



The Hague

2030

The Hague

Climate City Contract

2028

Commitments

2026

2024



Commitments

City of The Hague

2024

Annex 1: Climate Action Plan

Annex 2: Climate Investment Plan

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How To Read

The Climate City Contract (CCC) is another step towards The Hague realising its climate ambition: a climate-neutral city by 2030. The CCC consists of three parts: Commitments, the Climate Action Plan and the Climate Investment Plan. It connects local sustainability policies with the structure and logic of the 100 Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities in 2030 mission, which is carried out by NetZeroCities consortium (NZC) on behalf of the European Commission.^{2,3} The CCC is based on the following principles:

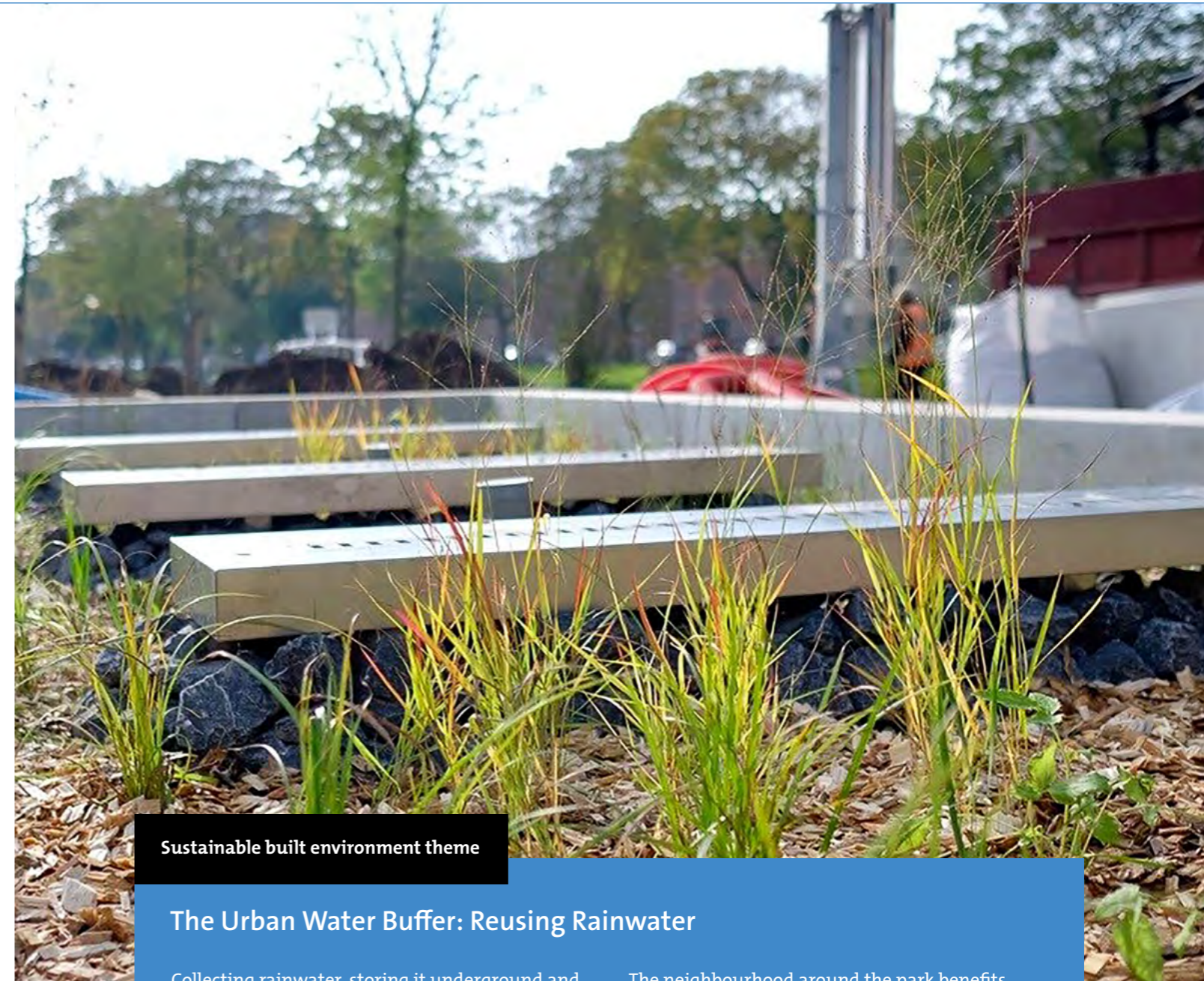
The Climate City Contract is a Dynamic Document

For The Hague, the CCC is a means to bring closer the ambition of a climate-neutral city by 2030. It maps existing and planned actions and places them in (an EU) perspective. Many climate actions will be further developed and made concrete in the coming years, which is why the CCC should be seen as a snapshot of where we currently are. We will publish revised versions every two years until 2030 (after 2024, updates will be published in 2026 and 2028). Each subsequent version will provide more concrete answers and solutions.

