

# Hello Queen

Groningen, a real student city, embraces the overwhelming presence of its students,, making it not only the Dutch city with the highest student density, but also one of the youngest cities in Europe. If you are a new student in the city and need some tips, then this magazine contains a lot of useful information.

01 About Groningen  
An introduction about the city.

Moving to Groningen 03  
A checklist for when you move.

05 Making Friends  
Spots and associations to make friends.

Hobbies 07  
tips on how to spend your free time.

09 Hotspots  
Good spots in the city.

Going Out 13  
Everything you need to know about night life.

17 They Fell in Love  
Experiences from other girls who moved here.

Diner on a Budget 19  
Cheap diner spots.

# About Groningen



Martini tower

## CITY

The city of Groningen is the capital of the province of Groningen and the sixth largest city in the Netherlands. It's a young and vibrant city with 205.000 inhabitants, of which 60.000 are students! The average age of the population of Groningen is 36, which makes it the youngest of all Dutch cities. As a diverse and welcoming city, it is home to individuals of more than 120 different nationalities.

There's always something going on, whether it's hidden between the medieval buildings or beautiful courtyards. A new exhibition at the Groninger Museum, a festival at Suikerunterrein or a farmers market on the Vismarkt. Groningen has plenty of nice cafe's, bars, shops and clubs. Want to have dinner at a cozy neighborhood pub or dine at upscale eateries? No problem, Groningen has it all, various cuisines included!

With so much to offer, Groningen is surprisingly small. The cozy scale of the city renders everything relatively close. The city is made for people to walk and bike around. Even though cars are allowed, most people chose to walk or bike for the quickest routes.

## PROVINCE

Surrounding the city of Groningen is the province of Groningen. A total of 596,000 people live in the province of Groningen, divided over 10 municipalities. The average age of the population in the Province of Groningen is 42 years, a very standard age in The Netherlands. The province offers lush countryside; you can see for miles along while driving, biking or walking to your next adventure. In the countryside you will find many small towns with centuries-old church towers or stately homes with beautiful gardens.

Besides iconic buildings, the surrounding countryside also offers plenty of beautiful nature. Head out with binoculars to Lauwersmeer National Park or put on your sturdy footwear and take a walk through the unspoiled nature of Westerwolde. Groningen also borders the UNESCO World Heritage Site the Waddensee.

A landscape perfect to go mudflat hiking, spot seals or travel on to the Waddenisland Schiermonnikoog. Whether you chose to head east or south of the province, each region has its own character. An comforting bonus of the province of Groningen is the air you breathe, it is the cleanest air in The Netherlands!

While living in the present has its perks here in Groningen, many of its people are busy building the future of tomorrow's world. Groningen is a province of innovators and inventors. In doing so, the province is taking a leading role in the energy transition and the growth of both the digital and bio-based sectors.

in Groningen Life is good

Small city, bright lights; Groningen has it all. With its cheerful city center, beautiful nature, and diverse cultural offers, there is an abundance of things to experience! Around the centre, lies a province

full of hidden gems and adventures. It welcomes everyone and anyone; from international students looking to study, to young families wishing to settle. Find your place in this charming city. Discover

everything you need to know about the city here.

# Moving to Groningen

In Groningen it won't be hard to meet other people; there is a wide diversity in neighbourhoods and students are spread out over the whole city. As the city is relatively small, you don't have to be worried that you'll end up miles away from the city centre. Most accommodations are located on a reasonable distance from the city centre. And did you already know most transportation within Groningen is by bike? Still, you might have some requirements for your accommodation. Do you consider it important to live close to one of the universities? Or is an accommodation close to Groningen's nightlife more important to you? And once you've found an accommodation, you can easily enter the name of the street in GoogleMaps and find out in which neighbourhood it is located.

## Housing

It's best to arrange accommodation in advance. Finding a place to live can be quite a challenge. When coming to Groningen most people choose to start renting a house. To find a rental place, you can look online at websites like Pararius, Woningnet, and Kamernet. If you're looking to buy a property, many houses can be found on Funda.



## BSN

You need to register at the municipality within 5 days after your arrival. Registration is necessary, because you will only get a citizen service number (BSN,

## INSURANCE

If you are 18 years or older and live or work in the Netherlands, you are legally obliged to take out standard health insurance. This insurance covers the costs of medical treatments, such as going to the hospital or a general practitioner.



