

Integrated Action Plan Heerlen

By Yvette Petit, Richard van Beek,
Douwe Dijkstra, Marc Nelissen &
Sanne Claessens

Heerlen, March 2022

Heerlen

Table of Contents

1.	HISTORY	3
2.	CITY CONTEXT	4
3.	GEOGRAPHY	5
3.1	Demography	5
3.2	Institutional context.....	6
4.	MUNICIPAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY	7
4.1	Policy challenge	9
5.	OBJECTIVES, ACTIONS AND SCHEDULE	11
5.1	Small Scale Action: "Together we make the city center"	14
5.2	Small Scale Action "Streetlab"	17
6.	FRAMEWORK FOR DELIVERY	18
6.1	Monitoring – Intended Result	25
7.	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	27
8.	APPENDIX - FINANCE - RESOURCING	28

1. History

Heerlen has a long and rich history, starting in the Roman Period. About two thousand years ago Roman militaries (soldiers) settled in Heerlen and named it 'Coriovallum'. The settlement was located at the crossroad of two important roads. The Romans built a bath house, of which the archeological remains can still be visited in the Thermenmuseum. It has been scientifically proven that the bath house in Heerlen is the oldest (brick) building in The Netherlands. In the Middle Ages the place was only a small village of farms and mills and it was called Herle.



In the period 1900 - 1965 Heerlen became very prosperous, because of the rise of the coal industry in the area. The population grew very fast. Houses, schools, shops and a hospital were built. After the last mine closed in 1974, Heerlen suffered from a huge economic decline and a social crisis. The last decades of the 20th century were very hard for Heerlen. There was a lot of poverty, a high crime rate and there were many people with a drugs and/or alcohol addiction. But in the past twenty years Heerlen created a new perspective and growth, focussing on economic spearheads like retail, tourism and logistics. The old railway station area, in the eighties a gloomy and dangerous place, made way for a beautiful new area, the Maankwartier (Moon Quarter).



Heerlen still has its disadvantages in the social and safety domain. This also applies to the rest of the region. Both income level and education level are much lower than the Dutch average, so people quickly turn to the local government for assistance. People age in a less healthy manner, compared to other regions in The Netherlands. Elderly develop chronic illnesses and need care at a younger age.

2. City Context

Heerlen is a former mining city that had to reinvent itself after the mines closed. In the past two decades it focused on the local economy, culture and education. It developed several business parks and focuses on medical logistics, smart services, culture and tourism. It was elected national event city of the year in 2016. In 2016 Parkstad (Heerlen + neighbouring towns) won the Tourism for Tomorrow Award in the category 'Best Travel Destination in the World'. Heerlen has over 60 events per year (not during covid measures).

Heerlen focusses on urban culture and has major cultural events, like Cultura Nova and the international break dance event IBE. In the past years Heerlen turned into an open-air museum with dozens of murals and other pieces of art by national and international artists.

Soon Heerlen will start with the development of its Roman quarter. The museum that protects the Roman bath house, will be renewed. In the public space around it, attention is drawn to the Roman history of Heerlen.



Heerlen has many care facilities: a large medical hospital, a rehabilitation centre, a psychiatric hospital, a dozen nursing homes and several communes for people with a mental disability. The city also has a large refugee centre (412 persons) and a shelter for asylum seekers who have exhausted all legal remedies. There are facilities for the homeless.

Every neighbourhood in Heerlen has a community center and a social team in which adult care, the youth service and social work are represented. There is a lot of attention for safety in Heerlen.

Heerlen has two universities: the Open University and Zuyd Hogeschool (the latter is a University of Applied Science).

3. Geography

Heerlen is a city in the South of the Netherlands, in the province Limburg. The city is part of a green urban area. It's the center city of Parkstad, an agglomeration with 250,000 inhabitants and 8 municipalities. By origine it is a separate mining region within South-Limburg that had to reinvent itself last decennia and is characterized by it's urban character intertwined with green, countryside arteries. There is a long year tradition of cooperation with the Städteregion Aachen (10 municipalities with 550.000 inhabitants) and the german speaking part of Belgium.



Heerlen is situated in the EU-region (10 km from Germany and 24 km from Belgium). Cities like Brussels and Cologne can be reached by car within 1.5 hours.

Surface: 45.53 km² → 44.94 km² land and 0.59 km² water

3.1 Demography

- Heerlen has 87,035 inhabitants (Netherlands 17,475,415).
- Number of inhabitants in 2009: 89,384. This means a decrease of 2.69%
- Population density: 1.936 inh./km² (land surface)

Gender

Male 43,309 and female 43,726

Age

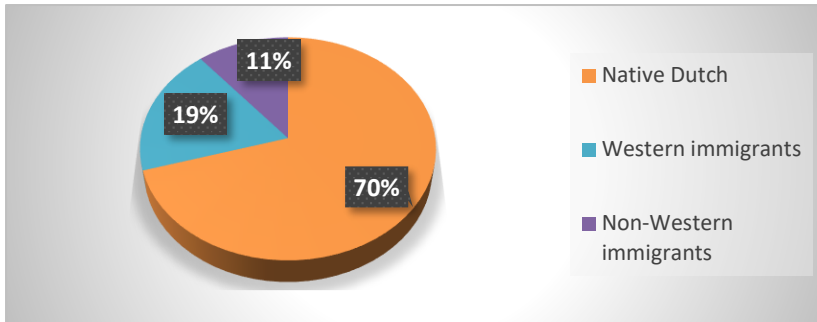
Heerlen is an aging city

Age 60+: 26,863 (of which 12,489 are male and 14,374 are female).

Almost 31% of the inhabitants are older than 60 years. In 2035 that will be approximately 35%.

