



*Internationals and cross-border  
employees in the Maastricht region*

Report



Gemeente Maastricht

Datagedreven Sturen  
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# Introduction

## Background research

The Expat Centre Maastricht Region (ECMR) is a service point primarily aimed at expats (EU and non-EU) and their families who have recently moved to South Limburg. Fully aware that the term expats is both too broad and, in some cases, too narrow. The majority of this target group are new international knowledge migrants who use the Fast Track Proces procedure requested by a Dutch employer. For this, close cooperation is maintained with the IND Maastricht and GemeenteLoket Maastricht.

But other international residents and EU cross-border employees also find their way to the Expat Centre Maastricht Region. Besides a personal consultation, the ECMR offers a Maastricht Region Manual, a website full of practical tips in English and they organize events and workshops in English on topics such as tax return, buying a house, or starting a business.

The aim of the research is to ask internationals and cross-border workers how they experience living and working in the Maastricht region.

This report contains the results of the research.

# Methods

## Methods

From September 17 to October 31, an online questionnaire was distributed through various channels. The same questionnaire was distributed to the English-speaking part of the Maastricht Forum (266 members), the resident panel of the municipality of Maastricht.

The target group was internationals and cross-border workers, including expats (knowledge workers).

In the South Limburg region (see image), there are 26,065 working internationals excluding employed status holders, displaced Ukrainians, and students\*. 40,435 internationals reside in South Limburg including status holders, partners, students, displaced Ukrainians, and students\*.

The CBS does not have population figures on internationals, such as age or gender. Therefore, the response cannot be weighted.



## Research questions

These were the research questions:

1. What do internationals and cross-border workers think about living and working in the Maastricht region?
2. What is the family composition of internationals and cross-border workers?
3. How integrated do internationals and cross-border workers feel, and what has helped them integrate?
4. To what extent is the Expat Centre Maastricht Region known among internationals and cross-border workers?

\* Source: Decisio april 2024

# Summary

## Survey

Between September 17 and October 31, 105 internationals and cross-border workers participated in this research: 49 via the Maastricht Forum and 56 via an open link. The response is not sufficient to make a reliable statement for all internationals and cross-border workers. However, the results of this research do provide an indication about internationals and cross-border workers. The research consisted of an online questionnaire. The respondents were not weighted on characteristics such as age and gender, as no population characteristics are available for this group. Below are the most notable results summarized.

## Working

More than two-thirds of the respondents work in the Maastricht region (71%). Of the respondents who do not live in Maastricht, slightly less than half would consider it (40%). Almost half were invited by a company to come and work here (44%). The majority have been working here for more than 5 years (43%). Most respondents work in education (33%). One-third want to stay here permanently (33%). For an equally large part, it is still uncertain how long they will continue to work here (32%).

## Living

Three-quarters of the respondents live in the Maastricht region (75%), with the vast majority living in Maastricht (91%). Most respondents have lived here for more than 5 years (45%), followed by 1 to 3 years (26%). For the majority, it is still uncertain how long they will continue to live here (33%). Two-thirds live here with their family: partner and/or children (63%), followed by 28% who live alone. Of the respondents who live here with their family, 38% have children living with them. Most children are between 5 and 11 years old (56%). Two-thirds of the children attend a Dutch school (67%). Nearly two-thirds of the respondents have a partner (60%). More than half of the partners also work in the Maastricht region (57%). Of partners currently not working in the Maastricht Region 67% is considering to do so in the future. Most respondents do not have time for volunteer work (41%). A quarter have done volunteer work at some point (28%).

# Summary

## Integration

Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with two statements. The first statement was, "There is enough support from the local community in the Maastricht Region to make internationals feel at home." One-third agreed (completely) with this (34%), while a quarter disagreed (completely) (26%). The second statement was, "I feel integrated into Dutch society in the Maastricht Region." An equal number of respondents agreed (completely) (38%) and disagreed (completely) (39%). The time needed to integrate well ranges between 1 to 3 years (39%) and more than 3 years (39%). Two-thirds have Dutch friends (66%). Attending cultural activities and events (37%) and learning Dutch (28%) were the most important factors in feeling at home. Colleagues (54%) and friends/neighbors (47%) were the most helpful to respondents as newcomers.

## Expat Centre Maastricht Region and events

Two-thirds have heard of the Expat Centre Maastricht Region (ECMR) (68%). In total, 31% have visited the ECMR. The majority who visited the ECMR were (very) satisfied with the assistance (63%). Half of them were aware of the events organized (50%). Of all respondents, half would attend a session on tax return (50%), followed by a session on cultural differences (41%), and healthcare in the Netherlands (37%). Respondents would like more information about community centres (34%), dual careers (34%), and renting a house in the Netherlands (29%). Two-thirds prefer to be informed about events via email (67%), followed by the ECMR website (36%) and the ECMR newsletter (35%).

## Characteristics

Most respondents are between 30 and 44 years old (48%), followed by 18 to 29 years old (25%) and 45 to 66 years old (23%). Nearly three-quarters have a European nationality (72%), with most having Dutch nationality. Of those with a nationality from a non-EU country (28%), most have British or Canadian nationality. Respondents who filled out the questionnaire via the open link most often came through the ECMR LinkedIn page (21 respondents), followed by the ECMR newsletter (14 respondents). Respondents had advice for other internationals. Most advice was about learning Dutch (n=10), social contacts and networking (n=6), participating in activities/clubs (n=5), and practical matters (n=5). The most mentioned themes in the other comments were information (n=5), work or education (n=3), and language (n=3).

# Approach

A photograph of a person from the waist down, wearing a dark jacket and holding a white tote bag. The bag has the text 'EXPAT CENTRE' in large, bold, black letters, with a blue horizontal bar under the 'E' and a red horizontal bar under the 'E' in 'CENTRE'. Below this, 'MAASTRICHT REGION' is printed in smaller black letters. The person is also holding a clear plastic cup. The background shows a blurred indoor setting with blue chairs and a wooden table.

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## Research approach

The population of the study consists of approximately 15,000 internationals and cross-border workers in the Maastricht region. The study was distributed among 266 English-speaking panel members and via an open link.

In total, 105 respondents completed the questionnaire, 56 via the open link and 49 panel members (response rate 18%).

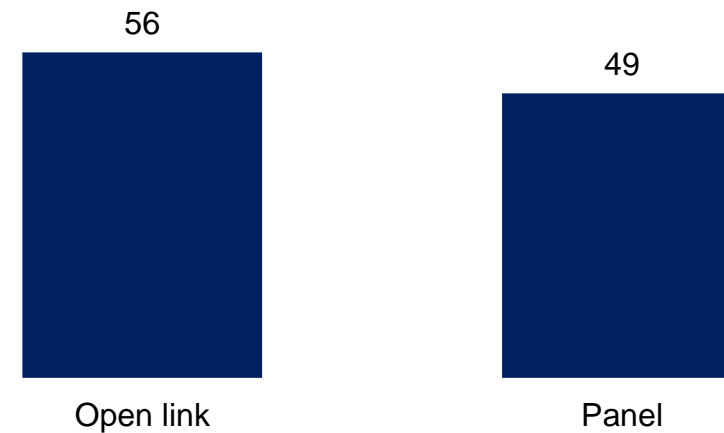
The response is not sufficient in number to make a statement about all internationals and cross-border workers. However, the results of this study do provide an indication about this group.

It is not known how representative the respondents are, as no population characteristics of internationals and cross-border workers are known.

Chapter 1 describes the results of the study. The open responses are included in the appendix. Here, all responses from the residents are presented in a table per question.

The absolute number of respondents is indicated with  $n=$ . Some respondents dropped out during the questionnaire.

## Response



# Results work



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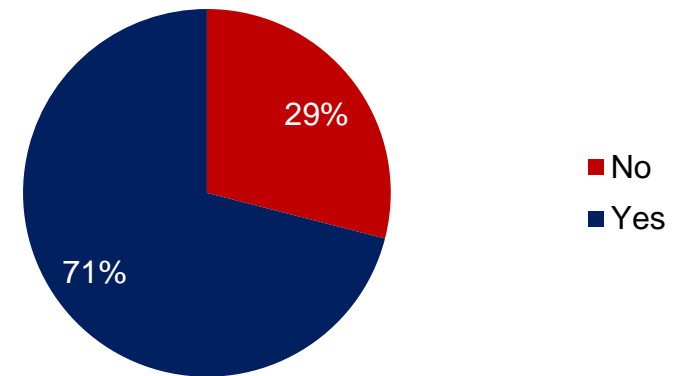


## 1. Working in the region

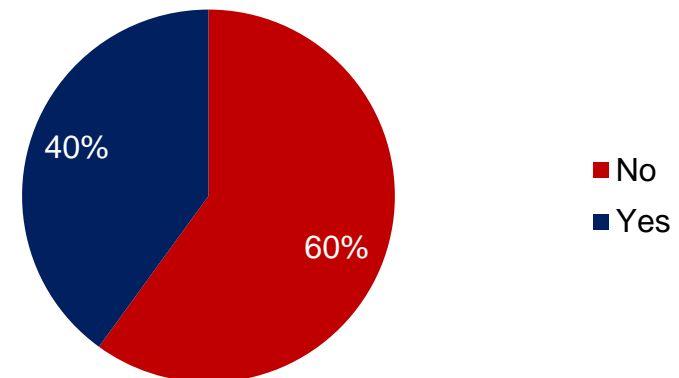
All respondents (n=105) were asked if they work in the Maastricht region. Those who do not work in the Maastricht region (n=30) were asked if they would consider it.

- 71% work in the Maastricht region.
- Of the respondents who do not work in the Maastricht region, 40% would consider it.

Do you work in the Maastricht Region?



Would you consider working in the Maastricht Region?

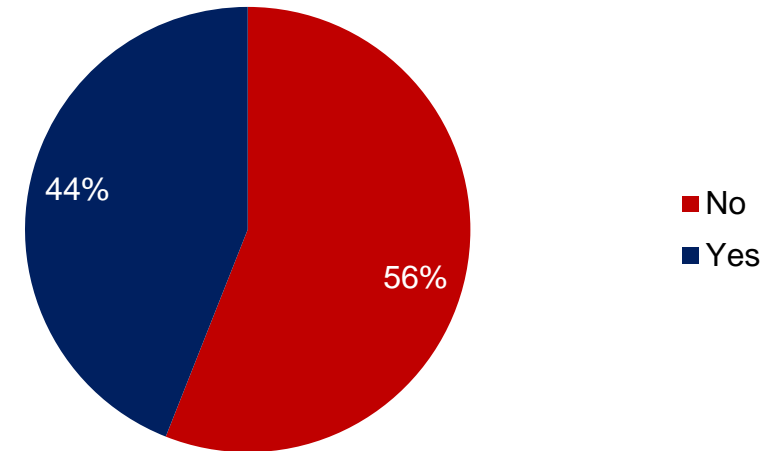


## 1. Working in the region

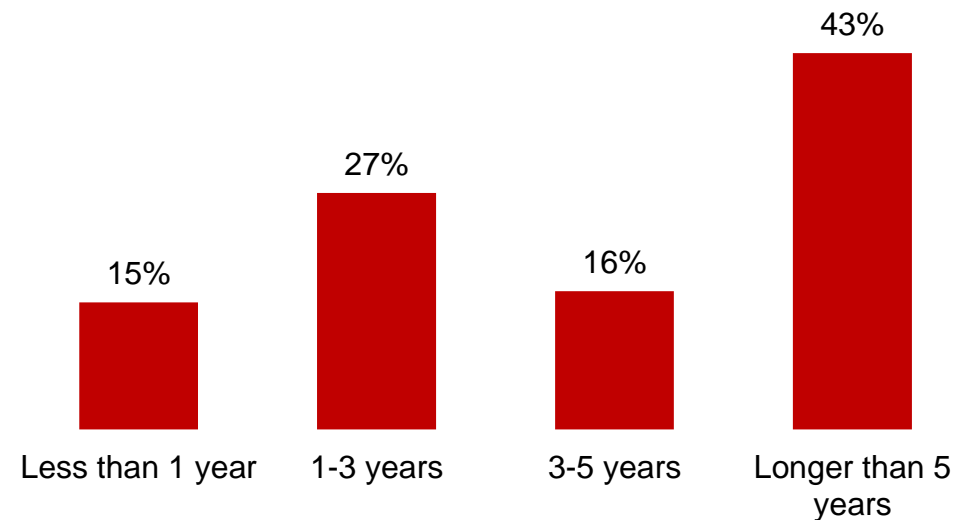
Respondents who work in the Maastricht region (n=75) were asked if they were invited by a company to work and live here and how long they have been working here.