## TRANSPORT

Although there are many different methods of transport in Groningen, cycling is favoured by most people. It is often the quickest, easiest and cheapest option of transport. Groningen is designed to be cyclist friendly, so cycling is always a good option.



## Also important FOOD

The market on the Vismarkt is held on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. The Vismarkt (Fish Market) is one of the largest and most popular markets in Groningen. Despite its name, the market offers much more than just fish. You will find a wide array of fresh fruits and vegetables, meats, cheeses, bread, flowers and other local delicacies. The market is a great place to experience the local culture and enjoy the city while finding high-quality, fresh products.

### Associations

A student city of course also has a lot of associations. Groningen has some great student associations, but there are also many other associations you could become a member of. Think of sports associations, religious associations, cultural associations, international associations and study associations. There is truly something for everyone.

### Learning Dutch

In Groningen, people speak English very well, but sometimes it can be useful to be able to speak a little bit of Dutch. That way, you can make contact with the locals in a slightly different way.

### Expats in Groningen

Would you like to meet other internationals in Groningen? Then you can also join the Facebook group 'Expats in Groningen'. Here, nearly eight thousand international residents of Groningen come together to share their experiences.

### Religion

Because Groningen is an international city, many religions can also be found in the city. Whether you are a Buddhist, Muslim, Christian or if you have another religion, Groningen accommodates all faiths. On the ESN Groningen website, you will find a comprehensive overview of religions in Groningen.

### IWCN

IWCN stands for International Welcome Center North. This is the organization you can turn to as an international when you arrive in The Netherlands. Besides helping you with practical matters, they also organize regular events where you can meet other internationals.

### ESN

ESN Groningen is a student organization which is part of the Erasmus Student Network (ESN). With the motto 'students help students', they organize over 150 activities each year for both internationals and Dutch students. The ideal place to meet fellow students from all over the world.

### Groningen life

Do you want to be totally immersed in Groningen's student life? Then take a look at the website of GroningenLife. On this website seasoned students will take you on a tour around Groningen. Finding a room, going to the best parties, the most exciting sports, or joining an association.help.

When you're new in a country, it's nice to quickly meet like-minded people. Fortunately, there are plenty of opportunities to make friends in Groningen. Here is an overview of different organizations where you can meet new people.

# Making



Are you looking for a new hobby? Or would you like to continue the hobby you already have and want to know where that is possible? Groningen has plenty of different clubs and associations you can go to; there's always something for you.

### Sports

Soccer, tennis, volleyball. Sports enthusiasts can indulge themselves in Groningen. Think of a sport and here you can practice it. On the Sport050 website you can find all the information about sports clubs and associations in Groningen. Students can also play sports at the ACLO, the student sports association.

### Professional sport events

Are you a fan of sports and want to see the professionals play? In that case; Groningen has more than enough to offer! From professional football to icehockey, find your favorite team to root for. For football there is FC Groningen, for volleyball Lycurgus Groningen, for basketball Donar Groningen and for icehockey GIJS Groningen.

### Music, theater and visual arts

Are you a creative person? Then VRIJDAG is the right place for you. This is the place to be for all kinds of creative endeavors. Whether you like being on stage, playing an instrument or working with a brush, at VRIJDAG you can do it. Creative students can also go to the USVA, the cultural facility of the University of Groningen.

### Reading

The lover of a good book is also well served in Groningen. At the various libraries of Biblionet you will find a wide range of books. In addition to the large Dutch collection, many libraries also have a large number of books in English and sometimes in other languages as well.

### Much much more

In addition to all the above activities, there are many more associations and organizations in Groningen where you can go to pursue your hobby. GroningenLife has made an overview of associations per category. The Municipality of Groningen has an overview of all associations in the city on their website.



Flower Market

Groningen is, of course, much more than just a place to study or work. It is also a place where you can enjoy living and exploring, with a fun cultural sector and a diverse range of restaurants and bars. Don't miss these hotspots!

# WOW



### Noorderplantsoen

Noorderplantsoen is the biggest park located this close to the city center. It is one of the best locations to hang out with friends when the sun is out. You will see thousands of people lying on the grass and catching sunrays. Many people bring barbecues (this is allowed in certain BBQspots) and enjoy the weather. The park has basketball and volleyball pitches. Moreover, at the end of August, the park becomes a cultural area with the festival Noorderzon.

