

# Election Program GroenLinks Groningen 2022-2026

## Summarized English Version

**GroenLinks** (GreenLeft) wants a better world for everyone. We want to combat climate change, fight poverty, build a society in which everyone can participate, and pleasant places to live in the city and in the surrounding towns.

### **A BETTER CLIMATE, MORE SUSTAINABLE ENERGY, LESS CO2 EMISSIONS**

We are emitting too much CO<sub>2</sub> - mainly due to our enormous use of energy. That has to be reduced.

- Everyone can play their part in reducing our energy consumption. Help and information is accessible and a municipal fund will pay if you can't afford energy-saving measures.
- The heat network brings warm water to your house for heating and showering. We are going to expand that network for more people than we already reach. The heat comes from sustainable sources. That way we need less natural gas.
- We will put solar panels on as many roofs as possible. The municipality will develop solar parks and wind parks. That way they are community-owned. Local energy corporations will be prioritised over commercial parties.
- We will provide enough shade against increasing heat and create more space for water. Heavy rains should not cause problems for our roads and houses.

### **MORE GREEN, MORE NATURE**

Nature is in decline. Plants and animals are disappearing. Agriculture, industry, infrastructure and our households are heating up the climate and taking up a lot of space. We are going to address that.

- Space will be used efficiently. Companies and houses will get solar panels, green roofs and green facades. Gardens with a lot of concrete and tiles will be made green. That way we will give nature more space in the places where we live and work.
- Agriculture has to coexist with nature. That is beneficial for plants, insects and birds. We will talk to farmers and ask them to go the extra mile and plant flowers around their fields. We also want less cattle.
- We will protect the network of nature reserves in the city and the surrounding area.
- We will make new links so this network becomes stronger. We are against new forms of busy recreation in the area surrounding the Zuidlaarder Meer.

## HOUSING FOR EVERYONE

We want to build more houses, mainly within the existing limits of our city and towns.

- We will strive for 40% social housing in new neighborhoods.
- We won't just build for families, but also for communes, young people, elderly people who want to live in *hofjes*, artists and singles. There will be room for housing corporations and citizens' initiatives. Homeless people and people with psychological or physical problems will get a roof over their heads.
- Newly built houses in towns should fit the character of the town.
- We will prevent the purchase of houses by investors and slumlords. Buying a house means you will live in that house.
- We will build houses in a circular way. Materials will be reused.

## PUBLIC SPACE FOR EVERYONE

Public spaces should once more become a place to meet each other, to relax and to play. There will be less rooms for cars. Cars will have to adapt.

- A green environment in neighbourhoods is important for a pleasant and healthy life. A green environment facilitates rest and relaxation. A green environment creates space for nature. Contact with nature is important for children. There will be more green spaces for people.
- 30 km per hour will be the standard speed limit where possible. Cycling will be made more appealing. We will do this by creating more and better cycling paths. We will ensure that travelling by bike will often be quicker than travelling by car.
- We will make sure that there is sufficient room to park your bike in the city center and other neighborhoods, so that bikes will not block sidewalks. There will be enough room for pedestrians, children and to exercise.
- Public transport should be a quick way to move around. There will be more transfer hubs. You will also be able to rent bikes, electric scooters or cargo bikes there as well.
- The *Diepenring* will be an enjoyable space to relax, to play sports, to meet each other. Parking places will disappear, leaving space for greenery and allowing strolls along the water.

## **A SAFE MUNICIPALITY FOR ALL**

Everyone who lives in Groningen should be able to call this place “home.” Every citizen matters. Feeling at home in Groningen means being able to participate in your community.

- Feeling at home in Groningen also applies to everyone who wants to live here, to students wherever they’ve come from, including those who come from abroad.
- Refugees will not be left out in the cold. They have found safety here.
- We do not accept racism and homophobia. We don’t discriminate based on age, sexual orientation, background, education or physical abilities.
- New Year’s Eve will be celebrated as a large event that’s enjoyable for everyone, but without fireworks.
- We want to allow use of weed.
- We take a preventative approach to crime. People who cross the line are known to the police, but also to youth workers, teachers and social workers. They work together. This works better than combating crime after it has occurred. We will only allow CCTV cameras if there is no other option.

## **A JUST WORLD**

Poverty is unfair and is not someone’s own fault. People have different skills and backgrounds, as well as in the way they grow up. The result of this can be poverty, a shorter and more unhealthy life, or less chances to become happy. It’s the role of the government to make these differences smaller.

- The system of welfare payments should be made more flexible, with less rules and more support for those who need it.
- We fight against the “poverty trap.” Those who find a job and no longer need welfare payments should not be cut in income, even if that job is temporary.
- The municipality will take on the debt of people so that they will only have to settle
- Culture should be accessible to all. Everyone should be able to play sports.

## **WORK FOR EVERYONE**

We will create more jobs. Not only for theoretically schooled people, but also for those who've had practical education. Money earned in Groningen should stay in our local economy, instead of flowing out of the area or even the country.

- We will create more opportunities for internships and work experience.
- A protected working environment remains necessary for people with disabilities.
- We want a minimum wage of 14 euros per hour.
- We will keep towns and neighbourhoods lively with a mix of stores, restaurants, cafes and activities.
- We will actively support social enterprises.
- Artists will, of course, receive decent pay.

## **LESS COMPETITION, MORE HEALTHCARE**

We are against market competition in healthcare. We see that this leads to more administrative processes and longer waiting periods. We want to get rid of that. Some parties now take in huge profits. They only provide part of the solutions for complex problems.

- The marketplace of products, prizes, competition, monitoring and bureaucracy doesn't work. We want to get rid of the obligation of public tender in (youth) care.
- The municipality will actively support families facing difficulties again. Families often face many problems at the same time: parenting issues, poverty, debts, healthcare, housing. The *WIJ Teams* can help families quickly.

## **OPPORTUNITIES FOR EVERYONE IN EDUCATION**

Everyone should have equal opportunities in education. Schools should reflect the demographics of the neighbourhoods they're in. We will reach agreements about this with school boards.

- High contributions by parents and expensive private institutions within a school create obstacles to participation. We will provide homework support and tutoring for all students.
- Languages and math are taught in schools. Children also learn about the world around them in school. Children should also have classes outside in nature.
- Everyone should be able to be themselves at school. We do not accept homophobia, sexism or any form of discrimination.
- We will ban soft drinks and fast food from schools. Children are taught about how they can stay healthy. The school will provide a healthy breakfast or even a warm meal if that is necessary.