- 44% were invited to come and work here.
- 43% have been working here for more than 5 years.
- 27% have been working here for 1 to 3 years.
- 16% have been working here for 3 to 5 years.
- 15% have been working here for less than 1 year.

Were you invited by a company to work in the Maastricht Region?



How long have you worked in the Maastricht Region?



## 2. Field of work and profession

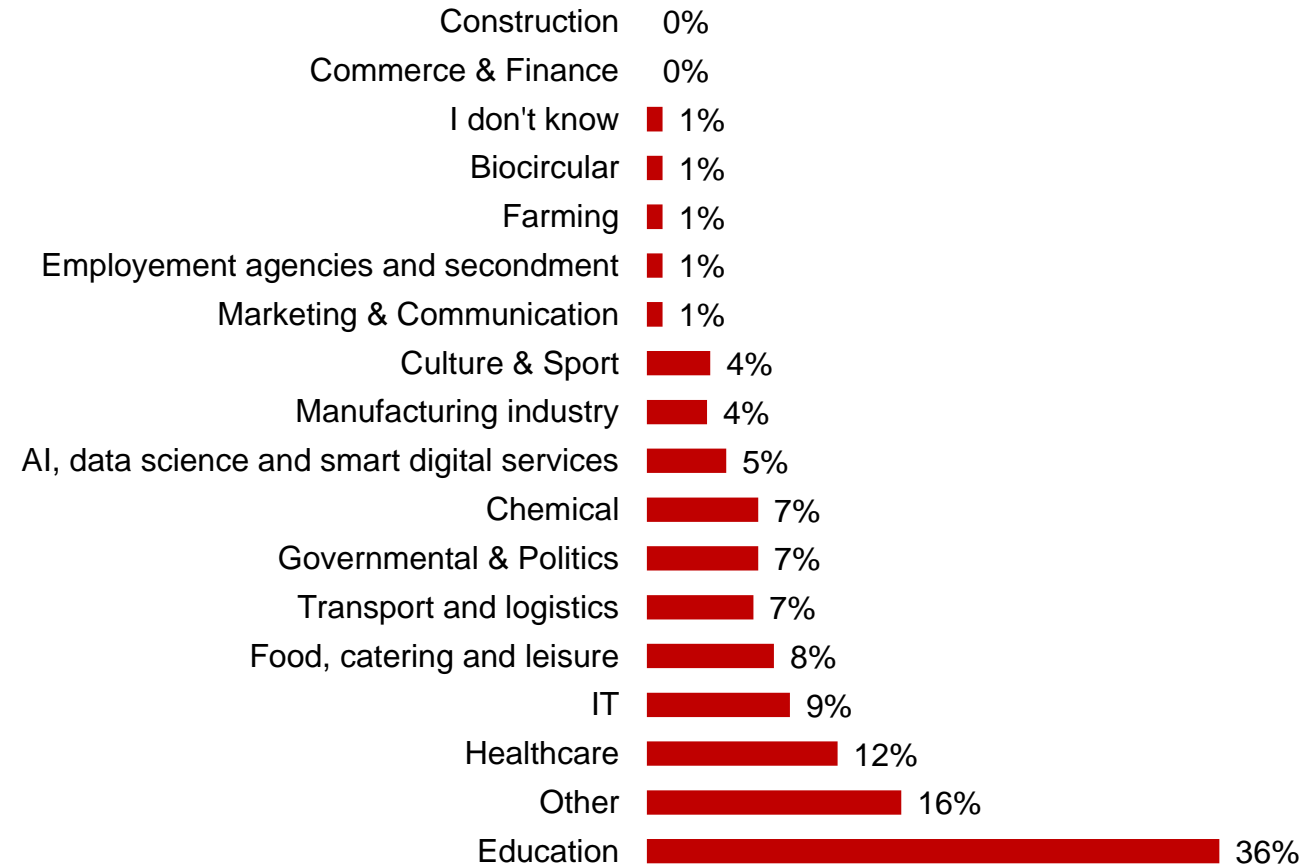
Respondents who work in the Maastricht region (n=75) were asked in which sector they work.

- 36% work in education.
- 16% work in another industry.

The responses can be found in the appendix.

- 12% work in healthcare.
- 9% work in IT.

### In which industry do you work?



## 2. Field of work and profession

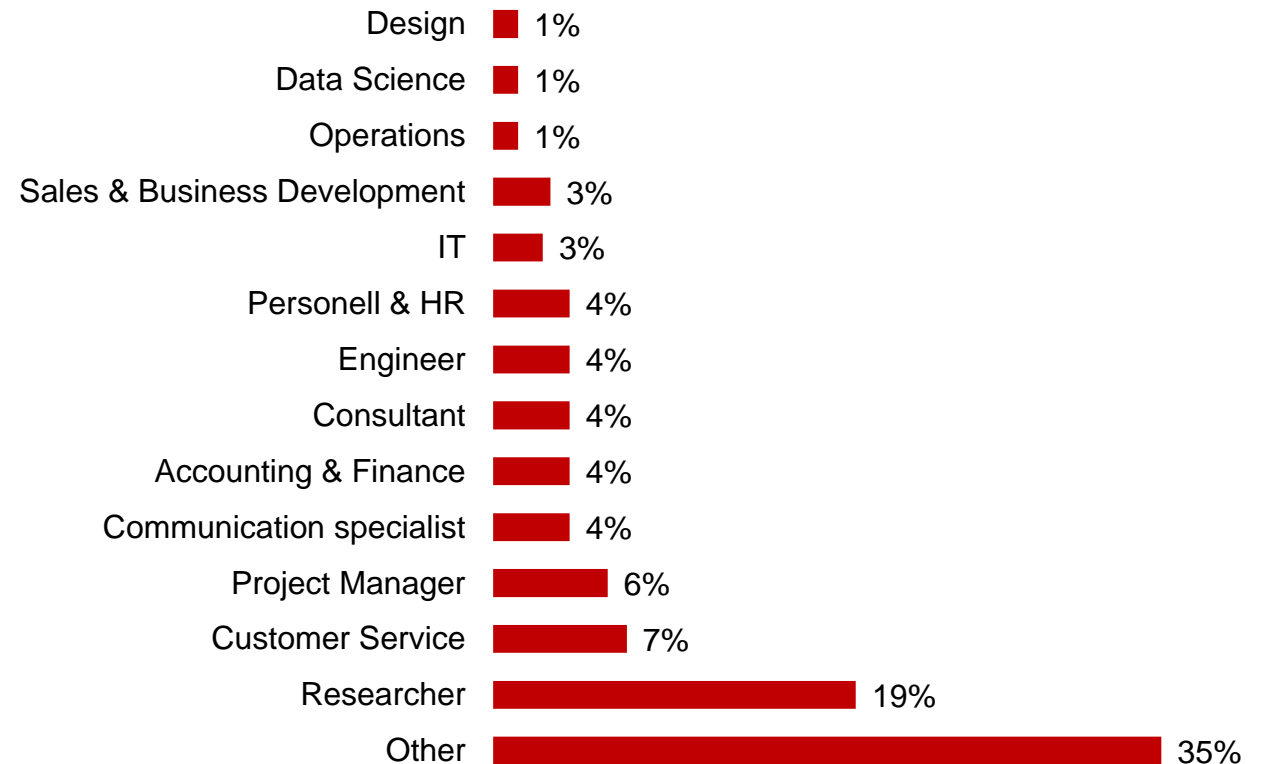
Respondents who work in the Maastricht region (n=75) were asked in which position they work.

- 35% have another position.

The responses can be found in the appendix.

- 19% work as researchers.
- 7% work as customer service representatives.
- 6% work as project managers.

### What position do you work in?

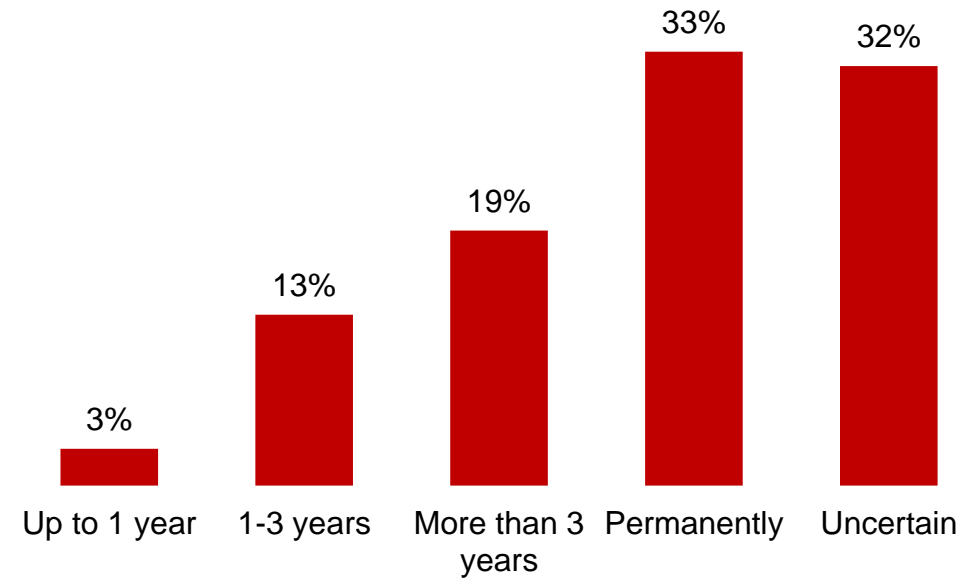


### 3. Future of work

Respondents who work in the Maastricht region (n=75) were asked how long they intend to work in the Maastricht region.

- 33% intend to work here permanently.
- 32% say it is uncertain.
- 19% intend to work here for more than 3 years.
- 13% intend to work here for 1 to 3 years.
- 3% intend to work here for up to 1 year.

How long do you intend to work in the Maastricht Region?



# Results living





## 4. Living in the region

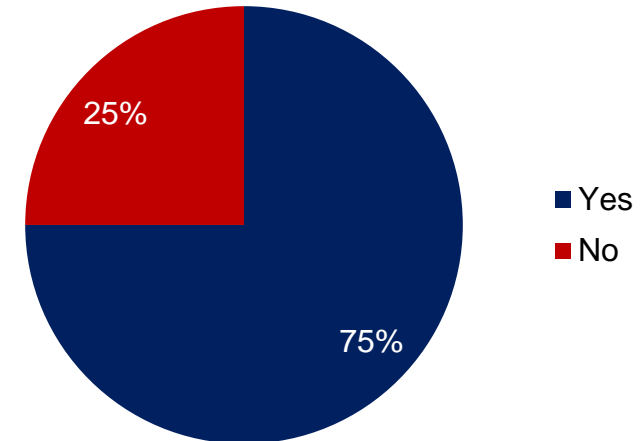
All respondents (n=101) were asked if they live in the Maastricht region.

- 75% live in the Maastricht region.