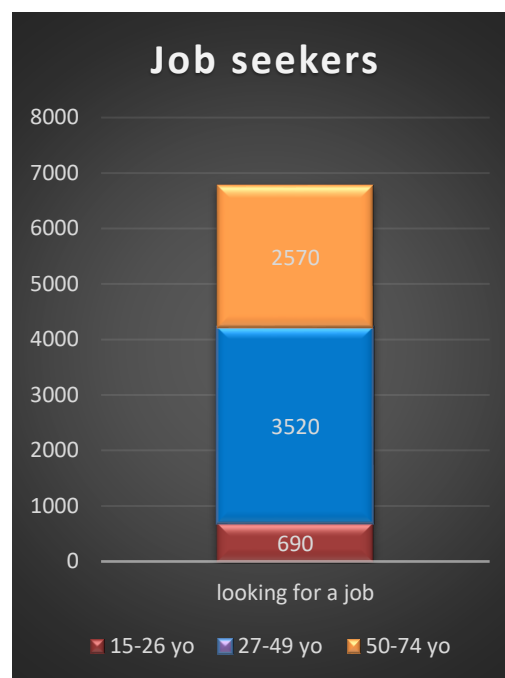
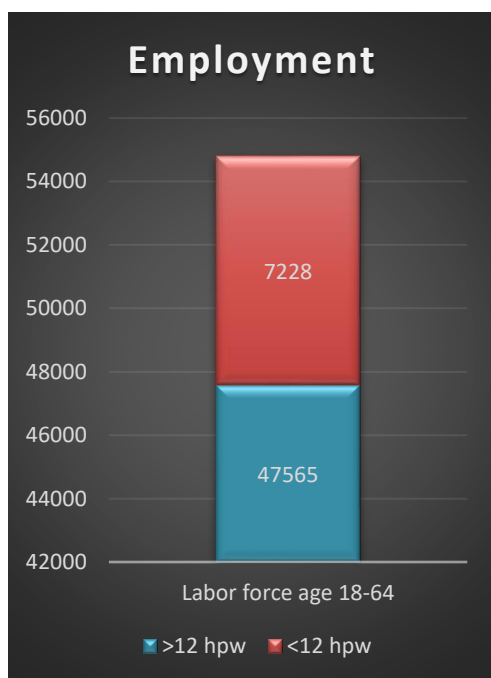
2021 demographic pressure : 69.7% his pressure represents the ratio of the number of young people plus older people to the number of 20-64 year oldsNote: If it is nearly 70% it is very high which is a good thing. The lower the percentage the higher the burden or pressure to carry the age groups who are deemed non-working. Many cities are closer to 50%.

Ethnicity



Employment

72% of all people in the age range of 18-64 yo (labor force) had a job in 2020. About 10% of all inhabitants were looking for a job in 2020.



3.2 Institutional context

The Netherlands is the largest of four countries of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The Netherlands is a decentralized unitary state and it has a parliamentary democracy. The King and Queen mainly have a ceremonial function. The Netherlands has a number of levels of government:

- the national government in The Hague.
- the provincial governments
- the municipal governments
- Regional water authorities

Article 124 of the Constitution provides that provinces and municipalities have the autonomy and power to regulate and manager their own domains. However, regulations can be demanded by the national government.

4. Municipal economic development policy

In Heerlen, 3 economic sector clusters are very well developed namely Medical Technology Logistics, Smart Services and in the leisure and retail, the home furnishing regional shopping destination the Woonboulevard.

Land development has been fully optimized. The Municipality have almost no more plots to give out. It therefore encourages the redevelopment of old sites with the aim of:

- Strengthening employment
- Making the buildings and their surroundings more sustainable
- Making choices about which companies to facilitate and which not.

It is tackling this together with the other Parkstad municipalities. The strategy is to look at where a company can best land in the region.

The possible development of new business sites will also be dealt with in the region, however there will probably be no new sites in Heerlen, but some will be developed in the neighbouring municipalities Brunssum or Beekdaelen, for example.

Medtech

Heerlen is an ideal location for medical technology companies due to its central location in Europe, the availability of personnel, the multilingualism in the region and the presence of renowned knowledge institutes. The city is part of an Euregional (Eindhoven-Leuven-Aachen) chain of activities in the medtech and related sectors (such as life sciences, biomaterials and innovations for healthcare).

Heerlen, a proven location for medtech

In and around Heerlen, a cluster with a large number of companies are located in the Medtech and Life Sciences sectors. Among the leading multinationals in these sectors such as Medtronic, Abbott Vascular, Acist Medical Systems, Boston Scientific, Medivators, Doc Morris, TNT Healthcare HUB, CEVA logistics have a significant footprint in Heerlen. There are also (local) enterprises in the cluster enterprises in the cluster such as the Arion Group who specialises in innovative equipment for healthcare.

Top knowledge within reach

Various renowned knowledge institutes are located in Heerlen and the surrounding area, such as Hogeschool Zuyd with a department of Life Sciences, the Open University, the universities of Aachen (RWTH) and Maastricht (UM), and institutes such as the Forschungszentrum Jülich. Especially in the field of cardio-vascular diagnostic equipment, there is a lot of specialised knowledge available in and around Heerlen.

Location options in Heerlen

The Trilandis Business Park is eminently suitable for logistics activities in the field of medical technology. The cross-border Avantis Business Park is located near Trilandis. This is a high-quality location on the border between the Netherlands and Germany. In addition, Heerlen has various other high-quality locations at its disposal.

We are now in the next phase of this. There is no more land (in the immediate vicinity) to expand, however the Medtech cluster want to continue to grow. They are already the largest hub in Europe and, according to Medtronic, worldwide. A few years ago, we challenged the Medtech cluster to enter into more and better cooperation (the municipality does not always have to be the initiator). This opportunity has now been taken up jointly by the MedTech companies at Trilandis/Avantis and Boston Scientific from Kerkrade.

The aim of this collaboration is:

- Greater name awareness of the region and the companies. Making clear what they do, who they are and what advantages this region offers.
- Attracting more employment (both inside and outside the region). Showing what is possible
- Getting to know each other's companies better, economies of scale, exchanging personnel, etc.
- Strengthening the city and region

Smart Services

Brightlands Smart Services Campus in Heerlen is a community of entrepreneurs, researchers and students. It is the place where digital start-ups, companies, governments, research institutes and students learn, innovate and grow together. The campus consists of a community of experts working at 80 companies and institutes, start-ups and large organisations such as APG, CBS, Accenture, Conclusion, the Dutch Police and ASR. Together, they are working on innovations in services that make life safer, healthier and more sustainable, benefiting from the support of young digital talent from campus-related knowledge institutes.

