALITY AND KNOWLEDGE

Leiden has always been a welcoming city. It's great that people from all over the world enjoy our canals, monuments, festivals and restaurants. Tourism brings life to the city and creates jobs. We strive for balance: fun for visitors and liveable for Leiden residents. Smart tourism that adds quality; it suits Leiden as a city of knowledge with a university, a university of applied sciences and 15 museums. We see the Science Café Leiden, which provides a platform for scientists and budding musicians. Just like Sciencia & Vinho in Porto and Bar des Sciences in Paris. We are aiming for a mix of inclusivity, quality and talent development. Naturally, with the help of European funding opportunities, such as The Culture Strand.

Culture and tourism in brief

1. We are committed to quality tourism, including conferences, symposiums, festivals and (educational) events.
2. We are lowering cultural barriers with venues, museums, events, etc. that are accessible to everyone (physically and financially).
3. We invest in security, talent and commitment.

MORE IN DETAIL

1. Fun and liveable

No wandering mass tourism, but people who appreciate the city and spend a pleasant, sustainable time here. Applause for Copenpay in Copenhagen; visitors make the city cleaner by kayaking and receive a boat tour or coffee as a thank you. Make way for conferences, symposiums and educational events. For example, the annual Museum Night Leiden, The Dutch Life Sciences conference, the LIFF. Great for the local economy and Leiden Knowledge City in particular.