### Forum

In the heart of the city center you can find the Forum; a meeting place for everyone who is curious about the world of today and the possibilities of tomorrow. The Forum aims to surprise and inspire with its Storyworld, a huge exhibition space with changing exhibits, 5 movie theaters, the Smartlab, restaurants, the city library and the highest roof terrace in Groningen with phenomenal views and a rooftop cinema.

### Ouzerie De Olijfbom

Steentilstraat 28 - At this Ouzerie you eat the tastiest Greek snacks in a cosy, informal atmosphere. Upon entering, you already start salivating at the sight of the display cases full of goodies. In the open kitchen, they make everything themselves using fresh and natural ingredients. From salads to pastries. And there is something for everyone. Whether you like meat, fish or prefer vegetarian. Be surprised and choose one of the tastings. That way, you can enjoy a real Greek lunch in Groningen.

### Gustatio

Oosterstraat 3 - Sumptuous lunches, they can do that in Italy like no other. So it is not for nothing that Gustatio is also open at lunchtime. The restaurant is run by a family from Rome and the entire kitchen brigade consists of Italian chefs from different parts of Italy. And you can taste that! With all kinds of Italian classics, delicious antipasti and the best homemade pasta, lunchtime is also a good time here. Lunch the way you lunch in Italy.

### Stadspark

Stadspark literally translates to city park. This is the biggest city park and it is located in the south of Groningen. It has big walking areas, a restaurant, canals and small forests. It is picturesque with the big, old trees around. In this park, there is also a children's zoo park. In the small zoo park (free entry), you can see and pet some chickens, goats, rabbits and cats.

### Groninger Museum

Creative energy splashes from the walls. Beautiful or ugly? The Groninger Museum has been there since 1994, but it is still the subject of discussion on modern architecture. Let that be reason enough for a visit. The diverse collections and innovative, occasionally quite stimulating, exhibitions complete the experience.

### TOET the TOETjesparadijs

Gedempte Zuiderdiep 85 - This is highly recommended for the sweet tooth among us. A dessert paradise where delicious sweets and cakes are made. Ingredients are chosen with extreme care, preferably organic and local or else Fair Trade. And you can not only enjoy some goodies with your coffee there. In the afternoon, they serve a true TOET dinner. A 7-course dessert menu with lots of sweets, as well as a cheese platter and savoury tarts.

# Going Out

Groningen is famous for being a city without closing times. If you are looking for a small pub/cafe with little furniture and a lot of music instead of big clubs, you are in the right place! In Poelestraat and Peperstraat you can find one about every 10 meters! The concept of each cafe is a bit the same but still every student has their own preference. So take a look inside 't Vaatje at Grote Markt, 't Gat van Groningen, 't Golden Fust, De Brouwerij or De Negende Cirkel in Poelestraat or Het Feest in Peperstraat and see where you stay until the sun comes up!

## Shooters

A shooterbar as we expect, where beer, shots and loud party music create the typical night out! You can find Shooters in between the other bars in Peperstraat, it is often busy here. You can go there seven days a week, from 23:00 till late at night, or should we say early in the morning...



## Dorothy's

Dorothy's used to be called The House of Scandal or Bar de Rits and is the oldest gaycafé of Groningen. They are a straight-friendly gaycafe, where you will have a warm welcome and nice people to meet.

## Karaokebars

No better place to end your night than the karaokebar. The End has a broad variety of songs to choose from. But also at Sing Along you can join in on rock music or maybe Adele or ABBA.



## Chupitos

A popular name in the shotbar scene, with an enormous variety of shots to choose from! You can go for a classic shot of course, but how about one that takes you back to your favorite candy when you were young. They really create a show for certain shots with fire and everything!

## Ocean forty one

Ocean 41 is a party location with a summer vibe. During the whole year you can pretend that it is mid summer: drinking cocktails and dancing to summer hits. You can find Ocean 41 in the city centre of Groningen at Grote Markt 41.



# If you don't like the Basics

## Café de Prins

Another popular queer bar is Café de Prins at Zwanestraat. Here, the dancefloor is always on, and every Saturday there's a club night with a DJ. There are also various events going on, such as the drag shows by Anastasia von Beaverhausen and Lola Lasagna, every second Friday of the month. This is also the right place for a good old night of karaoke, led by drag queen Dolly Wood.