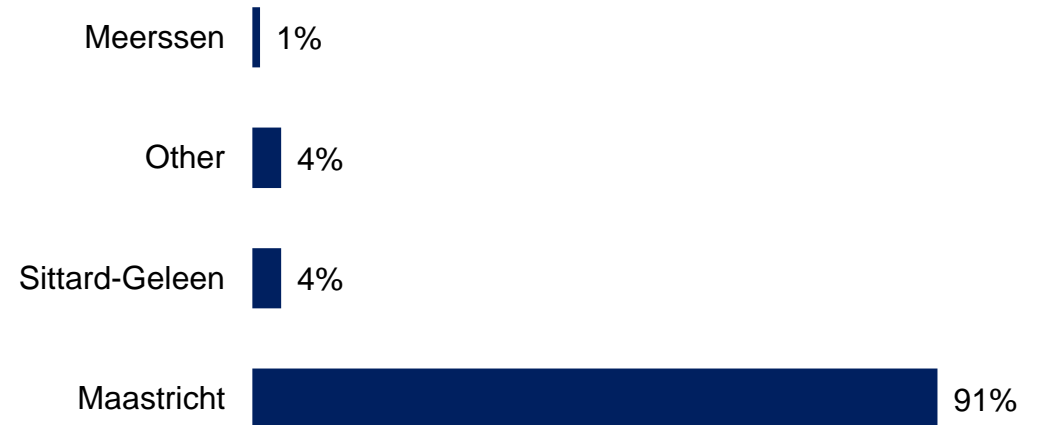
Respondents who live in the Maastricht region were asked in which municipality they live (n=76).

- 91% live in Maastricht.
- 4% live in Sittard-Geleen.
- 4% live in another municipality. These were Beekdaelen and Gulpen.
- 1% live in Meerssen.
- Respondents who do not live in the region most often live in Belgium (n=7) or Germany (n=2).
- The answers are presented in a table in the appendix.

Do you live in the Maastricht Region?



In what municipality do you live?



## 5. Future of living

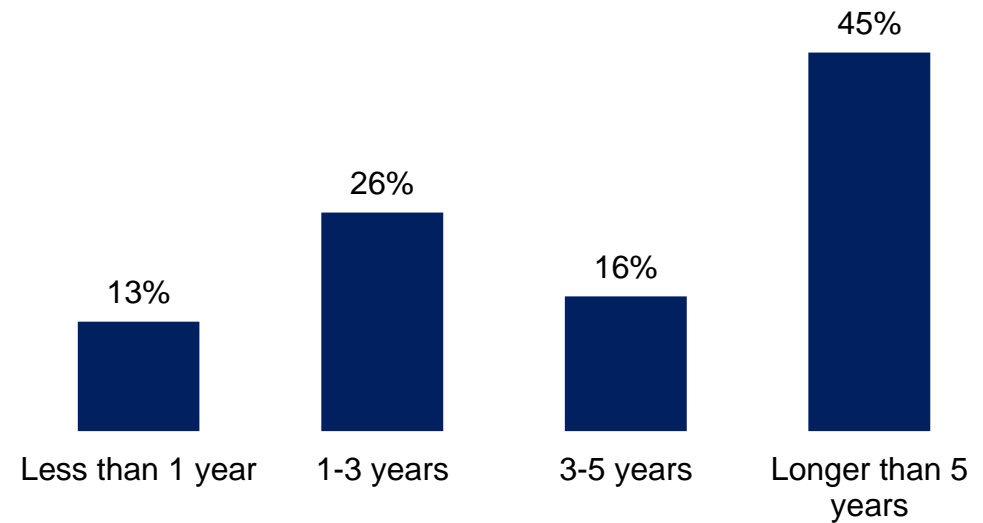
Respondents (n=76) who live in the Maastricht region were asked how long they have lived here.

- 45% have lived in the Maastricht region for more than 5 years.
- 26% have lived here for 1 to 3 years.
- 16% have lived here for 3 to 5 years.
- 13% have lived here for less than 1 year.

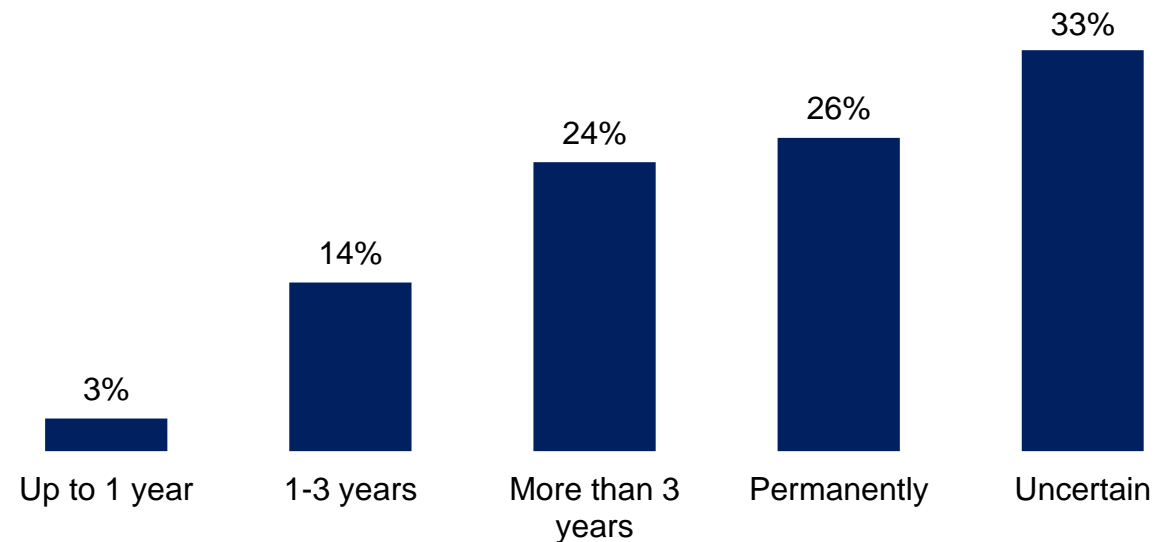
Next, respondents (n=76) were asked how long they plan to continue living in the Maastricht region.

- 33% is uncertain.
- 26% intend to live here permanently.
- 24% intend to live here for more than 3 years.
- 14% intend to live here for 1 to 3 years.
- 3% intend to live here for up to 1 year.

### How long have you been living in the Maastricht Region?



### How long do you intend to live in the Maastricht Region?



## 6. Family characteristics

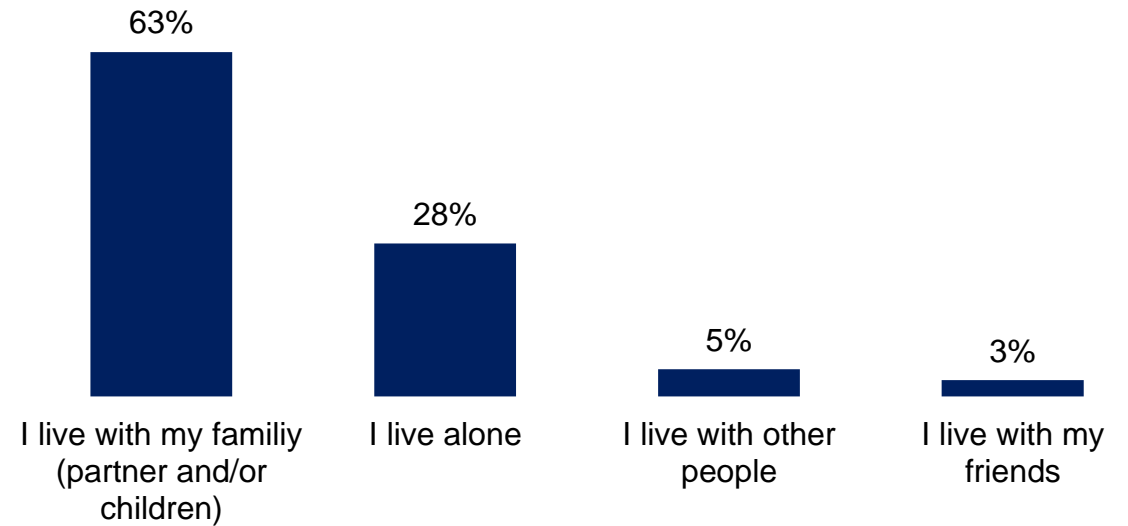
Respondents (n=76) who live in the Maastricht region were asked with whom they live.

- 63% live with family.
- 28% live alone.
- 5% live with other people. These were housemates (n=2), a brother (n=1), and students (n=1).
- 3% live with friends.

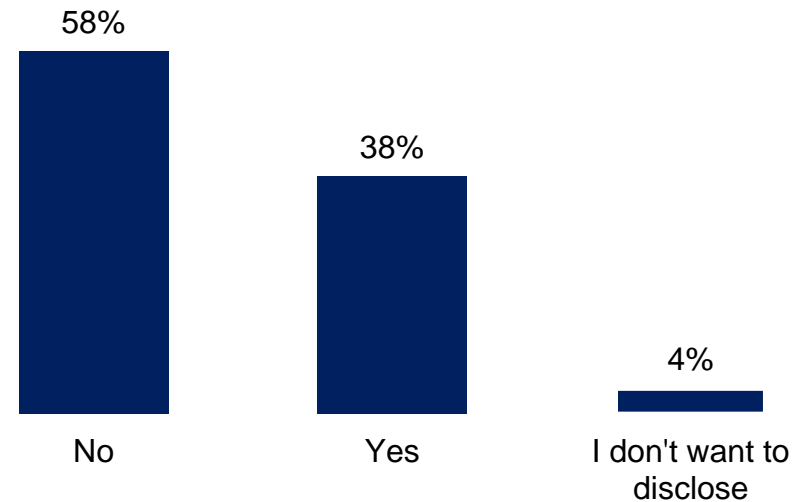
Respondents who live here with their family (n=48) were asked if they have children living with them.

- 58% do not have children living with them.
- 38% have children living with them.
- 4% prefer not to say.

With whom do you live here?



Are there any children in your house?