The Climate City Contract is a document of The Hague and Europe

The European Commission identifies the CCC as one of the building blocks of the 100CNSC mission. It is important for Europe that The Hague CCC is recognisable within this system; for The Hague, the CCC has to fit within the context of the city's policy, which is why it deviates on a number of points from the 100CNSC templates. Annex 1 of the Climate Action Plan contains an overview of the contents of the CCC templates and the translation into The Hague CCC.

The terminology used in this Contract also at times deviates from the CCC formats and guidelines in favour of local terms. This is always preceded by an explanation of these terms using 100CNSC terminology as a reference point.



Sustainable built environment theme

The Urban Water Buffer: Reusing Rainwater

Collecting rainwater, storing it underground and reusing it on hot days: it is happening in The Hague's Cromvliet Park. With money from the European Interreg fund, in 2020 an Urban Water Buffer that can hold 35 million litres of rainwater was constructed.

The Urban Water Buffer is a circular system. On days when it rains heavily, the water is collected and purified in a sand filter, and is then stored in an underground sand layer. During hot periods, it is pumped back up and used to water the plants in the park, and to provide water for the petting zoo and the vegetable gardens.

The neighbourhood around the park benefits from the underground storage in two ways. On days when it rains heavily, there is less flooding. And in the summer, residents can visit a park that is both greener and cooler, because plants that are well watered are able to more effectively cool themselves through transpiration. The Cromvliet Park is a textbook example of climate-adaptive design in the city.

The city has created a Guide to Climate-Proofing The Hague, which is designed for parties that want to work on making The Hague more resistant to the consequences of climate change. The guide includes, among other things, a step-by-step plan for climate-adaptive design.

² NetZeroCities is a European consortium of 34 parties financed by the European Commission to implement the 100CNSC mission. This is financed under Horizon Europe.

³ There are 112 participating cities: 100 within the European Union and 12 from associated countries.

2

Our City



Figure 1: Peace Palace

The Hague is known worldwide as the international city of peace and justice. It is the political centre of the Netherlands and home to more than 200 different international organisations, such as the International Criminal Court, the International Court of Justice, the Permanent Court of Arbitration and over 100 embassies. This international profile is rooted in a tradition that goes back to the Hague Peace Conference in 1899.

Climate, peace, and justice are inextricably linked, which is why the area covered by the International Court of Justice now also extends to the consequences of climate change. In 2023, the court considered the question of what climate obligations states have, and what the legal consequences are if they damage the climate through their (in)action.

The Hague is also a lively and fast-growing city. The Hague currently has more than 560.000 residents, and this is expected to grow to

more than 600.000 by 2030. This makes it the third largest city in the Netherlands and the largest Dutch city by the sea, with eleven kilometres of coastline. Our economy is home to approximately 70.000 companies, including a wide array of local, national, and international start- and scale-ups.

The Hague offers a unique mix of urban life and valuable nature. The city has eleven ecozones and The Hague's dunes are part of the Hollandse Duinen (Dutch Dunes) National Park.



Figure 2: Nationaal Park/National Parc Hollandse Duinen

Various parts of the city have Natura 2000 status. We are proud of our nature, take care of it and, where necessary, take steps to preserve and restore it.

At the same time, The Hague's coastal location poses spatial challenges for our city. The Hague has very little space to accommodate the expected population growth; the sea forms a natural border and it is not possible to expand the built environment within the municipal boundaries. The Hague must therefore densify its built environment. This results in complex choices and considerations about the use of the available space for achieving its objectives: accommodating more residents while maintaining a flourishing economy and a healthy, sustainable living environment.

The Hague is also a city full of contradictions. Of the four major cities in the Netherlands,⁴ The Hague is the most segregated, socially and economically. This is visible and tangible in the city. Inequality can be seen in analyses of energy issues, health, and green space in The Hague's neighbourhoods. The neighbourhoods with the lowest incomes also appear to be those with many poorly insulated homes, with a lot of heat stress and little access to green spaces. Consequently, the most vulnerable neighbourhoods in The Hague also face a major challenge in terms of an energy transition and greening. The sustainability challenge, therefore, also has a clear social component.