Brightlands helps corporate enterprises and governmental organisations to innovate with data science and digitisation. The unique innovation and co-creation program Brightlands Techruption supports smart data scientists with identifying useful disrupting technologies, overcoming digital challenges and co-creating smart solutions. Supported by knowledge institutes, they apply deep knowledge on data science, artificial intelligence, blockchain, self-sovereign identity, multi-party computation, legal analytics and decision-making. In this way, corporate companies can grow their business and governmental institutions can make their daily business more effective.

One of the most recent initiatives is the Public Services Lab that connects municipalities to investigate common issues and provides municipalities with access to new knowledge. In doing so, the lab makes use of the campus' innovation ecosystem. This allows municipalities to experiment and co-create new digital services that are valuable to society together with other government agencies, knowledge institutes and companies.

The Brightlands Smart Services has been appointed by the Dutch government (Economic department) to be one of the 7 digital hubs in the Netherlands with the focus on point broad social prosperity. This involves collaboration with universities, hospitals, health insurance and private parties in the early detection of (imminent) poverty and disease.

Retail and leisure

Heerlen has something for everyone including a shopping centre with two indoor shopping malls, markets and the largest home furnishing and car boulevard.

City Centre

The shopping lover is quickly sold on the centre of Heerlen with, besides the many fashion shops and department stores, nice little boutiques, special shops and special markets. There are also two indoor centres; 't Loon and Corio Center.

Furniture and Car Boulevard

The Woonboulevard has 120,000 m² of home furnishing shops. It has everything for in and around the house, from DIY stores, kitchen showrooms and bathroom specialist shops to furniture shops and home furnishing shops. A major visitor puller is Ikea, the largest in the Benelux. The Woonboulevard is right next to the A76 and has 4000 free parking spaces. Woonboulevard can also be easily reached by train (Station Heerlen-Woonboulevard) on the Heerlen-Maastricht line. It has 4 to 4,5 million visitors per year.

The Heerlen Autoboulevard is located right behind the Woonboulevard. This is a cluster of car companies of all well-known makes with the latest models, attractive used cars and accessories.

4.1 Policy challenge

As to generate new economic perspective for the whole region, spatial economic structure needs to be reinforced. We will do this by an extra impulse to the regional center function of Heerlen, but also by investing in the economic structures of education, labour market and innovation. This must result in employment on diverse levels matching the demographic pyramid of the population.

This also includes the use of cross border opportunities with cross border collaboration.

One of the most important challenges is the activation of people and space and a growing involvement with their living environment, hence we want to involve them in further development of Heerlen as a regional centre by:

- Realisation of a modern innercity area following the IBA methodology. For this, structural vacancies in offices and retail will be eliminated by demolishing or transition of function, office space transformed to apartments also by adding sustainable housing with an urban character (also for young starters), including more green and public spaces around.
- More green and blue structures and redevelopment of the public space in line with the themes and identity of the city for pleasant living.
- Showcasing the heritage of the city centre where the Roman past is visible, revitalising the history of the Middle Ages and where national classified monuments / buildings from the coalmining era will get a sustainable function together with the strengthening of the ecosystem for cultural production in the urban cultural region of South-Limburg.
- The City Ring will help the innercity to become more compact and the livability will increase, off-street parking facilities will be easier accessible and on the streets (electric) bicycles and pedestrians will get more space than the car. This City Ring will be a recognisable and orienting structure in a city with a high end image.
- Better connections to Education. When the centre of Heerlen was troubled by crime in the 1980s and 1990s, it was also decided to move the educational institutions to the edge of our city. Pupils and students were then not confronted or less confronted with

nuisance etc. A beautiful boulevard of education has emerged. The approach of Operation Heartbeat in 2000 soon had an effect. Currently, the centre of Heerlen is a safe centre. Since pupils and students bring life to a centre, we are currently looking at how we can allow education to partly take place in the centre again. Ideas and plans for this are being developed together with the educational institutions. Which means that we are in dialogue to facilitate the OU (Open University) and Zuyd University of applied Science to return to Heerlen Centrum and that we will provide new housing ourselves for two large secondary schools in the center. Because of the developments in Heerlen the German University RWTH is planning to open a branch in Heerlen City Centre.

- Creating more involvement of citizens. Making long-term plans for the city centre without the input of residents / entrepreneurs and visitors to the centre is unthinkable. Citizen involvement is an important item in Heerlen and is even now an independent programme of the municipality. The input of the actors in the city centre is seen as important, valuable and a condition for success. Attention was also paid to the follow-up, that is, how do we keep the residents involved in the choices made? Or even better, how do we involve them in the implementation of the plans?

Focus

A city with vitality can be conceptualised as:

- a green, safe and accessible living environment
- where residents/inhabitants are appreciated and who are welcome to participate in governance processes
- a place where people can be themselves
- where good (basic) facilities are available and where people get enough possibilities for self development.

New economic growth depends on revitalising the city centre. One of the main focus points is creating conditions for the reinvestment of the educational institutes in the city centre.

The specific vision, mission and goal of the URBACT iPlace Project in Heerlen:

Vision: Inspiration	Mission: Cooperation	Goal: Identity & Pride
To inspire our organisations and citizens in Heerlen! Our vision is not to restore Heerlen to its former glory in five or ten years' time. Our vision is to share our city today with people who are ideas-driven and enthusiastic for change and who want to grasp the opportunities of the 21st century. Our city is appreciated for its vibrancy, for being young at heart. But it is still a secret for many. If you are curious, we will share our secrets!	We cooperate because doing so is usually synergistic, meaning that it creates more benefit for less cost and makes our lives and goals easier and better. Besides that: it is often more fun and increases the chance of good results!	Boosting your local pride has the power to increase your local economy. Making the story of Heerlen visible and telling it in the broadest sense of the word (history, present, future, social, economic and cultural) by emphasising the successes and opportunities in the city, you can create a city brand and feelings of pride. It will attract new people, business and opportunities to Heerlen.