## 6. Family characteristics

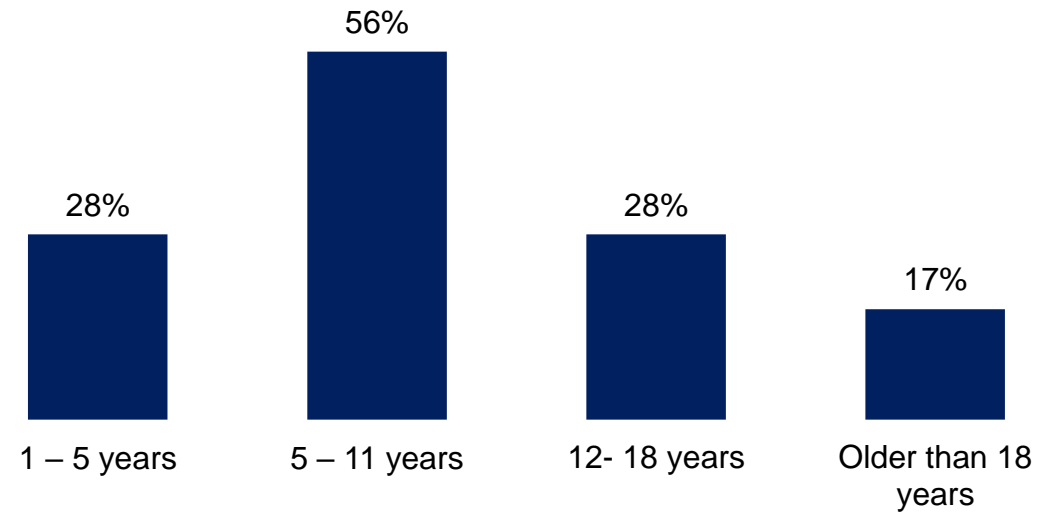
Respondents with resident children (n=18) were asked about the age of these children:

- 56% have children between 5 and 11 years old
- 28% have children between 12 and 18 years old
- 28% have children between 1 and 5 years old
- 17% have children older than 18 years

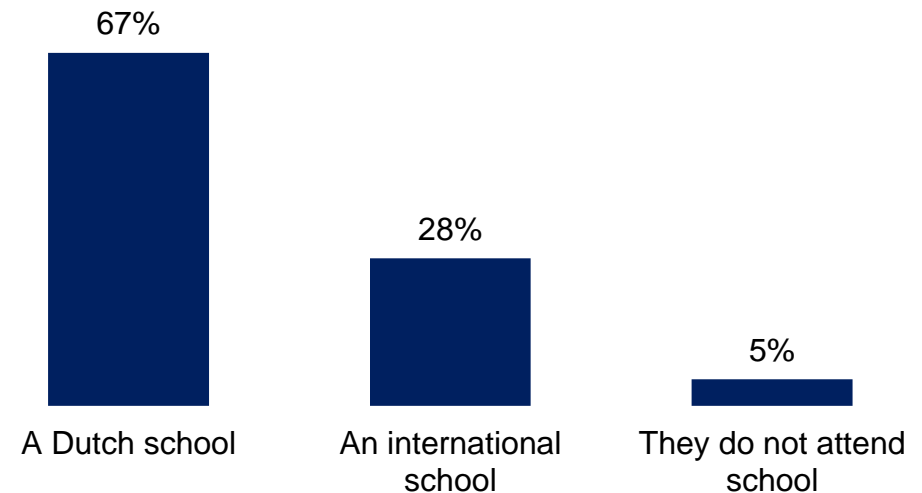
Respondents with resident children (n=18) were asked whether the children attend a Dutch or international school (n=18):

- 67% attend a Dutch school
- 28% attend an international school
- 5% do not (any longer) attend school

What is the age of the children?



Do your children attend a Dutch school or an international school?



## 6. Family characteristics

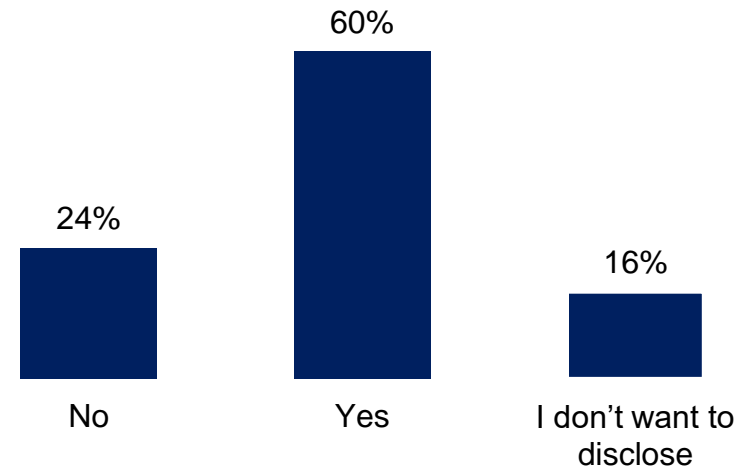
Respondents were asked if they have a partner (n=101):

- 60% have a partner
- 24% do not have a partner
- 16% prefer not to answer

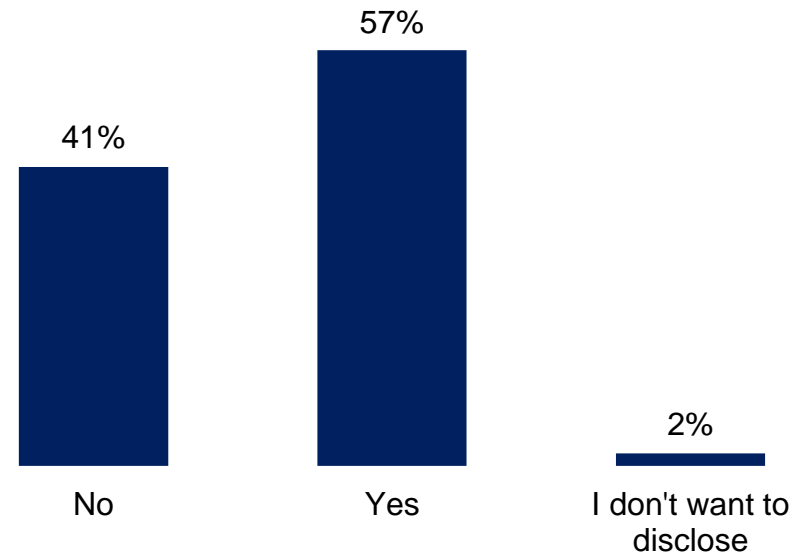
Subsequently, respondents with a partner (n=61) were asked if their partner also works in the Maastricht region:

- 57% have a partner who also works here
- 41% have a partner who does not work here
- 2% prefer not to answer

Do you have a partner?



Does your partner work in the Maastricht Region?

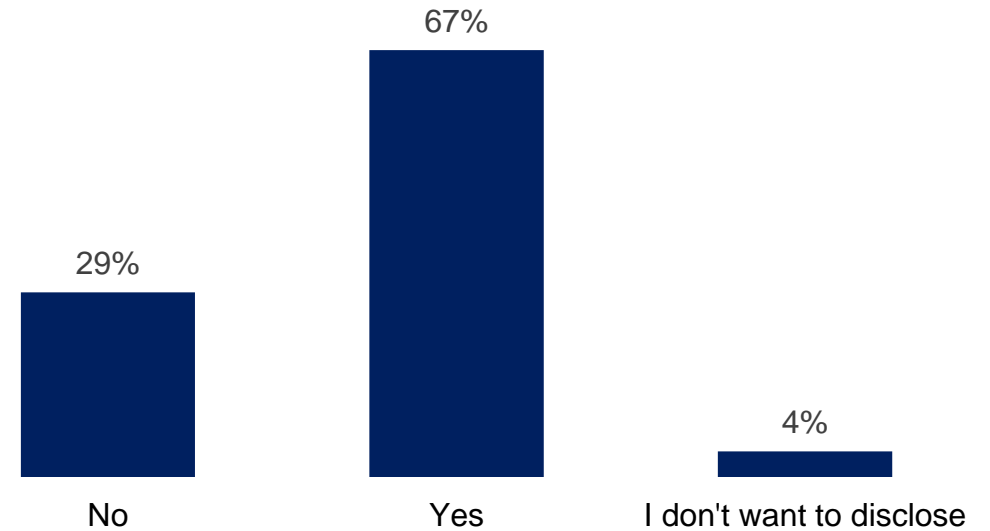


## 6. Family characteristics

Respondents whose partner does not work in the Maastricht region (n=24) were asked if their partner has considered working here:

- 67% indicated that their partner has considered it
- 29% indicated that their partner has not considered it
- 4% prefer not to answer

Has your partner ever considered to work in the Maastricht Region?

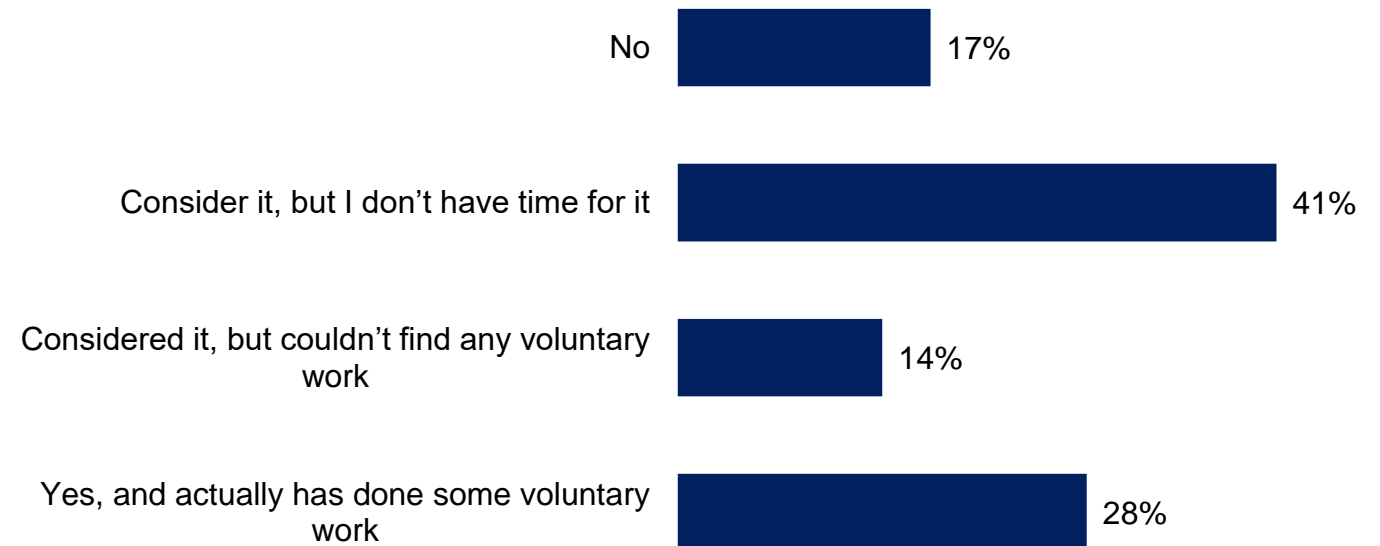


## 7. Volunteering

Respondents living in the Maastricht region (n=76) were asked if they or someone in their household has considered doing volunteer work:

- 41% have considered it but do not have the time
- 28% have done volunteer work
- 17% have not considered it
- 14% have considered it but could not find volunteer work

Did you or anyone else living with you in Maastricht region considered to do voluntary work?



# Results integrating



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## 8. Statements

Respondents who work and/or live in the Maastricht region (n=85) were asked to what extent they agree with two statements.

Statement 1: *'There is enough support from the local community in the Maastricht Region to make internationals feel at home'*

- 34% agree (completely)
- 26% disagree (completely)

Statement 2: *'I feel integrated into Dutch society in the Maastricht region'*

- 38% agree (completely)
- 39% disagree (completely)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

*There is enough support from the local community in the Maastricht Region to make internationals feel welcome*



■ Strongly disagree ■ Disagree ■ Undecided ■ Agree ■ Strongly agree ■ Don't know

*I feel integrated into the Dutch society in the Maastricht Region*



■ Strongly disagree ■ Disagree ■ Undecided ■ Agree ■ Strongly agree ■ Don't know

## 9. Integrating

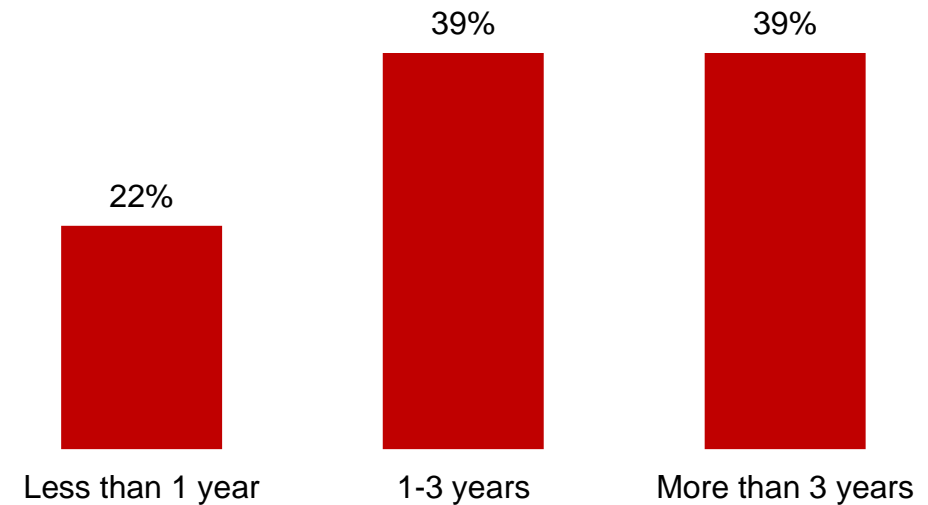
Respondents who feel integrated into Dutch society (n=31) (see previous page) were asked how long it took them to feel integrated:

- 39% said it took 1 to 3 years
- 39% said it took more than 3 years
- 22% said it took less than a year

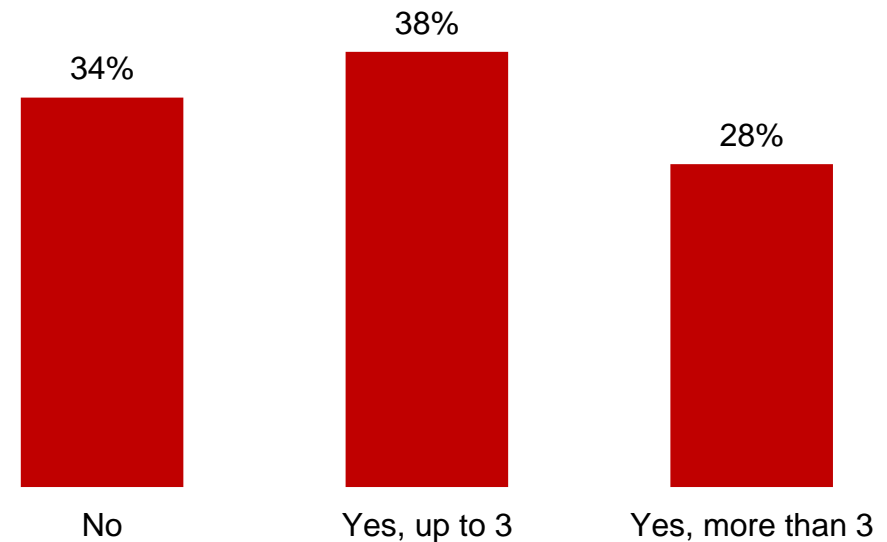
Respondents who work and/or live in the Maastricht region (n=83) were asked if they have local friends:

- 38% have up to 3 local friends
- 34% have no local friends
- 28% have more than 3 local friends

How much time did it take approximately to feel integrated?



Do you have friends who are Maastricht Region locals?



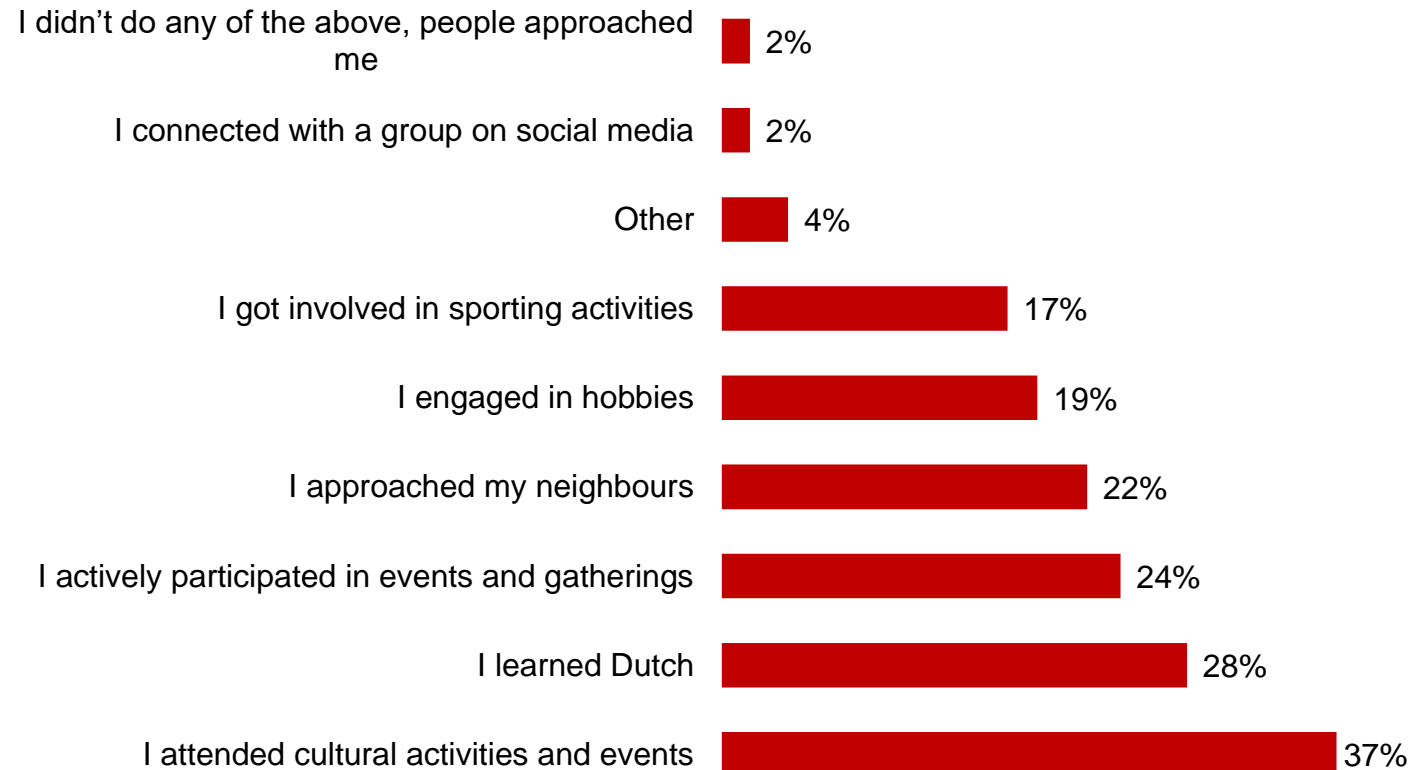
## 10. Help with integrating

Respondents living in the Maastricht region (n=76) were asked what they have done to feel at home in the Maastricht region. Respondents could choose multiple answers:

- 37% attended cultural activities and events
- 28% learned Dutch
- 24% actively participated in events and gatherings
- 22% reached out to neighbors
- 19% took up a hobby
- 17% started participating in sports activities
- 4% mentioned something else

The answers are listed in a table in the appendix.

### What did you do to feel at home in the Maastricht Region?



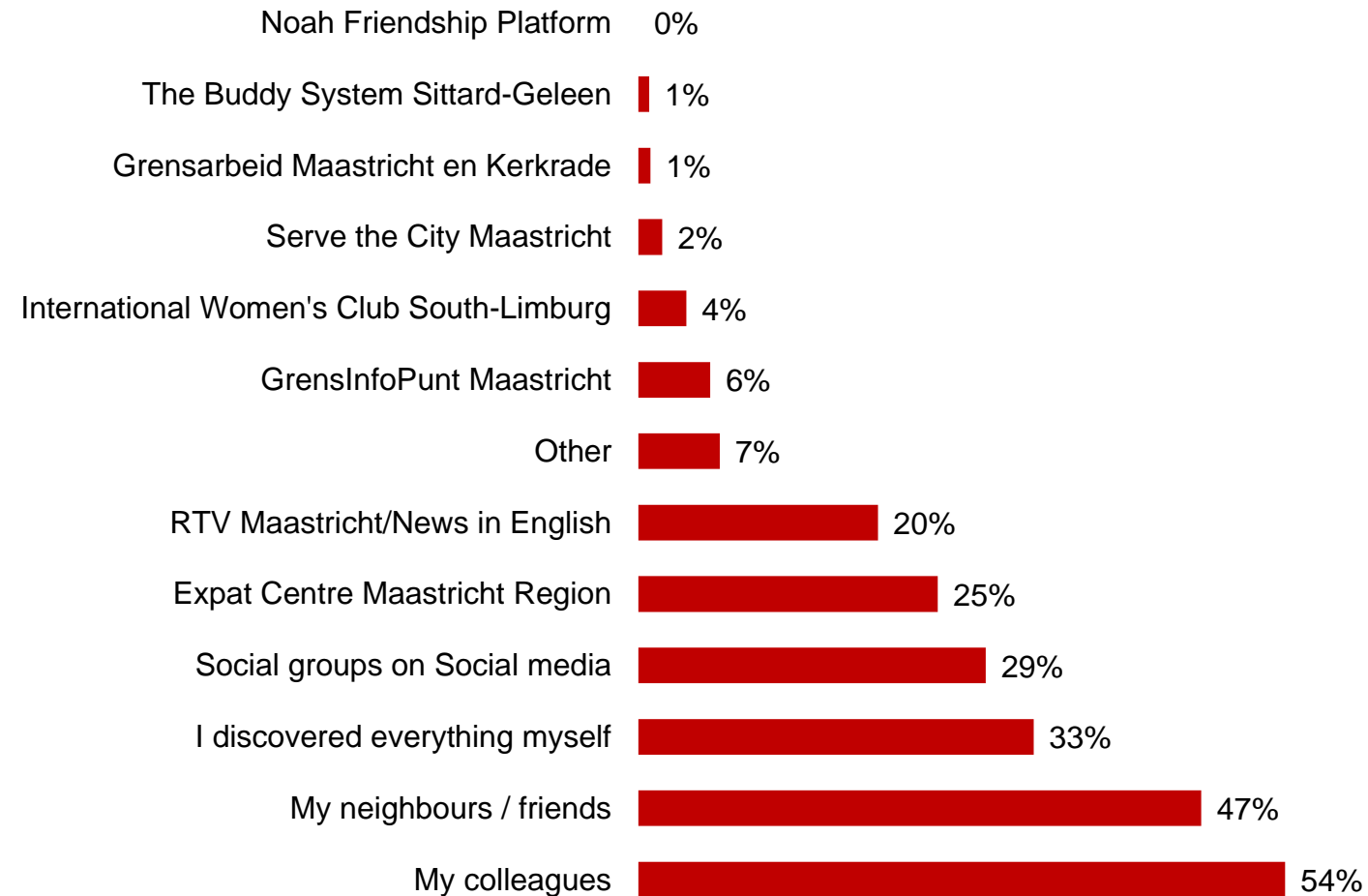
## 10. Help with integrating

Respondents who work and/or live in the Maastricht region (n=85) were asked if any of the mentioned facilities, volunteer organisations, or social groups helped them find their way as newcomers in the Maastricht region. Respondents could choose multiple answers:

- 54% said their colleagues
- 47% said neighbors or friends
- 33% figured everything out themselves
- 29% said groups on social media
- 25% said Expat Centre Maastricht Region
- 20% said RTV Maastricht/News in English
- 7% mentioned something else

The answers are listed in a table in the appendix.

Did any of the following services, volunteer organisations or social groups help you find your way as an international, student or cross-border worker newcomer to the Maastricht Region?