Sustainable mobility theme

DEEL: Share a Car With Your Neighbours

You have a car, but be honest: how often do you use it? The street is full of cars, but 95 percent of the time they are stationary. A waste of space, thought the initiators of DEEL, an initiative in The Hague to share electric lease cars with local residents. The structure for this is the neighbourhood cooperative.

At DEEL, residents are in control. They determine the rules for car sharing in their own neighbourhood: which cars they use, the rules, and the price. In practice, a shared car replaces several private cars. This creates more space for public

greenery or bicycle parking. Residents who participate in DEEL can work together on developing new ways to use public space. And those who rarely use their own car also save money.

DEEL, a not-for-profit, offers residents tools to help them set up their own cooperative. In The Hague, six neighbourhoods have already established cooperatives, and the success of DEEL has spread to Amsterdam and Utrecht, with the city of Rotterdam also interested in developing the initiative.

⁴ In order of population size: Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, and Utrecht.

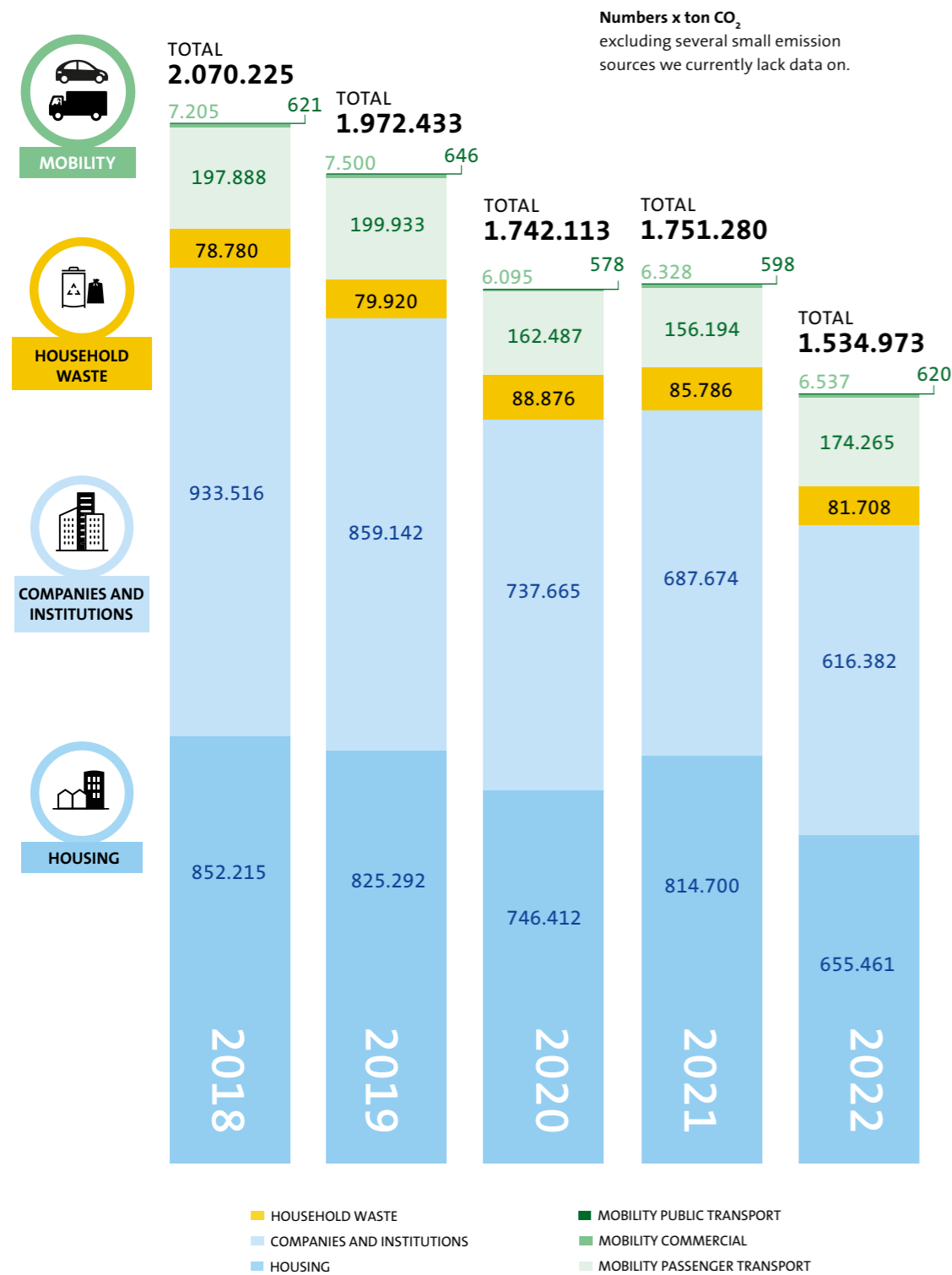


Figure 3: CO₂ emissions of The Hague 2018 – 2022 (Source: The Hague CO₂ scanner)