5.Objectives, actions and schedule

Objective	Creating a playful, cheerful and lively city centre where it is pleasant to live, work and recreate. The “living room of Parkstad Limburg”. A city centre that residents are proud of and attracts visitors and businesses.				
ACTION	Intended Result	Resources/ Assets	Lead Agency	Key Partners	Timescale
Bring back education to the city centre	More students bring liveliness and stimulate economy	Education Institutions National and regional government	Education Institutions	Municipality, regional and national government	Process of exploration started in 2020 intention to move education institutions to the centre within 10 years.
Move 2 large secondary schools to the centre	More students bring liveliness and stimulate economy	Education Institutions Foundations Municipality	Municipality	Education Institutes Foundation	Looking for suited location and building. Education Institutes agree to move.
Realising a student campus	After years of vacancy this former ward, will be developed into a student campus with 150 self contained residential units	Private funds	Real Estate developer	Real Estate developer Municipality	Renovation started in 2021
Creating studios for young people and graduates	From a vacant store to homes. 36 studios for young people and graduates,	Housing Cooperation Public Space by Municipality through national subsidy	Housing Cooperation	Housing Cooperation, Municipality	Completion in 2022

	aged 20-27 have been realized.				
Dialogue with OU and Zuyd to return to centre	Negotiating about the location options and housing facilities for OU and Zuyd in the centre	Municipality, Regional funds, Education Institutes	Municipality	Zuyd, OU, Municipality,	Dialogue started in 2021.
Restoring Facades	Streetscape quality and new impuls for retail, appealing to trends in society. (green, local, vega etc.)	Municipality, private funds, subsidy, real estate owners, entrepreneurs	Asta	Municipality, Ondernemersfonds, IBA Parkstad, Parkstad Limburg real estate owners, entrepreneurs, Streetwise, HMS, Ondernemershuis	Started in 2020 till 2025
Develop the Roman Quater	Create new Roman museum and high quality public space with reference to the roman past. In this area are also located the miningmuseum and the Archeological Centre Limburg. All will attract also students.	Municipality, private funds, subsidy regional and national	Municipality	Municipality, IBA Parkstad, Province of Limburg, citizens, Parkstad Limburg, Architect, HMS, entrepreneurs, APG/BSSC/OBVI ON	Started in 2020 finished/opening in early 2026

Create film theatre in Royal	Restore old theatre to create a centre for vision (movie) and sound. Also congress facility for the education institutes.	Municipality, subsidy regional and national	Municipality	Municipality, IBA Parkstad, Province of Limburg	Expected to be ready 2023
Creating high quality public space put pedestrian central	Climate adaptive and pleasant centre to stay green with water. From young to old people should feel comfortable to use and stay in public space	Municipality, Province of Limburg, IBA Parkstad, Parkstad Limburg, real estate owner	Municipality	Municipality, IBA Parkstad, Province of Limburg, citizens, Parkstad Limburg, Architects, citizens, event organisers, HMS	Started in 2020 finishing around 2025
Stimulate and host more (cultural) events in the city centre	More visitors, young and old. Playful, cheerful and lively center where it is possible to live and enjoy leisure. With special attention for student life.	Municipality	Municipality	Municipality, Citizens, Entrepreneurs, HMS, Cultural sector, Event organisers, Communication agencies, press	Started in 2021 and first results are already visible. Improvement of the image of the city center of Heerlen within the next 5 years

Special "pizza session" for young people and students "Together we make the city Center"	'hack the city' and to co-create ideas for making the city more attractive for student leisure activities.	Municipality	Municipality	Students and representatives of student organisations	July 2021 during SSA
--	--	--------------	--------------	---	----------------------

Objective	Creating a better image for the city by branding and story-telling				
ACTION	Intended Result	Resources/Assets	Lead Agency	Key Partners	Timescale
Map with all the projects	Showing what is happening and the future plans	Municipality, HMS	Municipality HMS	All stakeholders for input	Started in 2021 ongoing.....
Be more visible on social media	Creating interaction with public and improving the cities image	Municipality, HMS	Municipality, HMS	Municipality, HMS	Started in 2020
Organise conference in the city "dag van de stad"	Reach broad public and professionals outside the region	Ministry of Internal Affairs, IBA Parkstad, Parkstad Limburg Municipality	Ministry of internal affairs, IBA Parkstad, Municipality, Parkstad Limburg	Ministry of internal affairs, IBA Parkstad, Municipality, Parkstad Limburg	In November 2021

5.1 Small Scale Action: "Together we make the city center"

Background & Objective

Municipality of Heerlen drew up the Bid Book 'Urban Heerlen' in 2016. This bid book describes how Heerlen wants to develop its centre around 5 themes with 25 different ambitions. The bid book received great appreciation at the time. Many ambitions have since been realised.

The municipality now wants to build on these successes and update the bid book. The new version will include a number of plans that are already on the council's radar. In addition, the municipality explicitly wants to include the wishes and ideas of stakeholders. This should also be a basis for further work on the city centre together with them. To gain insight into the ideas and wishes of all stakeholders, we conducted an intensive participation process. This document

is the report of that process. During the process the ambition of "bringing back education institutes to the city centre" was one of the important topics being discussed in order to create support for the ambition in relation to the development of the city centre.

This 'photo of the city' was made at a time when the first results are visible. For example, the Maankwartier has been realised, the new city hall has just been taken down and the Nieuwe Nor is undergoing major renovation. At the same time, many plans are still in preparation, such as the development of the Promenade, the Van Grunsvenplein and the Roman Quarter. Those involved often seem to be unaware of these plans. The results of this report should therefore be seen in that light.

In order to collect ideas and wishes, we have chosen a low-threshold approach, in which we get ideas and opinions from as many people as possible:

We worked on the future of Heerlen for four weeks in the month of July. We did this at a location in the 'heart of the city centre'. On the Promenade, we remarkably decorated an empty building. We created a living room atmosphere and stimulated visitors (who could walk in spontaneously) to share their ideas. On average, ± 15 people walked in each day (estimate). In total, there were ± 180 .

We organised workshops around specific themes and stakeholders. In total, we held 12 meetings (listed on the following sheets). These meetings focused on questions such as 'what is going well', 'what can be improved' and 'what should be the focus for the coming years'. In total, ± 80 participants took part in the workshops.

We sent out a survey. Approximately 660 people responded.