## MISFIT

Do you like it a bit wilder, or are you craving more after having heard the DJs at BUTTS? Every month Kopjek organizes the MISFIT night in the industrial atmosphere of Graanfabriek. This is another place to go wild surrounded by like-minded people. It's the perfect night to put on your most daring outfit and leave all your worries behind on the dancefloor.

## Ons Moeke

Finally, Café Ons Moeke deserves a place in this article. It might not be a club with DJs and drag acts, but this place at Paterswoldseweg is the definition of the word iconic. While it might seem like any ordinary snack bar at first, it's anything but that. Owner Jantina Darwinkel has transformed it into a safe place for LGBTQIA+ youths from the city and beyond. For years she has been there for young queers who fled intolerant environments, because sadly these places still exist in the Netherlands too. She gives them shelter, puts them to work and shows them that life can be full of love instead of hate. Come and get your chips at the rainbow bar to support Jantina and Ons Moeke!

If you know where to look, Groningen is full of possibilities for a queer night out. Keep your eyes open for other places and events too because those stretch way beyond this list. During Pride, for example, many

more places organize queer nights and activities. So go and hit that dancefloor and work it honey!

## BUTTS at Oost

BUTTS is a recurring queer night in Oost (at Oosterstraat). Here you can expect a lot more than a rainbow flag on the wall and the familiar Gaga hits: BUTTS is about queer culture. Those who are familiar with the ballroom scene that arose in the 1980's and is still very much alive, will feel at home here. This is the place to serve in your very best outfit, show off your vogue skills (or learn them) and let yourself be blown away by various drag performances in all shapes and sizes. With the best DJ's, sick visuals and a balloon extravaganza. If you like electronic music and late nights, Oost is always a nice place to go as a queer person. The audience here is one of the most diverse in Groningen, which makes for a feeling of safety. Way to go, Oost!

## Het Pakhuis

If you don't really like the typical party cafes, there are also some nice spots to go to. One of them is, hidden in a side street of Peperstraat, Het Pakhuis. Next to eating there for a nice price, you can also dance there and listen to music which mostly isn't in the top 40. Every now and then you can also enjoy live performances here.

## Warhol

In another side street of Peperstraat, De Papengang, you can find Warhol. A night cafe with two floors. In Warhol you can also sometimes enjoy some live music. And definitely try out the famous Long Island Ice Tea of Warhol!

They

tell

in

*Bianka*  
"Groningen is a vibrant city, but when you get on your bike, you'll be surrounded by greenery and calmness pretty quickly."

Bianka Sieredzinska, 31, is doing her PhD in Groningen. Just before the pandemic, she moved from Warsaw to the north of the Netherlands. When she first arrived in the city, it was the week of Kingsday. "It was quite rainy on Kingsday. The streets were sticky from all the beer. So, it was probably a good thing that the rain could wash it all away."

But it only took that first week for Bianka to be sold on Groningen. She moved a month later.



*Angela*

"When the sun is out, no matter what the temperature is, well above 15 degrees, everybody is out, they put out chairs, tables, they grab a beer or have dinner. That's amazing."

Angela, a charismatic and cheerful 24 year old student from Brescia, northern Italy, has already been in Groningen for four years. During her life, she had moved a lot with her family. Her grandfather was Dutch and emigrated to Namibia where he met Angela's grandmother, a woman from Italy. They got married in Venice, before then moving to South Africa where Angela's mother was born, and then eventually the whole family moved to Italy.

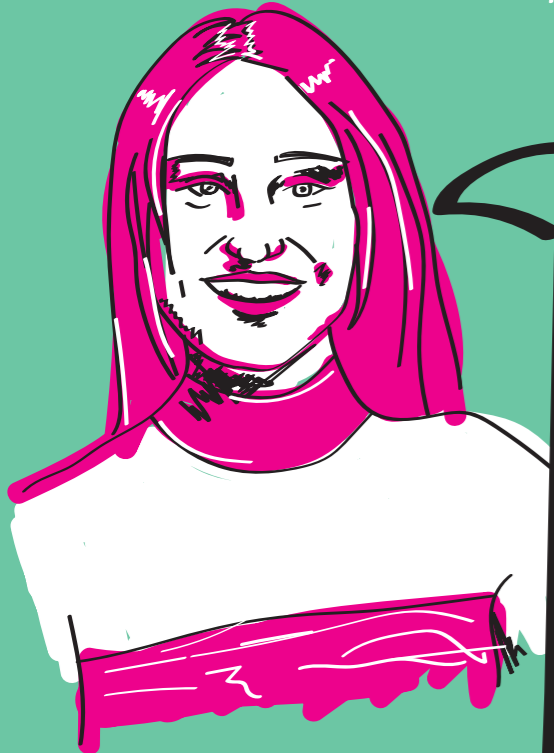


*Zaneta*

"I've recently noticed that when I mention 'home', I refer to Groningen."