2.1 Our Ambition

The Hague, the citizens of The Hague and The Hague’s natural environment deserve a beautiful, sustainable future. To make The Hague future proof, the city has been working on sustainability for many years. In 2008, The Hague was one of the first municipalities to join the EU Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, the largest European network of local authorities for climate neutrality and adaptation.

In 2017, a majority group in The Hague city council took the initiative to create The Hague Climate Pact that stated the ambition to be climate-neutral by 2030. The Pact, signed in 2018 by approximately 300 parties, contains tools to help work on the ambition to be climate-neutral.⁵ In 2018, the mayor and aldermen adopted this ambition in their coalition agreement. This ambition has since been repeated by each new coalition and is also included in the current coalition agreement.⁶

In April 2023, The Hague Climate Pact was followed up with the process to arrive at a Hague Climate Agreement (HKA, see [chapter 3](#)). The participating parties in the HKA - companies, residents, and institutions - endorse The Hague’s climate ambition and translate this into action. Consequently, The Hague’s participation in the EU mission 100 Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities is fully in line with the city’s existing ambitions and actions.

Along with the ambition of climate neutrality by 2030, The Hague is also committed to national and international goals. The Netherlands is one of the 196 states that signed the Paris Climate Agreement in 2015. This sets the target of a 49 percent greenhouse gas emission reduction in 2030 compared to 1990. In the Netherlands, this has been translated into the National Climate Agreement and has since been re-established to the aim to reduce emissions by 60 percent in 2030. In 2020, the European Union also re-established its climate goals with the European Climate Law: a climate-neutral EU by 2050 and reducing CO₂ emissions by 55 percent by 2030.⁷ The Hague is committed to these national and international goals.

The municipality has an important role in tackling inequality in the city, and the transitions required for a future-proof city create opportunities to address this. The City of The Hague is committed to ensuring that subsidies predominantly benefit the people who need them most, so that everyone can participate in the climate transition. And the municipality prioritises making the most urbanised neighbourhoods of The Hague greener, making vulnerable neighbourhoods healthier and more liveable. This ensures that climate neutrality and climate justice go hand in hand. Because every resident of The Hague has the right to a future-proof, safe and healthy place to reside and to work.

⁵ Dit is het Haags Klimaatpact 2030 - Haags Klimaatpact

⁶ Haags akkoord 2023-2026 (raadsinformatie.nl)

⁷ EUR-Lex - 32021R1119 - EN - EUR-Lex (europa.eu)

The Hague sees this as a key element in the approach to climate neutrality. The eyes of the world are on The Hague as an international city of peace and justice, including in the field of climate action. And it is precisely because of this special international role in creating a future proof world that the city itself should not lag behind. That is why The Hague aims to commit itself to a just transition within its own borders. Our ambition for a climate-neutral city is that of a city that takes its own responsibility, locally and internationally.

2.2 Our Emissions

In 2022, the city of The Hague emitted 1.534.973 tons of CO₂.⁸ This number is the sum of the emissions that take place within our city limits, the emissions released during the production of the energy that The Hague uses, and the emissions connected to processing our household waste. The CO₂ emissions released during the production of everything else that is imported to the city - the food, clothing and belongings of the city's residents, the emissions from materials used in construction, and the construction of vehicles used in the city – is excluded.

In 2022, the city's CO₂ emissions were approximately 27 percent lower compared to 2018, the year that The Hague uses as its baseline year for this CCC. This decrease is mainly due to lower energy use in the built environment; in homes, companies, and institutions. Though important progress was made in improving energy efficiency and development of the district heating network, it is not possible to say how effective these measures were in terms of CO₂ reduction.

This is because it has been documented that the rise of gas prices due to the phase-out of gas extraction in Groningen and geopolitical unrest has a significant impact on the use of natural gas as well. Figure 3 shows the decrease between 2018 and 2022 and the distribution between emission sectors (emission domains).

According to the 100CNCS methodology, in order to achieve The Hague's climate ambition, our emissions need to decrease by 80 to 100 percent by 2030 compared to 2018.⁹ This translates into a maximum of 398.305 tons of CO₂ emissions by 2030.