Locatie op de Promenade waar bezoekers binnen konden wandelen en waar workshops werden georganiseerd



Wand waar lopende initiatieven werden getoond



Wand waar bezoekers hun wensen en ideeën konden delen



Pizza-sessie voor jongeren



Rondvandeelingen door centrum voor Provincie, IBA, Parkstad en Gemeenteraad



Workshop voor minder validen



Feestelijke sluitpresentatie voor alle geïnteresseerden



Tekeningstijd voor jongeren



Aandacht voor de pers

Deelnemers

O.a. de volgende partijen namen deel aan de bijeenkomsten:

- Ondernemers, zoals Ondernemershuis Heerlen, Het Parapluiehuis, Kwestie van Aandacht, Heerwegen, Heerlen Mijn Stad, Groener Gras
- Bewoners van het centrum (±10 deelnemers)
- Onderwijsinstellingen (Hogeschool Zuyd en LVO)
- Evenementensector, waaronder Remcom en Cultura Nova
- Stadsmakers, zoals De Vijf Pleintjes en De Stadstuin
- Jongeren (± 15 deelnemers)
- Culturele sector, waaronder Stichting Street Art, Getting Up, Kohl, Stichting Schunck, Parkstad Limburg Theaters
- Cliëntenraad Gemeente Heerlen
- Vastgoedondernemers, waaronder Berden, MMGM Bedrijfsmakelaars, Boek & Offermans Makelaars, V&H Vastgoed, Weller Wonen, Q-Park, Aelsmans, Suyderland Venrode.
- Brightlands
- Bestuurlijke opdrachtgevers, zoals IBA, Provincie Limburg en Stadsregio Parkstad
- Verschillende afdelingen van de Gemeente Heerlen
- Gemeenteraad (±4 deelnemers)

Workshops

We organiseerden 12 workshops om stil te staan bij de ideeën en wensen van specifieke stakeholders:

1. Onderwijsinstellingen
2. Minder validen
3. Kinderraad
4. Jongeren
5. Culturele sector
6. Bewoners
7. Ondernemers
8. Grote bedrijven (Brightlands)
9. Bestuurders
10. Woonsector
11. Gemeenteraad
12. Evenementen

5.2 Small Scale Action “Streetlab”

With the Streetlab, of the ICT Academy of Zuyd University of Applied Sciences to introduce the inhabitants of Parkstad, SMEs and other organizations to what modern technology can mean and bring about in a low-threshold manner. The academy conducts research and provides education in areas such as Artificial Intelligence, Data Visualization, Data Science and Software Development. Various products and project results will be on display in the Streetlab. Students and faculty will be speaking to visitors in the Streetlab.

Setting up Streetlab in Heerlen-Centre creates a nice connection between the students of Zuyd University, the center and the presence of the Smart Services Campus in Heerlen. In this place, the students can put their training into practice and involve the environment in their studies. The inhabitants and visitors of Heerlen-Centre will be included in their research. Naturally, inhabitants of the other neighbourhoods in Heerlen and Parkstad will also walk in with questions or problem sets that the students may be able to take up.



Students showing the 'Smart Bin project'

Bringing education back to the inner city is therefore an important goal of the municipality of Heerlen. Students and young people create more liveliness in the center and that is good for the economic climate. They also make use of the wide range of cultural facilities. In our opinion, it is therefore the first step towards more education in Heerlen-Centre!



Opening of the Streetlab in presence of Mr. Luc Verburgh, the chairman of Zuyd University of applied sciences

6. Framework for delivery

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO IN OUR CENTRE IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS?

What will be there in 5 years?

In the coming period our town will get a big facelift. In this chapter we want to show what our city centre will look like in 5 years time. We describe the initiatives, projects and programmes that we will actually realise. In five years' time, we will have a city like we imagined it when we put the 2016 bid book on paper.

We have not only described it in this document, we have also made an image of it, a drawing. That drawing shows what we are going to realise on the basis of the 2016 bid book. The new ambitions (dreams) and what that will look like are not drawn in this image. By realising the new ambitions, we can further colour the image. Of course, there will still be so-called 'white spots' in the town centre, but not all of them need to be tackled. Not everything in the centre needs to be changed or renewed. On the other hand, if a partner has ideas for such a white spot, we are open to them.



Project map of the city center of Heerlen

In everything we do in the city centre, public space is the common thread. We realise the importance of increasing the number of distinctive and qualitative buildings, events and initiatives. But we also know that the needs of visitors to our town centre lie primarily in the details. We think about greenery, water, beautiful and playful furniture, less traffic and a clean centre where pedestrians are in charge. In other words, the city as a 'playground'.

But not only the city as a playground. We have learned from our past. We will never again do 'just anything' in the city. Quality and guts are the two terms that best fit this ambition. Whether it is a new swimming pool or a new museum: we go for quality. For going the extra mile, for a building or public space we can be proud of. That we and our visitors will turn

around for. And if we need help with that in a creative, financial or executive sense, we will come back to that.

It should be noted that the intended greening of the Bongerd, Promenade I and Promenade II will be designed in a uniformly intensive, high-quality and 'exciting' manner, with greenery and water elements, taking into account space for secondary activities such as the Market and small-scale events. The qualities for staying, experiencing and meeting will be realised in a sustainable and climate-friendly manner.



Future image of the Bongerd

As far as we are concerned, this will be the line for the next five years. But let it also be the line in the years thereafter. We are allowed to push the boundaries and unpack, as long as real quality is added to the centre. And we actually see a 'red line' as a 'red line'. If we explicitly choose to be a 'pedestrian city', let it be so from day one. And let's also take a closer look at previous agreements.

In 1996, Heerlen lost its swimmingpool on Mercuriuspad. More than 25 years later, Heerlen will get the centre pool back, this time at the Putgraaf. The temporary accommodation for the civil service organisation will be demolished. In addition to providing space for the central pool, this will also remove a large number of square metres of office space from the market.