# Results

## ECMR

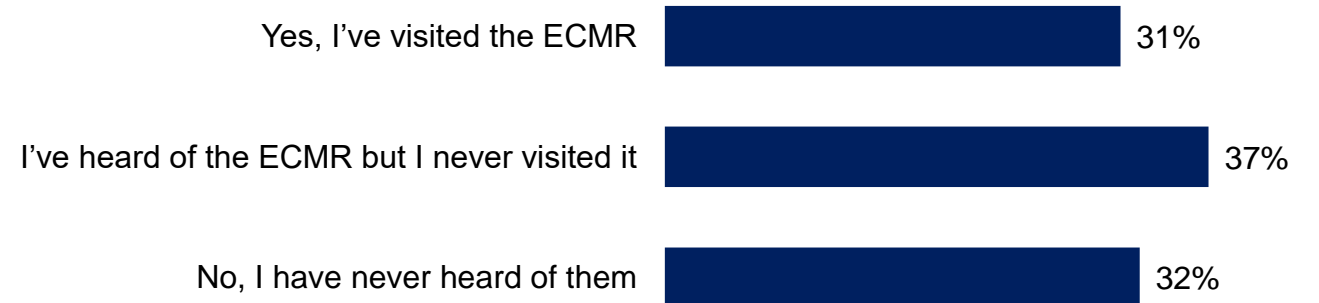


## 11. Familiarity

All respondents were asked if they are familiar with the Expat Centre Maastricht Region (n=97):

- 37% have heard of it but have never visited
- 32% have never heard of it
- 31% have visited the Expat Centre Maastricht Region

Are you familiar with the Expat Centre Maastricht Region?



## 12. Satisfaction

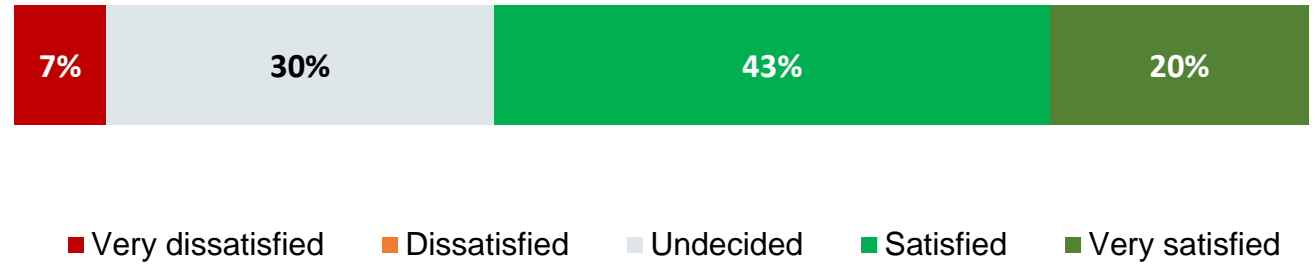
Respondents who have visited the Expat Centre were asked how satisfied they are with the Expat Centre Maastricht Region (n=30):

- 63% are (very) satisfied
- 7% are very dissatisfied
- 30% are neutral

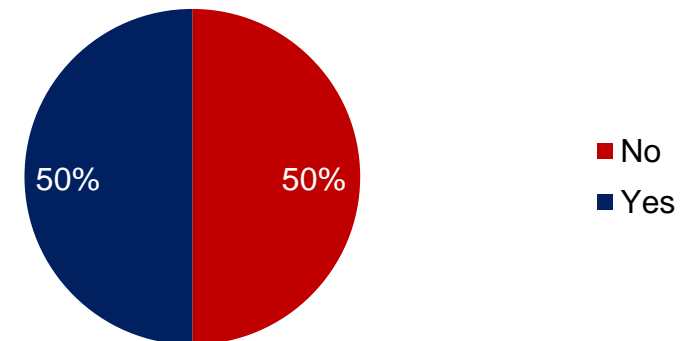
Respondents who have visited the Expat Centre Maastricht Region (n=30) were asked if they are familiar with the events and information sessions they offer:

- 50% are familiar with them
- 50% are not familiar with them

How satisfied are you with the help from the ECMR?



Are you familiar with the events and information sessions they offer?



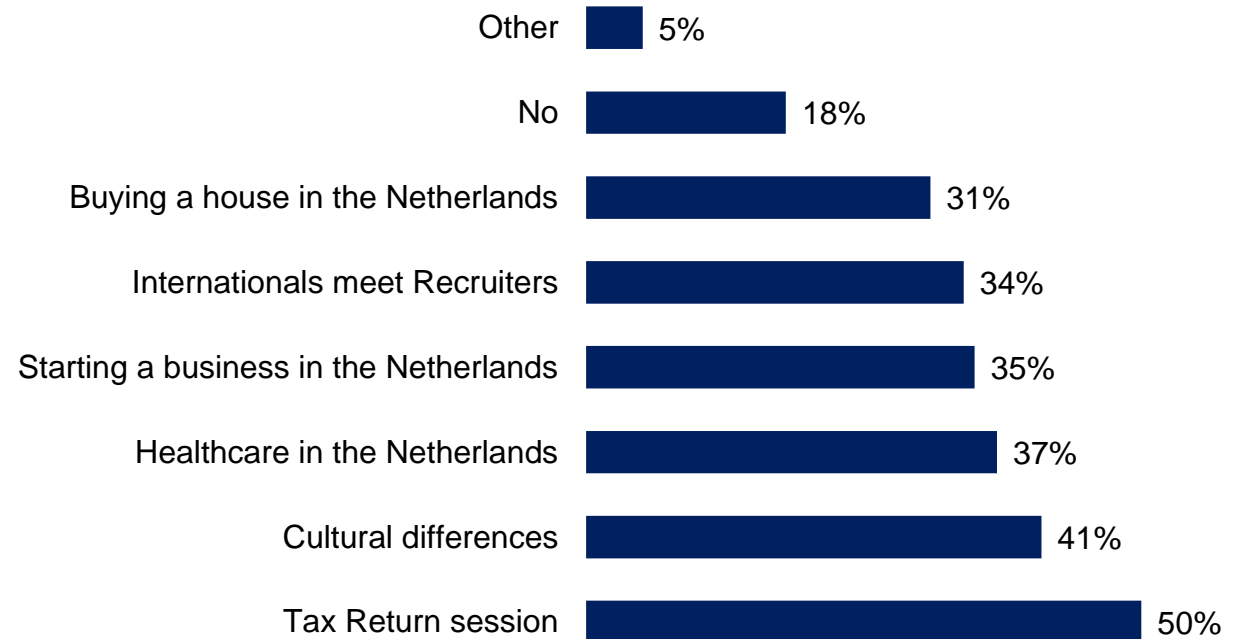
## 13. Events

All respondents (n=97) were asked if they would attend any of the mentioned information sessions or events organised by the Expat Centre Maastricht Region. Respondents could choose multiple answers:

- 50% would attend a session on tax return
- 41% a session on cultural differences
- 37% a session on healthcare in the Netherlands
- 35% a session on starting a business in the Netherlands
- 34% a session with recruiters
- 31% a session on buying a house in the Netherlands
- 18% have no need for an information session
- 5% mentioned something else

The answers are listed in a table in the appendix.

Would you attend any of the following information sessions or events organised by Expat Centre Maastricht Region?





## 14. Informing

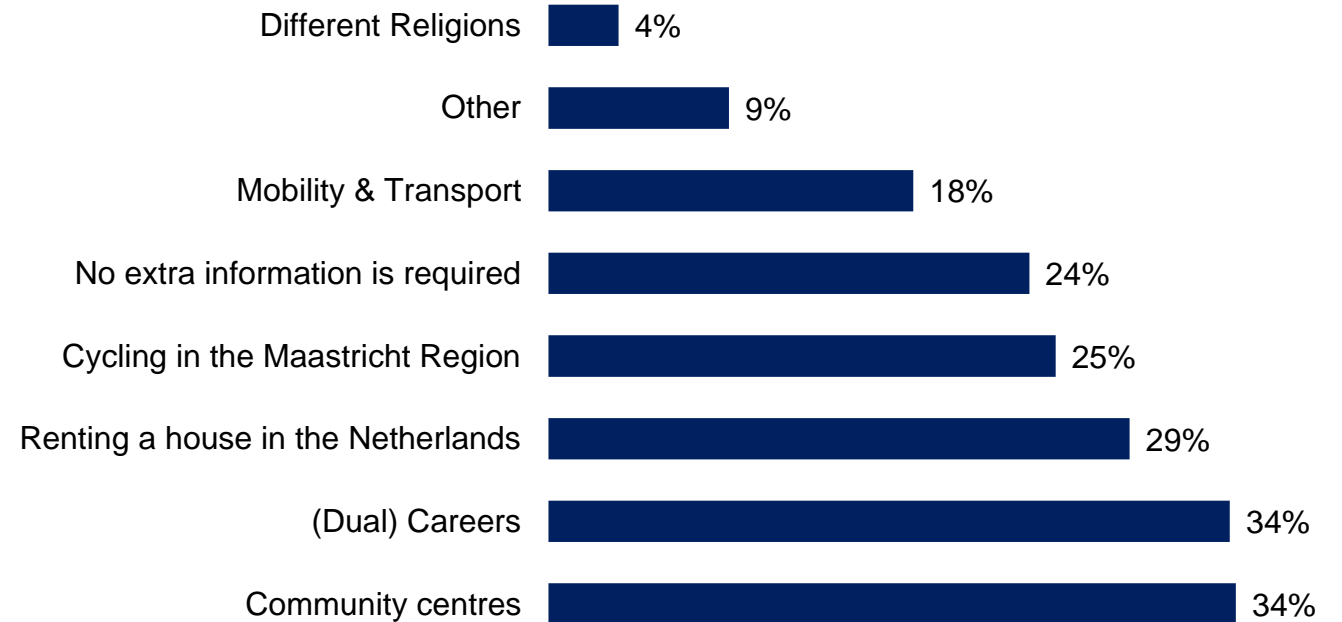
All respondents (n=97) were asked if there are certain topics they want more information about. Respondents could choose multiple answers:

- 34% want more information about community centres and dual careers
- 29% want more information about renting a house in the Netherlands
- 25% want more information about cycling in the Maastricht region
- 24% have no need for additional information
- 18% want more information about mobility and transport
- 9% want more information about something else.

The answers are listed in a table in the appendix.

- 4% want more information about different religions

Are there certain topics you would like more information on?

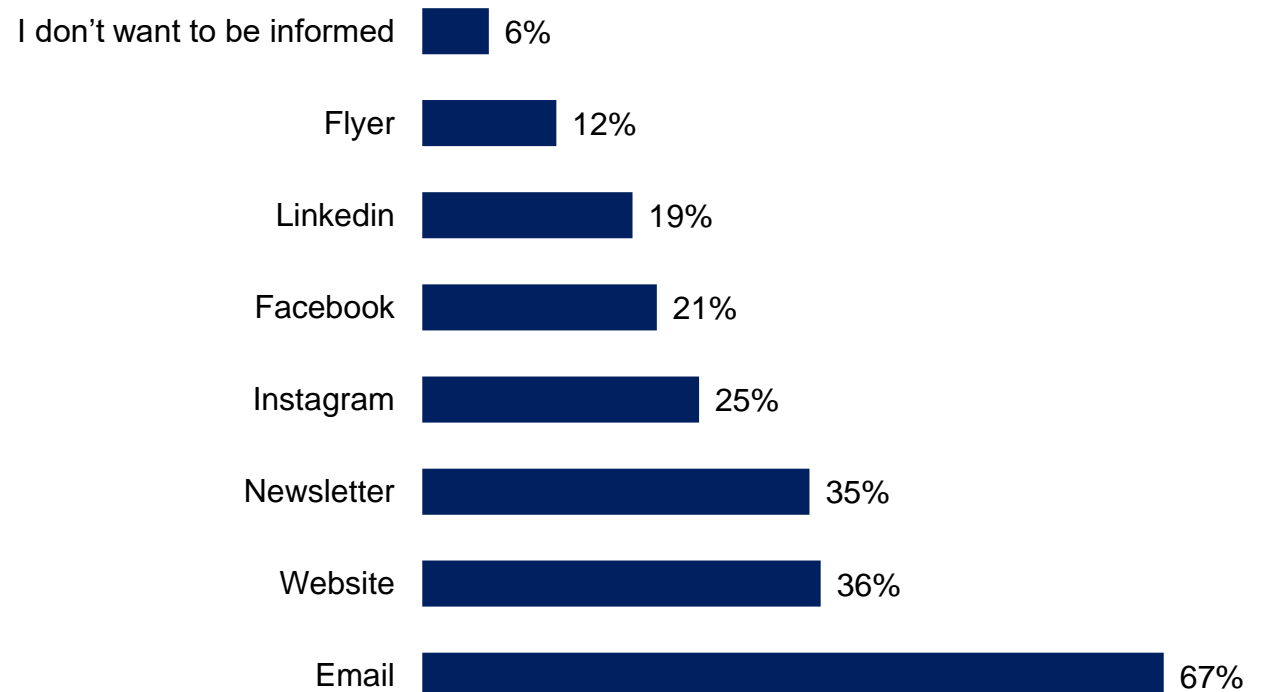


## 14. Informing

All respondents (n=97) were asked how they prefer to be informed about events. Respondents could choose multiple answers:

- 67% prefer via email
- 36% via the website
- 35% via the newsletter
- 25% via Instagram
- 21% via Facebook
- 19% via LinkedIn
- 12% via a flyer
- 6% does not want to be informed

How would you like to be informed by Expat Centre Maastricht Region about upcoming events?