2.3 Our Priorities

The City of The Hague has worked with four sustainability themes since 2018: energy transition, sustainable mobility, circular economy, and sustainable built environment. The EU mission 100CNCS has six emission domains. To make the CCC applicable to the local policy environment, the EU domains 'energy systems' and 'built environment' are combined under the theme 'energy transition' and 'circular economy', 'green industry', and 'nature-based solutions' are combined under 'circular economy'.

Sustainable built environment is an integral part of climate actions. Since it focuses on mitigation it is not linked to any of the 100CNCS emission domains.

100CNCS Emission domains and The Hague sustainability themes



Energy systems and Built environment: Energy transition

The transition of our energy supply from fossil fuels to renewable sources. This theme also includes insulation and other energy-saving activities. After all: energy you do not use, does not need to be generated.



Mobility & transport: Sustainable mobility

The transition to an emission-free mobility system. This can be summarised in three key words: reduce, change and make cleaner. Reducing the number of traffic movements and the number of kilometres that people travel, changing travel behaviour so that people more frequently choose more sustainable ways of traveling, and making existing modes of transport cleaner, more economical and efficient. When designing public spaces, we make choices that promote walking, cycling and the use of public transport or car sharing.



Circular economy, green industry, and nature-based solutions: circular economy

The transition from a linear economy with a continuous demand for finite resources and large waste flows to an economy based on value retention of raw materials. Reuse of raw materials is the norm in a circular economy. As a result, the demand for primary raw materials decreases, as does the production of waste.



Sustainable built environment

Working towards a city that is both sustainable and future-proof. This city is climate-neutral and resistant to the effects of climate change, such as heat stress and flooding, and at the same time accessible, safe, and pleasant to live and stay in. The sustainable city is green and healthy for people, plants, and animals.

⁸ Which emissions are included within the 100CNCS framework is discussed in detail in our Climate Action Plan.

⁹ Complete CO₂ remission reduction is the principal objective of the 100CNCS mission. However, the guidelines in the Info Kit for Cities state that a maximum of 20% of emissions from the baseline year (2018 for The Hague) can be compensated by Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) or carbon credits.

To give substance to these themes the municipality develops four sustainability agendas in 2024, one for each theme. These agendas, which will be updated annually, contain the municipal plans in the field of sustainability in the period 2023 - 2026, which is the policy period of the current The Hague board of mayor and aldermen. Based on these agendas, the elements deemed most essential to achieving our climate ambition were selected for this CCC. These can be translated into the City's strategic priorities.¹⁰ The Hague has identified the following three strategic interventions linked to the four sustainability themes:

2.3.1 Priority 1: Retrofitting Homes to Stop Using Natural Gas (Energy Transition)

The City of The Hague aims to reduce the use of gas in the coming years. Heating using natural gas is one of the largest sources of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the city. The phasing out of gas extraction in the Netherlands along with current geopolitical developments also mean that the natural gas supply is less stable than it was before. Consequently, in the years to come buildings in the city will be switched from gas to alternative heat sources, such as residual heat from the Port of Rotterdam or geothermal heat.

To make this switch successful, it is crucial to begin insulating large numbers of buildings across the city. Some alternative heat sources have a lower (water) temperature, so good insulation is critical to ensure an indoor temperature comparable to that achieved using gas as a heating source. That is why The Hague has the

objective to annually provide 10.000 existing homes with an energy efficient label (A, B, or C) until 2030. This will contribute to ensuring that the approximately 100,000 homes in The Hague that currently have an energy label of E or lower will receive a higher energy label by 2030 at the latest.

This will prepare the built environment to stop using natural gas for heating along with increasing energy efficiency, thus decreasing energy demand.

2.3.2 Priority 2: Zero-Emission Zone (Sustainable Mobility and Sustainable Built Environment)

The City of The Hague focuses on decreasing, changing and improving the mobility system. We aim to create a modal shift: a shift from car use to increased walking, biking, and use of public transport. We also focus on decreasing the number of commutes and kilometres made in the city by stimulating working from home and improving the efficiency of the current mobility and logistical networks. Central to our efforts is the step-by-step rollout of a zero-emission zone.