DesignThe Roman Bathouse

The Roman Bathhouse is the oldest stone building in the Netherlands. To properly manage the Roman Bathhouse (a museum masterpiece of international significance), preserve it and present it in an inspiring way to a large audience, this national monument will be given a new building. The architectural design by Kraaijvanger Architects, which will be a new landmark for Heerlen, refers to what is on display in the building and emphasises Heerlen's Roman foundation. With the Roman Museum, we are realising a landmark museum, with a

national and Euregional ambition and appearance. The public space in the Roman Quarter (including the formation of squares) will also be redesigned, creating a homogenous space with a strong reference to the Roman past.

As a city, we are the proud owner of the Royal cinema, designed by Frits Peutz in 1937. We are restoring the Rivoli and a new, modern extension will be built on the site of Maxim. The interior of the Royal is rebuilt. This place grows into a centre for image and sound, including a

film house with great regional appeal. De Royal finally gets the function it deserves and becomes (after the Amsterdam Tuschinski) the most beautiful cinema in the country.



Design of the Royal – Rivoli (theater)

A wonderful development is the expansion of the Mining Museum. In addition to the shaft building of the Oranje Nassaumijn 1, the museum is also moving into the former Kneepkenspand, a former department store in the middle of the city. With a modern, contemporary and informative museum concept that gives our mining past the place it deserves. The place where we will tell the stories from below and above ground. Here we let our children and anyone else who wants to get to know Heerlen see, hear and feel where we come from.

We have now earned our spurs as a theater and events city. Part of this is without a doubt the Nieuwe Nor, which in recent years has grown into a leading pop temple within the club circuit. Its success called for an expansion, and this expansion is coming. The scaffolding for the expansion of the Nieuwe Nor will soon be taken down and then this stage can continue its growth.

The city council and municipal organization will soon have a new home. This is very special because the new municipal offices were designed by the world-famous South Limburg architect Francien Houben, who used the adjacent town hall, also designed by Peutz, as a reference point for her design. She did this, given the shapes that are already visible, with great respect for the architect. The town hall was completed a year later and became a time machine after Frits Peutz's original design. As a result, this architecturally important building once again exudes the grandeur and atmosphere it originally had.

But there is more. What to think of 'entertainment on a high level' in the form of the kiosk the 'Worstenhemel' (sausage heaven) that we realize on top of the striking 'sausage stall' on the market. In this way we are creating a low-threshold urban stage for lectures and musical performances, for example. On Promenade II and Promenade I wind and stone will make way for a beautiful, green connection between the theater on the Burgemeester van Grunsvenplein and the rest of the center. After years of vacancy and neglect, Frits Peutz's 'bedhouse' the former hospital' on the Putgraaf is being developed into a student campus. There are also

ideas to turn the immediate surroundings into a place for young people and (urban) sports. The future city pool is also part of this.

In the coming years we will continue the policy line in the field of economy, retail and housing. We will therefore continue to focus on making the center more compact and transforming retail and work spaces into housing. Our City Plan plays an important role in this. Breaking through the one-sided housing supply also remains a key task for us. At the same time, we will continue to consult with our partners and stakeholders in the city to achieve a good quality retail offering and, in a general sense, to strengthen the core shopping area.

We are turning the Burgemeester van Grunsvenplein into a green and sustainable square with space for events, giving our beautiful Parkstad Limburg Theater the environment in which it can shine even brighter. But the whole area



Design of the Burgemeester van Grunsvenplein

around the square has our attention.

At the request of the owners of 't Loon, we are working together to find a new interpretation. The vacant premises in Schinkel-Noord will make way for new social housing and council housing, and the iconic buildings on Honigmannstraat will be restored to their original state. Schinkel-Zuid will get 98 beautiful town houses in green surroundings on the spot where many offices and stores used to stand empty.

It is important to us that Oranje Nassaustraat becomes part of the city center again. We take a broad look at the situation and include themes such as traffic, housing, quality of the environment, facilities, the City Plan and the wishes of the surrounding area. Then we will come up with a concrete plan of approach for this street.

Through the Facade Renovation Fund, a number of facades have already been repaired to improve the quality of the streetscape. In 2020, the work of Atelier Stadsrevisie was added. Through the atelier, a number of facades were overhauled. Starting in 2022, there will be a proposal for a continuation of the Facade Renovation Fund and we are studying a continuation of the use of aSTA.

Finally: a cleaner, livelier and better known center that is accessible and walkable for everyone. We are working hard to achieve this. The center is cleaned more often, unnecessary bollards and signs are removed or exchanged for flower boxes. In line with this, the city will serve as a playground (as a stage). With this we add frivolity and playfulness to provoke movement and participation. Fun for both young and old. This creates a playful, cheerful and lively center where it is possible to live and recreate in a pleasant, climate-adaptive designed green environment. And that is something we have to communicate and make known much more.

Pioneers

We are increasingly discovering, along with people in the city, that there is no end point, no "delivered" center. We are becoming convinced that we are different. We no longer have a historic center that must remain as it was. Heerlen is a city 'on a journey', always looking for new opportunities (sometimes by necessity), where there is more than enough mental and physical space for people. So as a city we are unfinished, raw, experimental, contemporary, innovative, creative and young at heart. That is not changing. We summarized this in 2016 under the heading "urban". This vision has put us positively on the map in recent years. We are keeping to this course and will strengthen and develop it further in the coming years. In practice, it is not clear to everyone what 'urban' is, and it is regularly associated with youth culture. In doing so, we sell ourselves short. We are so much more. And the term urban is so much more.



Urban Heerlen

We distinguish ourselves from other South Limburg cities by our non-conformist character. Heerlen is a city that traditionally moves continuously. In Heerlen there is more freedom of movement for both residents and businesses than in surrounding cities. The attraction of Heerlen is that it is continuously in transition (unfinished).

We want to emphasise our open mind, our opportunities, our pioneering spirit and our no-nonsense mentality. We believe that Heerlen is "a city for everyone. It is in our genes. The mining industry needed workers who then came to the mining town and the entire region from all corners of the world. Foreigners who left hearth and home to find their happiness elsewhere. Heerlen is still a city with a very mixed population, where many people with a small budget also live. We are a social city and therefore attach great value to inclusiveness. In addition to unfinished, raw, experimental and contemporary, it may therefore also be quite soft, playful, familiar and even cosy. That suits us.