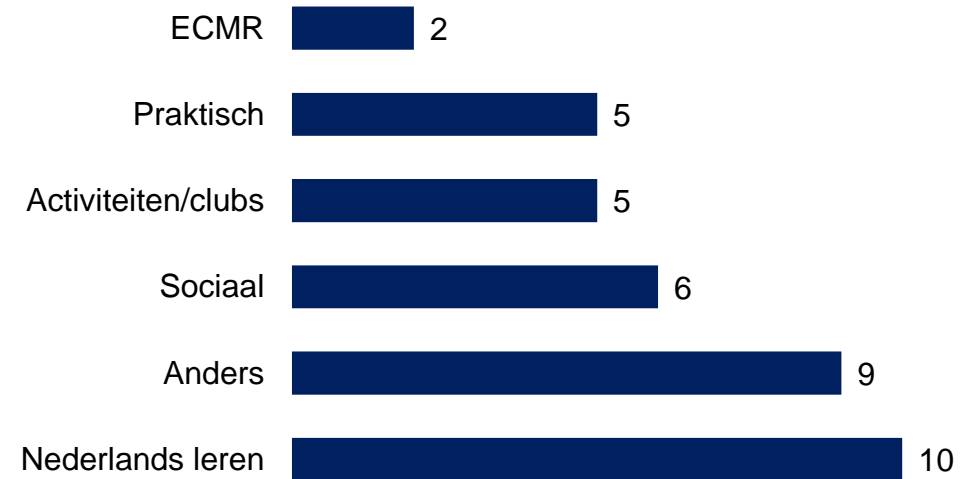
## 15. Advice

All respondents (n=97) were asked if they have any advice for other internationals who have recently moved to Maastricht or started working here. A total of 34 respondents provided a response. The answers were analysed and categorized:

- 10 responses were about learning Dutch
- 9 responses were about other advice
- 6 responses were about social contacts and networking
- 5 responses were about participating in activities or joining clubs
- 5 responses were about practical matters, such as dealing with the tax office or waste collection
- 2 responses were about contacting the ECMR

The responses can be found in a table in the appendix.

Do you have any advice for other internationals that have recently moved to Maastricht or started working here?



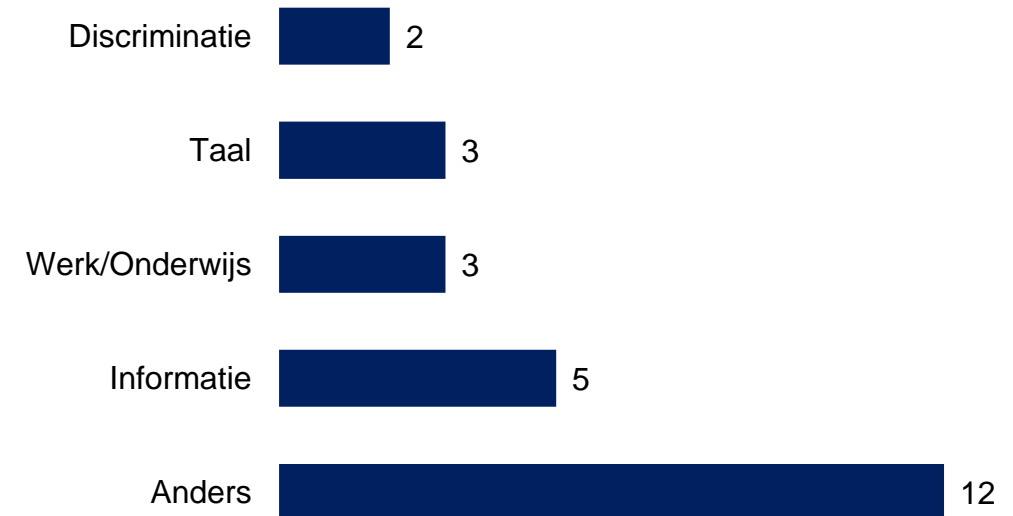
## 16. Other comments

All respondents (n=97) were asked if they have any comments about the questionnaire or if they feel certain important topics were missing. A total of 25 respondents provided a response. The answers were analysed and categorized:

- 12 responses were about something else
- 5 responses were about information
- 3 responses were about work or education
- 3 responses were about language
- 2 responses were about discrimination

The responses can be found in a table in the appendix.

Do you have any remarks about this survey?  
Are there any topics not mentioned which you think are important?



# Results characteristics

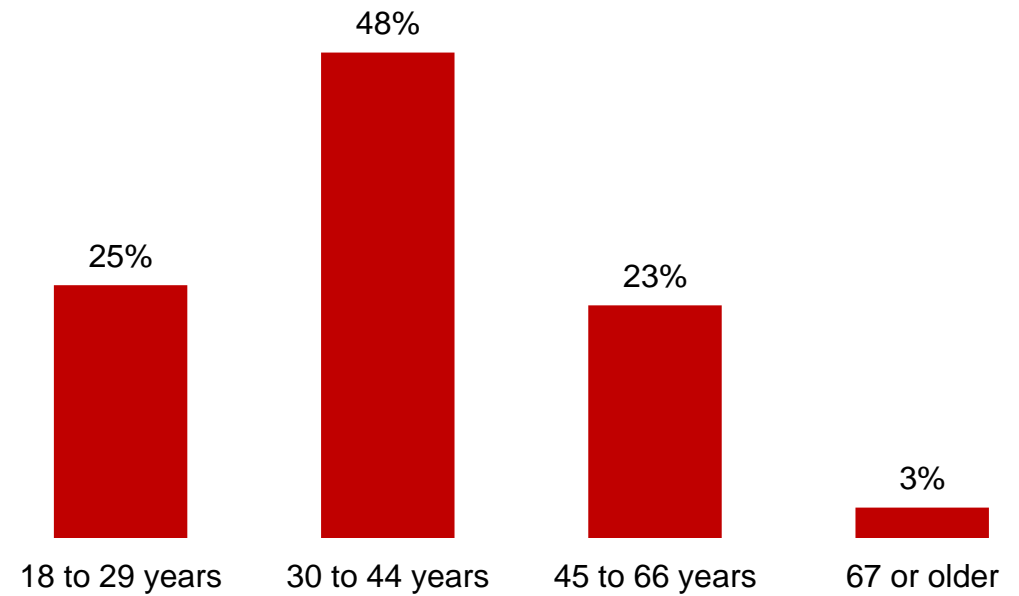


## 15. Age

Respondents (n=95) were asked which age category they belong to:

- 48% are between 30 and 44 years old
- 25% are between 18 and 29 years old
- 23% are between 45 and 66 years old
- 3% are 67 years or older

What is your age?



## 16. Nationality

Respondents (n=95) were asked if they have the nationality of an EU member state:

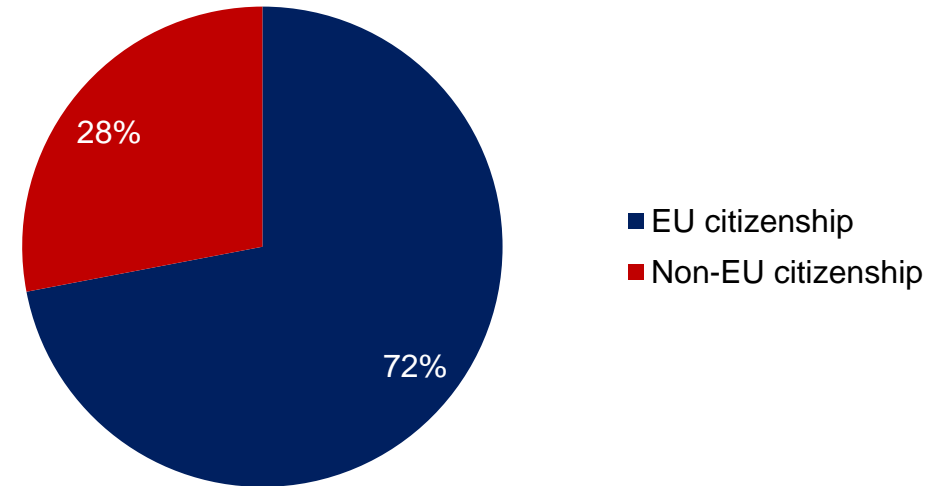
- 72% have the nationality of an EU member state

Most of them have Dutch nationality, followed by German and Spanish nationality. All answers are listed in a table in the appendix.

- 28% have the nationality of a country outside the EU

Most of them have British or Canadian nationality. All answers are listed in a table in the appendix.

Do you have a EU citizenship?

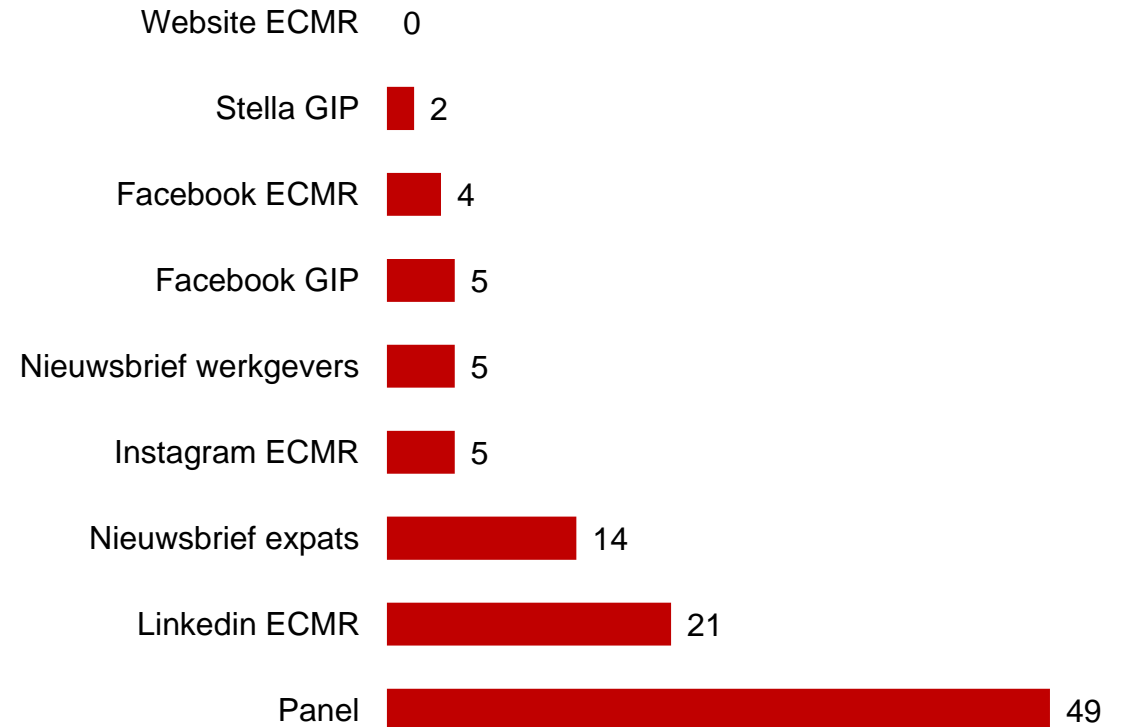


## 16. Channel

The respondents (n=105) were recruited through various channels to complete the questionnaire:

- 49 respondents via the panel
- 21 via ECMR's LinkedIn
- 14 via the newsletter for internationals
- 5 via ECMR's Instagram page
- 5 via the newsletter for employers
- 5 via GIP's Facebook page
- 4 via ECMR's Facebook page
- 2 via Stella GIP
- No one completed the questionnaire via ECMR's website

## Kanaal





# 3. Conclusion and recommendations

## Conclusion

- The response to the questionnaire was insufficient to make a statement about all internationals and cross-border workers in the Maastricht region. This suggests that the recruitment methods (resident panel and open link) did not sufficiently reach the target group and/or the topic of the questionnaire was not interesting enough.
- More than three-quarters of the respondents live and/or work in the Maastricht region. A substantial group (~20%) therefore lives or works elsewhere.
- Respondents have been living and/or working in the region for a long time (>5 years), with newcomers being less represented in this study.
- This may also partly explain why a large proportion of respondents live here with their families, have a significant number of (older) children, and one in three have never heard of the ECMR.
- Respondents were divided on integration and support from the local community.
- The events of the ECMR are relatively unknown among visitors of the ECMR.
- Learning Dutch was the most mentioned tip for integration. This study did not ask whether respondents speak Dutch.

## Recommendations

- Evaluate how well the target group is reached with the current communication channels, and how this can be adjusted. Consider whether you want to serve the group that lives and/or works elsewhere, or refer them.
- Investigate the interest of the target group in the most open way possible. For example, through a group discussion or a poll on social media.
- Try to engage newcomers with the communication channels. For example, during their visit to the ECMR. This is also a good time to highlight the events. Collect their email addresses to keep them informed about events.
- Investigate the success factors and barriers to successful integration, and communicate this to newcomers. This study shows that speaking Dutch, social contacts, and participating in activities have helped internationals.
- Map out various Dutch language courses and ensure that (some of) these are affordable.
- Connect internationals and cross-border workers so they can share tips and tricks with each other.
- Engage in conversation with the target group. Some recommendations can be followed up in a group discussion. Share the outcomes with the target group and professionals who work with this group.

# 4. Accountability

Client	Expat Centre Maastricht Region
Research population	Internationals en cross border werknemers in the Maastricht region (estimated at N=14.640)
Subject	Living, working and integrating in the Maastricht regio
Methods	Online survey
Fieldwork period	Between 17 september and 31 october 2024
Release	Maastricht Forum (English), open link through different online channels.
Response	Maastricht Forum 49 (response 17%), open link: 56

# 5 Appendix



## Open responses

<b>In which industry do you work? Other, that is:</b>
Agrochemical
Cellular agriculture - research startup
Corporate
Customer Service
Law firm - legal services
Non-profit
Photography
Research
Retail
science innovation

<b>What position do you work in? - Open answers</b>
Academic lecturer
Adviseur Kwaliteit en Processen
Assistant Investment Team MKB.
Building Manager
Business owner
Chef
educator
Executive Assistant
Facility maintenance
Language teacher
Lawyer
lecturer and researcher
PhD
Pilates instructor
Primary school teacher
Project/innovation management assistant and sales
scientist
Shop assistant
Student counsellor
Surgery nurse
Teacher
Team Leader
Training, and operations
waitress
Waitress, cook, IT assistant, logistics worker

<b>In what municipality do you live? - Open answers</b>
Beek
Belgium
Gulpen

<b>In what country and municipality do you live? Other</b>
Aachen, Germany
Belgium
Belgium - Bassenge
Belgium - Limburg
Belgium - Maasmechelen
Belgium Riemst
Belgium, Lanaken
Belgium, Maaseik
Belgium, Riemst
Germany Selfkant
The Maastricht region

<b>With whom do you live here? - Open answers</b>
Brother
Flatmate
Housemates
Students

**Did any of the following services, volunteer organisations or social groups help you find your way as an international, student or cross-border worker newcomer to the Maastricht Region? Other:**

Fellow expats we met through the Maastricht Int. Playgroup, UWC Maastricht and international church were lifesavers for us.

Jules & You

mymaastricht.nl

None cares .. discrimination is on high alert in maastricht

Refugee Project Maastricht and FoodBank(lbb)

The church I go to

**What did you do to feel at home in the Maastricht Region? Other**

Colleagues - international sphere of Maastricht

I joined a Dutch speaking church

<b>Would you attend any of the following information sessions or events organised by Expat Centre Maastricht Region? Other</b>
Language (Dutch) help/support/classes
Living in Belgium but working in the Netherlands
More social events to feel welcome and integrated
Retiring in the Netherlands
Sessions for people that have been living here for longer. These sessions are very tailored for new comers / students mainly. Networking sessions for people working in certain industries, ...

<b>Are there certain topics you would like more information on? In the format of an event or information session? Other</b>
Future projects urbanistic
Help with learning the language
How to meet locals
How to socialise with locals
Maybe some talks on how Limburg differs from the rest of the Netherland would be interesting.
support in taxes and document working from home
Waste
Work for women with High Education Level



Do you have a EU citizenship? Open answers	
-	2
Belgian	3
Czech	2
dutch	1
Dutch	8
Dutch, as of 2024 Canadian since birth (still, as dual)	1
French	4
German	5
German Bulgarian	1
Greek	1
Greek,Austrian	1
Hungarian (and American)	1
Irish	1
italian	1
Italian	3
more than one	1
Netherlands	14
Polish	1
Portuguese	4
Romanian	5
Slovak	2
Spanish	6

What is your nationality? (non EU)	
American	2
British	3
Canadian	3
Chinese	1
Indian	2
Indonesian	1
Mexican	1
Nigeria	1
No comment	3
Singaporean	1
Turkish	1
USA	2

**Do you have any advice for other internationals that have recently moved to Maastricht or started working here?**

Ask about the dynamics of throwing away trash. Ask about the rules for driving a car and bicycle.

be patient

Being Dutch I came in 1999 from 10 years abroad to Maastricht. Very difficult to get integrated. Do I am happy the Expat Center exist.

Connect with the International Women's Club of South Limburg.

Don't give up, you will find your way.

Dutch is very useful! But it's hard to feel fully integrated without knowing Limburgs.

enjoy

Get in contact with Expat before or as soon as you arrive in Maastricht, they were incredibly helpful for me to understand what I needed to do.

Get involved in some activities and try to meet people!

Get your Dutch right and engage with the locals as soon as you can.

I don't believe the city of Maastricht to be family friendly. Playgrounds are locked up and inaccessible to kids. Students take over the city, lots of drugs and alcohol consumed in the street. Loud parties at night in the street every night of the week, police can't help the situation. I have been physically attacked in the street by a racist man because I am of Middle East origin although I am an American born and raised. A shop owner was also attacked on Grote Gracht who is from the Middle East. The city is not welcoming nor is it safe. I suggest an alternative location for other expats who are not "white" and who have children.

I find it difficult to finding free and inexpensive language learning opportunities. Have not been able to find any volunteer organizations that accept immigrants without language. Dutch language acquisition is strongly pushed but opportunities to learn are extremely cost prohibitive and largely not available compared all surrounding countries. It is very hypocritical to have such a strong desire or requirement to acquire Dutch language but have so little resources available. The University courses are EXTREMELY cost prohibitive. Finding professional networking impossible. BIG registration for healthcare providers is absurdly timely. No responses from area employers. Very disappointing.

If the Belastingdienst sends you a 70-page tax booklet to fill out, all in Dutch, find out if you really have to fill it out before assuming they knew what they were doing when they sent it to you.

Ignore the mean comments from locals

It's hard to say at this point; we haven't been here for long! But, start looking for a place to rent as soon as possible because it is really really difficult and stressful to find housing here!

It's not true that people will not speak Dutch to you! Even if your Dutch is hesitant and you're struggling, especially in shops they will wait for you to express yourself and it will actually work out!

**Do you have any advice for other internationals that have recently moved to Maastricht or started working here?**

- Join as many local cultural events as possible. It's the best place to meet locals and experience the local culture. Be open-minded about trying new things (food, events, etc)
- Join international groups and be active. Learn basic dutch is also useful.
- Learn all the laws, learn dutch to understand what is possible.
- Learn Dutch asap
- Learn some basic Dutch and attend social events.
- Networking is important, with the most people possible. One day you will find someone who genuinely wants to help.
- No comment
- Reach out to fellow expats as they would likely have similar experiences to the questions you have.
- Say 'yes' to everything in the beginning.
- Start on your drivers license the day you arrive, I have been trying for a year just to pass the written test, Tough going from a commercial driver in the US to not being able to drive.
- Take part in cultural events, make friends with neighbours and parents, learn Dutch and share your own culture and/or language.
- They should pray and mind their business . Locals can never help them but God . Even you reading this will call it nonsense but is fact
- Try to connect with fellow expats via company, school, playgroup, IWC or churches. This is the way to meet people who went through the same process and can point you in the right direction.
- Try to learn Dutch which is very hard for English speakers
- Try to network as much as possible, not just for business but for personal connections.
- use a daylight lamp and supplement vitamin D during autumn/winter
- X
- Yes, get a circle of friend because it could be feel very lonely if you work at home (like me)

**Do you have any remarks about this survey? Are there any topics not mentioned which you think are important?**

Better outreach and information about newtrocking events (if any) for expats.

Companies in Maastrich do not support Employees to get involved and part of the comunity. The impression is that you have to try to make as much money as possible. Job market do not promote staying here or in any other place of The Netherlands.

Discrimination on employment if you are not Dutch is at high level now and hurt education options for adults

Find job for women with high level of education

Help with language is a key aspect that must be covered. Language courses are prohibitively expensive and impossible to combined with the work pressure. It would be great to have enough support apart from 'just figure it out' to actually feel comfortable and welcome in expressing yourself.

I never got informed about how the trash system works and that there is such a specific trash system. I learned everything from friends that were already living here.

Ik ben geen expat, maar grenswerker (NL nationaliteit, werkend in NL, woonachtig in Duitsland) dus niet alle vragen waren op mij van toepassing. Ik ben blij met de hulp en informatie van Grenspunt info (van wie ik de uitnodiging kreeg om de enquete in te vullen)

it is very limited in questions

Learning dutch, tips,

More outreach programs need to be in place. The Expat desk should work more closely with United World College. Should contact HR and admissions departments to find out how the school supports foreign students. Perhaps have an education liason office within the department

no

Opportunities to practice the language

Regionalism; I've learned that locals are ambivalent about expats here.

See above.

Social isolation

Thank you for gathering this information!

The issue of people in the center, trying to sell you things near the coffee shops, is quite annoying / dangerous

There are some topics mentioned in the survey, specifically related to activities or groups that would be good to know more of. Sessions for this topics / groups or organizations would make sense for people that have decided to stay longer than just a few years here.

Why not also in Dutch?

Why not kickstart an expat "fellow" program? Experienced expats can help guide new expats in the region; good opportunity to network too!

X

You should ask about safety and things that promote a healthy environment such as noise pollution. Drug use etc.



Team

# Onderzoek & Statistiek

Do you have any questions or comments about this report?

The researchers from department O&S, team datagedreven sturen are happy to assist you.

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