The Hague currently has an environmental zone in the city centre. From 2025, this will become a zero-emission zone for logistics. We are currently looking into expanding the categories of vehicles that have to comply with the stricter emission rules. Because zero-emission vehicles are expensive to purchase, transitional arrangements will be introduced for parties that need

longer to meet the target, such as small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

While CO₂ reduction through rollout and expansion of the zero-emission zone is initially relatively small (the logistics sector is responsible for less than three percent of the CO₂ emissions from the mobility sector), in the longer term the reduction potential is much greater; more zones, and more extensive zones, mean a greater effect. The ZE zone will improve air quality in the city significantly, while the deposition of nitrogen in The Hague's Natura 2000 areas on the coast will be reduced. This makes the rollout of this zone highly relevant for the sustainable built environment in our city as well.

2.3.3 Priority 3: Circular Construction (Circular Economy)

Europe's goal is to have a fully circular economy by 2050, where the reuse of raw materials is the norm. This requires a different structure of our economy. This makes the transition to a circular economy highly complex. That is why the Netherlands has set an interim target of achieving an economy in which raw material use is halved by 2030. Estimates from the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (in short: PBL) indicate that halving raw material use can lead to a 15 percent reduction in total CO₂ emissions.

To achieve this strategic priority, The Hague still has a lot of work to do. It is expected that a significant part of the intended reduction can be achieved by building more sustainably, through the reuse of materials and scaling up 'bio-based' construction. What kind of CO₂

reduction this could yield has not yet been properly calculated. However, we do know that the construction sector uses large quantities of materials, that we have a significant housing shortage, and that we are expected to see a steady grow in population, further increasing the need for construction. In 2024, the municipality will formulate clear ambitions for the sustainable use of materials in new construction. This priority will be more clearly defined in the next CCC (2026).

¹⁰ Strategic priorities as defined in the CCC guidelines 'should be meaningful changes that will have a profound impact on reducing GHG emissions in [our] city'.

3

Collaboration and Cooperation



Figure 4: Participants of a climate round table listen to a presentation

“The task is great, but together we can achieve a lot!” This slogan is central to the municipality’s communication about sustainability. The municipality is well aware that it is only one player in a large and complicated playing field. We cannot do everything ourselves, and we do not want to. We can only successfully complete our climate challenge if the entire city feels it is important. This is why the municipality wants to join forces in a variety of ways with other parties in the city, including organised groups and residents of The Hague.

3.1 The Hague Climate Agreement

The Hague Climate Agreement (or Haags Klimaataakkoord, in short: HKA) is an important document in the transition to a climate-neutral city. With the HKA, The Hague wants to create momentum and a joint agenda together with companies, organisations, and residents to take concrete steps towards a climate-neutral city in the years to come.

To create the Climate Agreement, the municipality started a participation process with parties in the city in April 2023. This included professional organisations such as housing associations, the regional transport company, the water company, universities and colleges, as well as active resident initiatives, such as energy and car-sharing cooperatives. The international community is also involved and non-profit organisations, embassies and representations have participated in an English-

language branch of this process. In total, about 160 different parties had discussions with the municipality and with each other, with the aim of supporting one another to take positive steps forward in the climate transition. The parties covered the four climate themes of The Hague: energy transition, sustainable mobility, circular economy and sustainable living environment.

This cooperation leads to the first version of the HKA in April 2024. The participating parties put their names under climate deals: agreements between two or more parties to arrive at a concrete plan for sustainability. This means that achieving The Hague's sustainability ambitions becomes a joint responsibility with the city.