A beautiful term that makes the different aspects of urban visible is the term "playful" or "playfulness". This term contains the softness, the nostalgia, old-fashioned cheerfulness and the familiar, but it also contains the naughty, the pioneering, the daring and the renewing. At its core it is about a city that belongs to all people without exception. Not only young people, entrepreneurs and professionals but also the elderly, people with disabilities and children.

This leads us to three core values in which we recognise ourselves and with which we want to show and profile ourselves:

1. Heerlen is continuously in transition (on the move),
2. characterised by being non-conformist
3. and having a familiar character people can relate to.

We want to bring projects and programs to fruition around these core values.
IN WHICH CITY WILL WE LIVE IN 10 YEARS? AND IN 20 YEARS?

In this part of the ambition document we look into the future. We muse and dream. We know that if the dream is to have any right to exist, we must permanently search for financial and executive possibilities. Opportunities within ourselves, but also in the outside world. What coalitions can we forge? Which party also believes in our dream? Who, like us, wants to invest and put their shoulders to realise ambitions?

We know that plans can remain plans for a very long time, which can be talked about endlessly and, in the worst case, disappear into a drawer. We managed to convince ourselves that with courage, conviction and a healthy dose of work ethic, steps can be taken. But we have also learned that in addition to 'rolling up your sleeves' you also have to dream. Dreams strengthen ambitions and can open up paths that were deemed impossible.

Dreaming does not mean that there is no historical perspective. Dreams do not come out of the blue. They are linked to the identity and collective memory of the city. When we think about the future Heerlen we can distinguish a number of threads, which originate from the past and are of course also shaped by a changing society.

So the future is not just fantasy. Some things we already know. We always want:

- more space,
- more greenery and water,
- more quality,
- more events,
- fewer cars,
- more iconic architecture,
- more originality,
- more local initiatives/heroes.

The centre in 10 years...

At this point in the ambition document we have included a number of future perspectives that are already on our agenda. These are perspectives that we are thinking about and working on (to a limited extent).

The deterioration of the station was once the reason to put our shoulders under the center. Now we have the Maankwartier, designed by the Heerlen artist Michel Huisman, the symbol of the new Heerlen. But a thorn in our side is the fact that the intercity still stops under the Maanplein. The connection between Eindhoven and the Randstad with Aachen and the rest of North Rhine-Westphalia and other European destinations is still missing.

As far as we are concerned, this intercity connection will be in place in 10 years. It is a crucial impulse for the South Limburg economy and will make the provincial city of Heerlen a European



Maankwartier

connecting city. The lobby for this intercity has been going on for decades, but as yet without any direct result. We will continue to put all our energy into this lobby.

In 10 years we will have moved the housing of higher and secondary education to the center of the city. In our view, this is a fundamental game changer for the downtown development and a flywheel through which past and future investments will pay off even better. With education in the center of the city, the possibilities for holding congresses and seminars increase, for which an excellent infrastructure already exists. Meanwhile, the parties are sitting around the table and arguments, ideas and preferences are being exchanged.

The centre in 20 years.....

Under this heading we have included a number of future perspectives that are not yet on our agenda and that, for the time being, have the character of thought experiments. Nevertheless, we think it is important to share, develop and discuss these vague dots on the horizon with each other, because we are a city that is constantly changing and reinventing itself.

In 20 years, and maybe even in 10 years, we will have realized a connection between the Caumer and Geleen brooks. A branch of the Caumer brook will flow straight into the center, over the Promenade, past 't Loon, to flow into the Geleen brook at Nieuw Eyckholth. The current petrified shopping boulevard will by then have become a park-like natural area with lots of greenery, benches and opportunities to relax and exercise. It is the crowning glory of a series of years of greening projects in the center, in which the road system had to give way considerably in favor of attractive, square-like, green spaces in the center. It has been the driving force behind a renewed appreciation for the center of Heerlen, which has given an enormous boost to the influx of new center residents and visitors.

The center of Heerlen has developed unilaterally into a shopping area. Outside of shopping hours, people leave the center. In the coming years, we believe that homes and residents must reclaim the center from stores. Therefore, in addition to numerous smaller housing projects, in which we have had an eye for all target groups, we have realised two major, revolutionary housing projects over 20 years. As indicated above, we have realised a sustainable 'zero emission' neighbourhood in and around the Oranje Nassaustraat.

In the future, we want to connect themes such as parking/mobility/smart services and sustainability in the city center. Think only of electric cars in the center, make the center car-free, no more heavy trucks in the center, but a loading and unloading point on the edge of the center. But also a network of electric trolleys to get to the center. This will provide ample space for pedestrians and cyclists, but fewer public parking spaces. Making the city ring car-free and greener also applies to it. A very nice idea in that context seems to us to mark the 'playground' with typical Heerlen eye-catchers, analogous to the function and appearance of city gates.

It's about setting the bar high and not letting ourselves be led by the reflex to look at impossibilities first. Take our already established reputation as an events city. Perhaps we can build on that by aiming for '365 events a year'. It would be an ambition with which we could possibly raise our reputation to an even higher level and with which we would undoubtedly distinguish ourselves.

6.1 Monitoring – Intended Result

Above, you have read how we see the future for our city, with beautiful vistas for the next 5, 10 and 20 years. If we then go back to the vision for iPlace "It is not to restore Heerlen to its former glory in five or ten years' time. But our vision is to share our city today with people who are ideas-driven and enthusiastic for change and who want to grasp the opportunities of the 21st century. Our city is appreciated for its vibrancy, for being young at heart. But it is still a secret for many. If you are curious, we will share our secrets!". The focus for Iplace is that we believe that new economic growth depends on revitalising the city centre. One of the main focus points in Iplace is creating conditions for the reinvestment of the educational institutes in the city centre.

Because we believe that students and young people create more liveliness in the center and that is good for the economic climate. They also use of the wide range of cultural facilities and create a buzz.