Zaneta Mlcakova, 23, is originally from the Czech Republic. She has been living in Groningen for three years now. For a long time, living in Groningen had been one of her goals. Her best friend was already studying in the city and Zaneta came to visit her every single holiday. That way, she got to experience some parts of the student life here, even before she became a student herself.

"There was something special about Groningen. That's why it was always my one and only choice: I either stay in Czech or I go to Groningen."



love

# Food on a Budget

20

## Eeterie de Globe

Akerkhof 22 - Eeterie de Globe has been a multicultural eatery since 1998, hidden behind de Akerk in a former monastery in the heart of Groningen. The restaurant runs on people with a distance to the labour market. Every day you can choose from three fresh meals. The daily snack costs €9.50. For one or two euros extra there is also a vegetarian dish or a main course with meat or fish. From students to Stadgers on a small budget, everyone joins in.

€9.50

## Ugly Duck

Zwanestraat 28 - Eetcafé Ugly Duck has been a classic eatery as an eatery should be for 30 years. The name may raise questions, but inside you'll discover there's nothing ugly about it. You'll enjoy a good meal, extensive lunch or a special beer and a drink in a monumental building full of hidden ducks. From Sunday to Thursday, use the Dagobert Duck card to order a tasty daily snack for €13.90.

€13.50

## De Olijfboom

Oosterstraat 40 - At this ouzerie you can taste the sun on your plate with the tastiest authentic Greek dishes. As soon as you enter, your mouth starts watering at the display cases full of delicacies. Everything is prepared fresh and with natural ingredients in the open kitchen. From creamy spinach risotto and vegetable stew to a warm pita filled with delicacies. There is something for everyone.

€10.50

## Het Pakhuis

Peperstraat 8-2 - Het Pakhuis has been hidden away for over 50 years in a cosy alley in the Peperstraat, an iconic nightlife street in the city centre. For many a nostalgic place where you can eat, dance and party until the early hours. Every day there is a changing daily snack for €17.50, and students score a tasty student snack for €12.50.

€12.50

## De Slingerij

Aweg 12 - De Slingerij is an eatery with a fine Groningen history, dating back to 1854. The story goes that the iconic artwork, het Peerd van Ome Loeks, was created in memory of the racehorse of one Lucas (Loeks) van Hemmen. Loeks was a piker and owner of café and livery stable De Slingerij. Nowadays, you can dine here, rummage, play Risk, watch sports or just sit at the bar. You eat a changing daily snack here for €16.50.

€16.50

## Eetcafé Lambik

Grote Kruisstraat 73 - Eetcafé Lambik is a cosy spot on the edge of the Noorderplantsoen, named after the good-natured character from the Flemish comic series Suske en Wiske. In a homely atmosphere, you can enjoy a tasty daily snack here from 17:00 for €16.50. In summer, slide onto the sun terrace, in winter nestle inside, always with a view of the park.

€16.50

## Feel Good

Oude Kijk in 't Jatstraat 29 - Feel Good is a modern eatery, with retro wallpaper, where the daily snack is given a vegetarian twist. Almost every day between 17:00 and 19:00 you can eat what's on the plate here. For €9.50, you can eat a tasty Indian lentil dahl or pumpkin risotto, for example. Instagram keeps you updated on the daily changing dish, so at least you won't find a dog in the pot.

€9.50

## Het Poortershoes

Oosterweg 13 - At the Poortershoes eatery in the Oosterpoort neighbourhood, you can grab a delicious meal for as little as €7.50. The community centre is housed in a monumental old bargee school on Oosterweg, opposite Kroeg van Klaas. It is a meeting place where locals gather for various courses and activities. Feel like reading, playing a game or having a chat? You are most welcome here.

€7.50

19