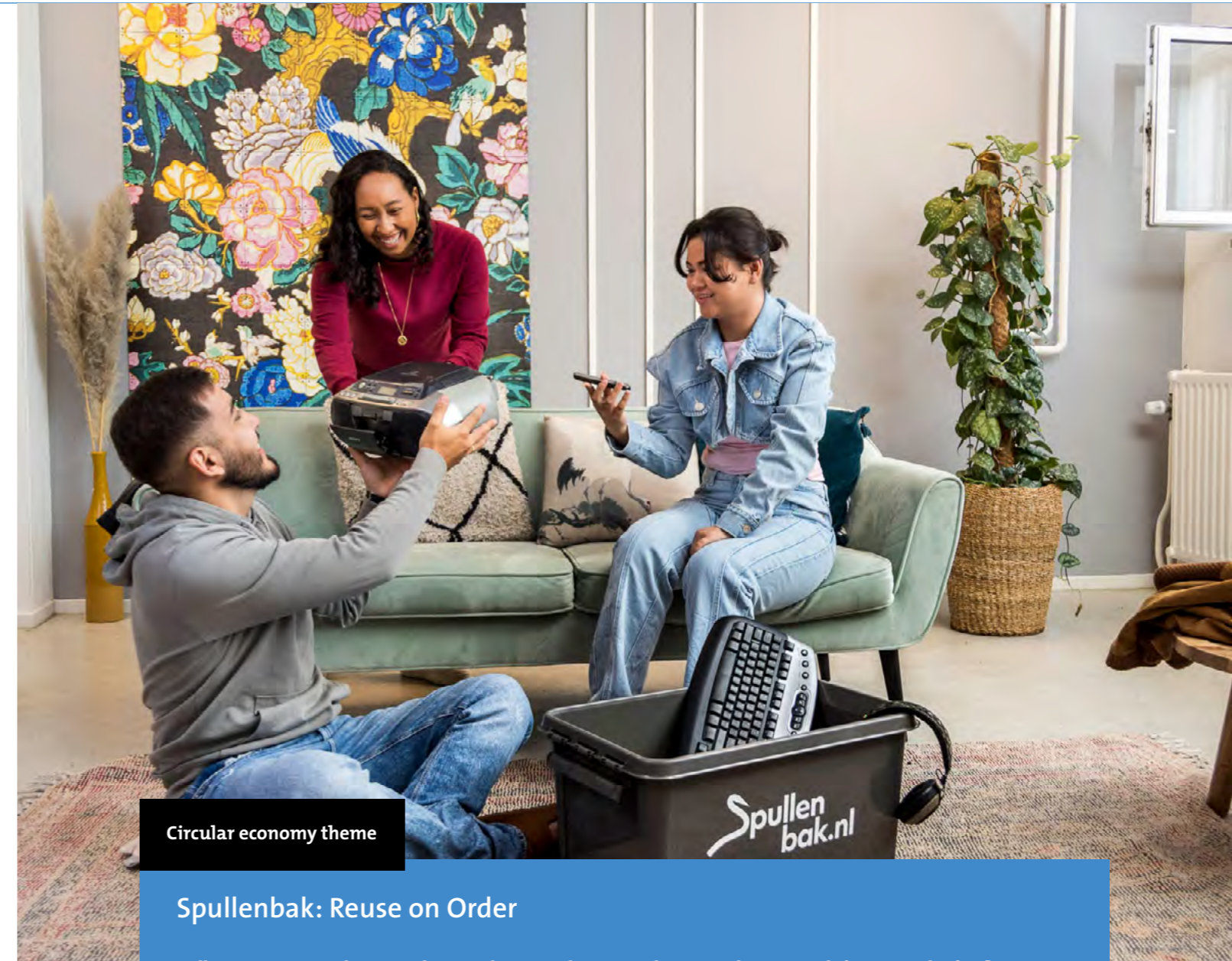
40 Climate deals have been submitted for the HKA. In the coming years, the city will continue to work on the implementation of these deals and the development of new deals, helping grow the movement that is working on sustainability in the city. The municipality plays a central role in this: as a facilitator, as a cooperating partner in climate deals, and in monitoring implementation.



Figure 5: Front page of The Hague Climate Agreement

3.2 Connection between The Hague Climate Agreement and the Climate City Contract

The Hague Climate Agreement (HKA) and the Climate City Contract (CCC) are closely related. The HKA is mainly focused on cooperation between various parties in the city and focuses on local action. With the CCC, The Hague joins 111 other cities that are working towards the ambition of being climate-neutral by 2030. The CCC is mainly focused on knowledge exchange and cooperation with other Dutch governments, European cities and the EU. The HKA and CCC thus complement and strengthen each other.



Circular economy theme

Spullenbak: Reuse on Order

Collecting waste, selecting what can be reused, and burning the rest - this is how it works almost everywhere in the Netherlands. With the Spullenbak (Waste Bin), The Hague turns it around: entrepreneurs and institutions indicate what kind of waste they need and it is delivered so that they can use it immediately as a raw material. Old towels and sheets, cork, paper, LPs, old ties, unused tools, they all get a useful new purpose.

With the Spullenbak, The Hague is contributing to the circular economy of the future. Residents of The Hague who have a waste bin at home know exactly what they can put in it and what happens to their waste. The corks go to a company that grinds them into cork granules of different sizes.

These are then reused, for example, for floor finishing. Used egg cartons go to an organic farm, old tools are given a makeover and go to schools and craftsmen in developing countries, and wastepaper is used as filling for sleeping bags in the local hedgehog shelter.

The Spullenbak was established in 2022. After a pilot in several neighbourhoods across The Hague, today, everyone in the city can request a Spullenbak for free. When the bin is full, users can make an appointment online to have it collected and exchanged for an empty one. More than a thousand households in The Hague currently have a Spullenbak at home, and dozens of companies, social entrepreneurs, and social institutions are also participating.