ACTION	Intended Result	Timescale	Monitoring
Realising a student campus	After years of vacancy this former ward, will be developed into a student campus with 150 self contained residential units	Renovation started in 2021	In 2025 we have more people in the age of 15-45 living in the city centre*
Creating studios for young people and graduates	From a vacant store to homes. 36 studios for young people and graduates, aged 20-27 have been realized.	Completion in 2022	In 2025 we have more people in the age of 15-45 living in the city centre*

[Wetenswaardigheden, cijfers en statistieken over Heerlen-Centrum - Oozo.nl](https://www.heerlen.nl/wetenswaardigheden-cijfers-en-statistieken-over-heerlen-centrum-oozo.nl)

Inhabitants Heerlen-Centrum

Heerlen-Centre has 5,100 inhabitants with a population density of 4,904 inhabitants per square kilometre. These 5,100 inhabitants consist of 2,580 men and 2,515 women. The age category 65 and over is the most strongly represented with 30.6%.

Breakdown by age

00 - 14 year

6.1%

15 - 24 year

15.1%

25 - 45 year

24.9%

46 - 65 year

23.2%

65 and older

30.6%

In 10 years we will have moved the housing of higher and secondary education to the center of the city. In our view, this is a fundamental game changer for the downtown development and a flywheel through which past and future investments will pay off even better. With education in the center of the city, the possibilities for holding congresses and seminars increase, for which an excellent infrastructure already exists. Meanwhile, the parties are sitting around the table and arguments, ideas and preferences are being exchanged.

ACTION	Intended Result	Timescale	Monitoring
Bring back education to the city centre	We host the 2 large events of OU and ZUyd in our city centre. E.g. Dies Natalis In 10 years the higher education is back in our city centre with their facilities	In 2022 we host one event and in 2023 two events. Process of exploration started in 2020 intention to move education institutions to the centre within 10 years.	We report to the city council about the progress made in the dialogue with the education institutes about the reallocation to the city centre.
Move 2 large secondary schools to the centre	More students bring liveliness and stimulate economy	Looking for suited location and building. Education Institutes agree to move. Next 5 years.	Start developing plans and arranging funding.

The investments made in recent years and the ambitions for the future have contributed to the fact that the schools are now prepared to discuss a move back to the centre. Six years ago, this discussion would have led to nothing. It is the big picture that counts in decisions like this. A clear vision, identity and ambition that is primarily made and shared by a large proportion of the city's stakeholders.

7. Acknowledgements

We want to thank the representatives of the other participating cities, our lead partner Amarante and our lead expert Wessel Badenhorst for synergy within the group and the willingness to openly share inspiring stories and experiences.



8. Appendix - Finance - Resourcing

Finance consists of:

A. Ambitions/projects in progress (resulting from Urban Bid Book from 2016).

B. Ambitions/projects not yet in progress (resulting from Together we make our city center from 2021).

A1 Ambities/projecten in uitvoering

Na het vaststellen van de Begroting 2022 bedraagt de totale financiële omvang ruim € 154 miljoen.

Vóór vaststellen Begroting 2022	€	151.949.265
Mutaties		
Ambitie 10 Openbare ruimte: stad als speeltuin (BWV-21001307)	€	1.169.555
Ambitie 18 Minimaal 200 studenten volgen onderwijs in de binnenstad: onderwijs naar de binnenstad (BWV-21001405)	€	1.280.000
Ambitie 19 Evenementen: correctie jaarschijf	€	-75.000
Na vaststellen Begroting 2022	€	154.323.820

De begroting is opgebouwd uit subsidies, bijdragen gemeente Heerlen en derden (additionele subsidies en bijdragen derden).

Opbouw begroting		Bedrag
Provincie Limburg	€	11.350.000
IBA Parkstad	€	8.516.000
Regiodeal	€	7.358.000
Heerlen investeringskrediet centrum	€	27.611.761
Heerlen additioneel (o.a. Nieuwe Huisvesting, Openbare ruimte Maankwartier, Romeins Museum de Thermen)	€	92.036.499
Derden (o.a. verkoopopbrengsten, subsidie ProRail)	€	7.451.560
Totaal	€	154.323.820

More than half of budget has been spent for the purpose of realizing the ongoing ambitions from the Urban Heerlen Bid Book plus advancing insight. The remainder will continue to be spent in the period of Together we make the Center.

Realisatie en prognose		Bedrag	% Realisatie van begroting	A2
Begroting	€	154.323.820		-
Gerealiseerd t/m 2020	€	78.938.972		51%
Prognose 2021	€	18.148.277		63%
Prognose 2022	€	21.680.726		77%
Prognose 2023	€	17.974.185		89%
Prognose 2024	€	12.061.189		96%
Prognose 2025	€	5.520.472		100%

Management of the Programme Centre

In addition to investments, a program also requires a great deal of capacity and commitment of (specialist) expertise (in addition to that of the line organization) to develop the program further and to be able to capitalize on new initiatives and opportunities in addition to the investments. In the 2022 budget, funds have been requested and allocated for this purpose.

Jaar	Programmabudget	
Begroting 2022	€	225.000
Begroting 2023	€	225.000
Begroting 2024	€	225.000
Begroting 2025	€	225.000

B1 Voorbereidingskrediet nieuwe investeringen

In order to work out the center together into new investments (for example, redesigning new parts of the public space), a preparatory loan is needed. This preparatory credit will be used in the coming years for the attributable costs of new investments, including conducting research, obtaining specialist advice and making designs. The detailed plans with investment credit for the actual realization will be submitted separately to the council for decision-making.

The preparation credit amounts to a maximum of € 4.6 million up to and including 2025 and can be covered within the reserved capital costs (BWV-20000626 Investment credit Centre) by reducing the interest rate for capital interest from 1.25% to 1% in the Budget for 2022.

Jaar	Voorbereidingskrediet	
Begroting 2022	€	700.000
Begroting 2023	€	1.200.000
Begroting 2024	€	1.800.000
Begroting 2025	€	900.000
Totaal	€	4.600.000

B2 Operating Budget

To enable new initiatives and projects in the field of experience, culture, participation and street art in 2022, a one-year new budget of €300,000 was allocated in the 2022 Budget. Based on experiences in 2022, a multi-year budget is requested in Budget 2023.

B3 Subsidy for housing construction impulse

Up to and including 2030, housing corporations, developers and the municipality of Heerlen are investing in the addition of approximately 700 (affordable) homes with infrastructural access in the city center. The allocated subsidy amount is € 4.5 million.

[Appendix](#)

Map with 22 projects in English.