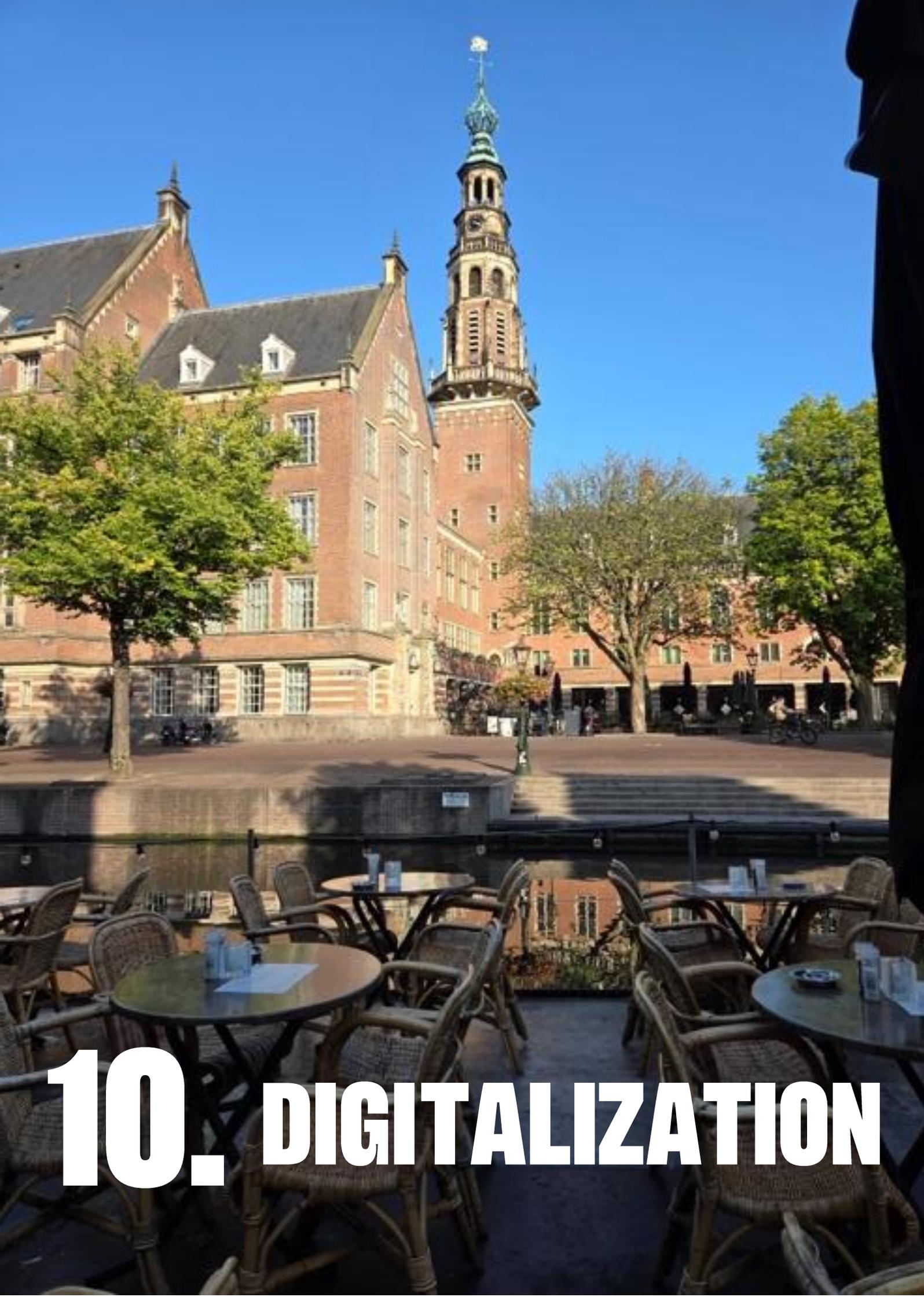
2. For everyone

Culture must be accessible in both the literal and figurative sense. We support the *City Pass*, which gives families on a tight budget access to all our cultural offerings. We want to ensure that our own Leids Ontzet remains very much Leiden's own. We advocate a two-day international city pass, a European Museum Week and more LCKV. We are looking at physical accessibility; museums such as the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden and Naturalis are doing well. We want more of that.

3. From Jochem Myjer to undiscovered talent

Art and culture deserve more certainty and a secure future. That is why we advocate a fair, transparent subsidy system that leaves room for experimentation, young creators, studios and small venues. We also advocate more cooperation between the business market, commerce and culture.

We want everyone to participate, which is why we want to bring people together through workshops, community art and amateur art.



10. DIGITALIZATION

10. DIGITALIZATION

A SMART, SAFE AND PERSONAL MUNICIPALITY

Leiden is also digitising at a rapid pace. Technology makes it easier for us to live, work, inform each other and strengthen democracy. At the same time, dependence on Big Tech poses a threat to everyone's autonomy and carries the risk of Kafkaesque pseudo-service. We will therefore advocate for a digitally independent, strong Leiden based on open source with European core software by around 2030. In addition, we want a user-friendly local DigiID, in which all Leiden residents can easily arrange their passports, marriages, births, and (parking) permits. And that there are always people in the town hall who can help Leiden residents with digital questions and problems? Of course!

Digitisation in brief

1. Open-source digitisation in 2030,
2. User-friendliness for everyone,
3. Online services at the service of people and democracy.

MORE IN DETAIL

1. Cybersecurity & open source

We no longer want to be dependent on American tech companies, and we want the city to have structural control over the protection of systems, residents and their data. That is why we are aiming for Leiden to have completely switched to open source by 2030, with European alternatives for core software.

These are complex processes with (often phased) complicated implementations, but they are necessary. We are learning from the experience of Denmark and Estonia, which have already successfully undergone these transitions. But we will also benefit from the expertise of Leiden University, Leiden University of Applied Sciences and the Bio Science Park.

2. User-friendly, inclusive digital services

The online information in Leiden must be useful to every Leiden resident. Think of (preferably) one clear, user-friendly digital service desk. This should include multilingual support, such as Arabic, French, Italian, Turkish and Polish. People with low literacy skills or visual impairments should also be able to find their way around. Because not everyone is digitally savvy yet, we want to offer free digital skills training, for example in libraries and community centres. The better we can inform people, the more involved they will be.

3. Serving people and democracy

Digital tools can make it easier to involve people in decision-making. A user-friendly website with an overview of most motions and votes will benefit everyone. Hybrid citizens' assemblies and digital consultations make participation more accessible and inclusive. We want transparent algorithms and open data to ensure that residents can follow how decisions are made. We want to experiment with forms of digital participation that influence policy. In this way, we are building a municipality where technology strengthens trust in democracy.



11. INTERNATIONALS

11. INTERNATIONALS

LEIDEN: WELCOME, BIENVENU, いらっしゃいませ

International students, expats, status holders and migrant workers from all over the world enrich our economy and culture and give the city its flair. However, they often encounter problems here: high housing costs, language barriers, discrimination, precarious employment or limited access to healthcare. We want to give them a warm welcome to our fair, inclusive and forward-looking city. We do this through international orientation programmes, safe housing models and innovative integration approaches that have already proven successful in other European cities.

Internationals in brief

1. We are committed to providing affordable, high-quality housing for internationals.
2. We make services accessible and multilingual, with support from European funds.
3. We support language education, integration and mobility, using European best practices as an example.
4. We represent their interests through our Executive member for European Affairs.

MORE IN DETAIL

1. Living, working and rights

We want to offer international students, expats and migrant workers a home. Temporary accommodation must be available so that internationals are not dependent on expensive or poor-quality rooms. Work and housing should be separate: losing a job should not automatically lead to losing a home.