	Climate City Contract	The Hague Climate Agreement
Ambition	Climate neutral by 2030	Climate neutral by 2030
Parties involved	The city, the government, other European cities, the European Commission	Organised parties (professional and from residents) active in the city
Participation	Network continues to grow. Parties are approached in a targeted manner	Network continues to grow. Parties can join continuously
Iterations	Bi-annually	Annually
Monitoring	Yes, actions described on CO ₂ emissions and implementation	Yes, on implementation of climate deals

Tabel 1: Overeenkomsten en verschillen tussen het Climate City Contract en Haags Klimaatakkoord

3.3 Shared Ambition

The Climate City Contract and The Hague Climate Agreement share the municipal ambition of a climate-neutral city by 2030. All parties participating in climate deals in the HKA support the municipality in this ambition and contribute to this through their role in a deal. Their commitment to our municipal ambition is thus captured in the HKA. Because the CCC and HKA share the same ambition and were established at the same time, stakeholders were not asked to sign the Commitments. All deals and parties involved in the HKA can be found on the website www.denhaag.nl/klimaatakkoord.

3.4 Other Municipal Documents

The basis for The Hague's sustainability policy is the 2019 Sustainability Memorandum. It identifies the themes that The Hague is working on: energy transition, sustainable mobility, circular economy and sustainable living environment. In 2024, four working agendas will be developed that further establish the objectives of the Sustainability Memorandum for the years 2023-2026. These working agendas set out the sustainability priorities and activities

for the coming years, and thus also form the substantive basis of the CCC. The municipality discussed this with more than 200 residents and entrepreneurs from The Hague during a large city meeting in April 2023.

3.5 Residents

Sustainability is a relevant topic among residents of The Hague; the city is home to many citizen initiatives on energy and (re) greening, among other things. This is not to be taken for granted, because we can only achieve our ambitions if the residents of the city participate. We are therefore committed to encourage and support residents' initiatives and run campaigns aimed to inform and talk with citizens about sustainability. For example, in 2022 the municipality organised two citizen consultations on climate and the energy transition across a number of city neighbourhoods. Residents are also involved in the HKA, and we are currently working on a citizens' council to play an important role in monitoring the development and implementation of the Agreement.



Energy transition theme

Scheveningen is Building the Network of the Future

The City of The Hague and grid operator Stedin are experimenting with the flexible energy network of the future. Part of the network, with a capacity of 1MW, has been separated from the public grid. This local network provides the opportunity to experiment with new digital technologies and innovations, working methods and protocols. It allows the city to learn about the possibilities of a flexible network that offers more space for locally generated sustainable energy.

The share of locally generated sustainable energy is increasing rapidly. However, this leads to new problems as the electricity grid is not able to transport such amounts of energy. In many places in the Netherlands new connections simply no

longer fit into the grid, which hinders the energy transition. A local and smart energy network that applies digital innovations to monitor, predict, and control energy generation and consumption and that has the possibilities for energy storage can help reduce the peak load on the electricity grid.

The municipality currently manages the local network as part of Living Lab Scheveningen and also is its only user. In the next phase, other users such as local businesses can be connected as well. Eventually, a local energy cooperative with grid users will be responsible for the management of the network. This way, we will learn important lessons on how to organise the network of the future together.

4

Next Steps



Figure 6: A solar roof with The Hague's skyline in the background

In the period up to 2030, the municipality will draw up a new version of the CCC every two years and share it with the European Commission. The updates, which will be based on previous versions of the CCC, will detail progress made and look ahead to 2030. We aim to publish the next CCC in 2026.

The HKA will remain important for the CCC in the coming years, as it describes the agreements and actions of parties from within city. Following the HKA's launch in April 2024, the municipality will support stakeholders that are leading a deal with the implementation process. Going forward, parties will be free to conclude new deals and add them to the HKA, and to add partners to existing deals. We will organise a meeting of participating parties at least once per year, and we will publish annual reports detailing the progress of the agreements.

These commitments are substantiated by the Hague Climate Action Plan and Climate Investment Plan. This makes it clear that various

relevant processes are underway in The Hague that will lead to considerable substantive depth in subsequent versions of the CCC. The two most relevant processes in 2024-2025 are:

- Developing and implementing a Hague climate dashboard as a sustainability monitoring and analysis tool for mapping the impact of current policies and making data-driven decisions about new policies.
- The kick-off of the HKA as an instrument of cooperation on the theme of sustainability in the city, and starting a council that plays an important role in the implementation and further development of the HKA.