We take strict action against abuses such as overcrowding and poor rental practices, in collaboration with inspection services. Internationals have access to clear information about their rights and obligations, in multiple languages. Registration in the Personal Records Database (BRP) must be accessible, so that they have access to healthcare and social services. European models for accessible registration can inspire us in this regard.

2. Accessible services, healthcare and welfare

The municipality must be internationally accessible. Forms, websites and service desks will be available in multiple languages. We advocate for a physical and digital International Desk where questions about housing, work, healthcare and integration can be answered. Newcomers will receive a welcome package with practical information, made possible in part by European subsidy programmes.

We believe that basic care should be accessible to everyone, including temporary residents or people who lose their jobs. In addition, we want to invest in mental health, meeting places and neighbourhood organisations to combat stress and social isolation. European health projects offer good examples and support.

3. Integration, language and mobility

Integration starts with language and meeting people, so we support Dutch language courses, English-language orientation programmes and events that connect international residents with Leiden neighbourhoods and associations. Partners of expats should also receive help in finding work and getting their qualifications recognised.

In addition, we offer cycling courses: important for getting around the city safely and independently. In cities such as Copenhagen and Vienna, we already see successful programmes from which we can learn.

4. Rental properties and multilingual childcare

To keep Leiden attractive to international talent, we are investing in sufficient rental accommodation for short stays, multilingual childcare and schools, and cultural involvement. Expats are actively involved in cultural life. With support for the Expat Centre, initiatives such as Leiden Welcome and European subsidies, our city remains a welcoming, cosmopolitan city of knowledge.

Volt also wants to systematically exploit the opportunities offered by Europe with an Executive member for European Affairs and build a city where people from home and abroad feel at home and contribute to our shared future.

BECAUSE EVERY EURO COUNTS

Volt stands for a careful financial policy. Every euro counts. That is why we focus on smart cooperation, transparency and use (European) subsidies to find the right balance.

The starting point for our financial plans is the 2026 budget: we are aiming for a multi-year estimate of around 680 million euro for 2026. After that, per programme. We advocate the use of stress tests for investments (interest rates, delays, lower returns) and clear stop/go moments. No structural euro without structural coverage; incidental ambitions = incidental coverage through, among other things:

- **co-financing by public parties:** Many investments transcend municipal boundaries. We therefore want to actively collaborate with neighbouring municipalities, the province and regional partners to share the burden of large investments. We are setting up a regional investment fund that we will use to promote co-financing with national and European subsidies.
- **Subsidy task force:** Think of European subsidies, government contributions and innovative collaborations with social partners.
- **School sustainability guarantee fund:** Municipal guarantee and pre-financing, repayment from energy savings.

Further digitisation and European AI can ultimately lead to greater efficiency and cost savings. At the same time, we want to continue working on financial transparency by creating accessible infographics to explain the situation to every resident of Leiden.

Permanent and secure: housing for everyone!

We will build additional homes and student rooms until 2035. We see a municipal role here in shaping the plans, land exploitation, area infrastructure and participation. Cost type: mainly incidental capital (infrastructure and/or pre-investments), public-private funds and co-financing as the norm.

Welfare and economy

We support SMEs/working landscapes within the 2026 ceiling, with $\geq 50\%$ co-financing (region/companies/EU) and phases with stop/go moments. Pilots such as the Bouwdepot run for 12–24 months with a cost ceiling per participant; upscaling is only possible if the effect is proven and structural coverage is in place.

Energy, water and climate

For projects, we count on $\geq 60\%$ external financing and reserve 2–3% of the replacement value for maintenance. We link green-blue interventions to area development with **revolving match funding** to spare the 2026 exploitation.

For schools, Volt wants to start a guarantee fund for loans to combine the sustainability of schoolyards and school buildings with future energy savings. There is no direct operating pressure here due to repayment from energy savings.

Public space and safety

We are introducing 30 km/h speed limits, car-free zones and logistics hubs on an area-specific basis. This will take place in 12-18 month phases with a cost ceiling and directly booked maintenance costs. For the greening of streets and squares and the development of Singelpark XL, we want 25-50% co-financing from developers, funds and residents.

Expansion of enforcement/cyber security will only take place within the 2026 formation ceiling and with multi-year planning. Cameras and crisis functions will continue if there is a positive business case (management/replacement/privacy guaranteed). Cyber resilience is a fixed programme with regional/national co-financing.

Health (care and prevention)

We want to start e-health/domotics as 12-18 month pilots with clear objectives. Only if there are $\geq 5-10\%$ savings or a demonstrable reduction in waiting lists will we make it structural (with coverage). We will incorporate sports/prevention hubs into existing plans, supplemented with health/sports funds.