

amsterdam marketing

PRESS FEATURE

Amsterdam: one of the most sustainable cities of Europe

Creating a city that is as sustainable as it can possibly be is high on the city of Amsterdam's political agenda. Amsterdam makes clever and efficient use of space, energy and resources. And, it goes without saying that it is also the most bicycle friendly city in the world. Another central policy aim is keeping the city as compact as possible.

Sustainability is vital for future tourism

An increasing amount of businesses in the tourism sector are convinced that sustainability is not a luxury, but a necessity. 'People, planet, profit' is what sustainability is concerned with, and sustainable policy can yield financial benefits.

Tourism and transportation are mutually dependent. Research shows that an average of three-quarters of all tourist CO₂ emissions comes from transportation. No one can predict when humanity will have used up all oil reserves. It may be in twenty, or even in thirty years' time, but it is obvious that this supply is rapidly depleting and this will have a negative impact on the prices in the years to come. Until now, the tourism sector has always relied on oil and, therefore, sustainability is equally important if we want to guarantee a future for tourism throughout the world.

City tourism in itself has an innate sense of self-destruction. If a certain location becomes too popular, a loss of authenticity is imminent and, as a result, a loss of attraction. This applies to both the city and the countryside between cities. That is why Amsterdam strives for a gradual growth in the number of visitors and a better distribution across the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area, respecting the vulnerable city centre.

Sustainable city Amsterdam as an example for many

Amsterdam is now ranking fifth on the Green City Index of European capitals. In the last few years, a number of sustainability projects have been realised in Amsterdam. Some examples: all trams and subways run on green electricity, canal boats use natural gas and other sustainable fuels and on the former Waterleidingterrein, an eco-friendly residential area was built. Another initiative to do the city proud is the high-efficiency waste-fired power plant belonging to waste and energy company Afval Energie Bedrijf (AEB). In order to obtain as much sustainable energy from waste as possible, a number of innovative

technologies have been clustered here. The result is an energetic yield of 30 per cent, an achievement that has not been realised anywhere else in the world. The processing capacity was increased by 530,000 tonnes of waste, making it the largest single-location waste-to-energy company in the world.

The ultimate bicycle city

Amsterdam was voted the bicycle-friendliest city in the world on several occasions. Residents and visitors have a total of 400 kilometres of dedicated bicycle tracks to their disposal. On a daily basis, Amsterdam's population cycles a distance of 2 million kilometres combined. Approximately 40 per cent of all travelling in the city takes place by bicycle. In the city centre and the 19th-century districts surrounding it, even half of all movements are by bicycle. Amsterdam has a total of 225,000 parking places for bicycles, of which 10,000 are located at the Central Station.

Half of all hotel rooms are sustainable

Many hotels in Amsterdam are actively working to achieve the best possible sustainable business operations. By now, Amsterdam boasts over fifty hotels with a Green Key certificate, especially among 4 and 5-star hotels. These hotels comprise over half of all hotel beds in Amsterdam. Green Key is an international sustainability quality mark for businesses in the tourism and recreation industry. A company will only be awarded a Green Key quality mark if this company is doing substantially more in terms of environmental policy than required by law. Green Key for instance sets high standards for gas, water and energy conservation, catering and waste separation. An increasing number of restaurants, theatres and conference location in Amsterdam are also managed sustainably, for instance by using products from the Amsterdam area. For further information, please visit: [greenkey.nl](https://www.greenkey.nl)

The high-speed train to Amsterdam

The Thalys high-speed train has been operational between Paris and Amsterdam since 2010, with a maximum speed of 300 kilometres per hour, reducing the travelling time between both cities to 3.05 hours and between Brussels and Amsterdam to 1.45 hours.

The Eurostar started services between London, Brussels and Paris in 1994. Passengers can change trains for the Thalys to Amsterdam in Brussels-South. The total travelling time between London and Amsterdam will then amount to 4.45 hours. An increasing amount of travellers use this possibility.

In terms of CO₂ emission, the high-speed train appears to be a better environmental option than planes and also a better option than cars. Calculations by environmental organisation MilieuCentraal show that international train travel emits two to four times less CO₂ and other greenhouse gasses per traveller than a car carrying two persons. Per traveller the train emits even an average of seven times less than plain travel to the same destination.

KLM and Schiphol are working hard towards sustainability

Due to their high CO₂ emissions, airplanes do not have a reputation for being eco-friendly. Both KLM and Amsterdam Airport Schiphol are working hard towards a policy that is as sustainable as possible. For the sixth time in a row, Air France-KLM has been named the most sustainable airline, as shown in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index. Air France-KLM has an active role in drawing up climate goals for the entire aviation sector and, it stands to reason, also applies this policy itself. For 2020, for instance, KLM has set a goal to reduce the CO₂ emission for international flights by 20 per cent in relation to 2009. In addition, energy-efficiency will be improved in 2020 with 1.5 per cent annually.

The certification awarded to Schiphol by the Airport Carbon Accreditation is the highest variety achievable: 3+. In order to be considered, an airport must have analysed all emissions, drawn up reduction plans, carried them out successfully and offset the remaining emission.

At Schiphol, approximately forty ground transport vehicles that are currently operational run on bio diesel. The fuel Schiphol and KLM use for their ground transport consists for 100 per cent of recycled cooking oil and does not contain fossil fuels. Taxi transport from Schiphol is currently serviced by over hundred fully electrically powered cars. Schiphol also utilises electrically powered buses to transport passengers from and to airplanes. In order to save energy, the terminal and passenger garages have been equipped with led lighting. Schiphol is testing the use of led lighting for the airplane platforms, as well as controlling them intelligently: only where it's needed. All roads on the airport have been paved with up to 100% recycled asphalt.

Amsterdam RAI commits to being sustainable

Amsterdam RAI commits to being a leading conference and event organisation regarding sustainability. The Amsterdam RAI aims, for instance, to replace all lighting in the RAI complex with energy-efficient alternatives. In 2010, replacing the light fixtures in four of the eleven halls yielded 33% in energy savings.

A recent initiative has been to supply the Amsterdam RAI using an electrically powered ship owned by Mokum Maritiem. Amsterdam RAI is an early adopter of the sustainability initiative to limit transport by road, to reduce transport movements around the RAI and to improve the air quality and noise pollution in the Amsterdam inner city.

The Golden Green Key accreditation proves that the Amsterdam RAI meets the highest requirements in the category for hotels/conference centres for companies in the tourism and recreation industry.

Leading in electric transportation

Amsterdam is leading in the field of electric transportation. There are currently over two thousand public charging points for electric cars, boats and bicycles and more are added every week. It goes without saying that all of them use green electricity. It is expected that the city will have approximately 4,000 charging points by 2017. As of October 2014, some 1,840,000 kilowatt-hours have been charged through Amsterdam's charging points – the equivalent of over thirteen trips to the moon and back!

Manufacturers of electrically powered cars have also discovered Amsterdam. Mainstream manufacturers such as Mitsubishi, Renault and Nissan will launch their latest electrically powered models in Amsterdam first. Amsterdam is also the first city in the world where Car2Go offers its services using solely electrically powered cars. This service is also available for tourists by means of a membership: register at home before leaving for Amsterdam and hit the streets in an electric Smart when you arrive. In addition, canal cruise boats are increasingly electrically powered.

More information on sustainable Amsterdam:

amsterdam.nl/duurzaam

greenmetropole.nl

iamsterdam.com/media-centre/city-hall/dossier-electric-transport

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About Amsterdam Marketing

Amsterdam Marketing is the city marketing organisation of the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area, active in the fields of promotion, information, research and services. Our ambition is to put this region on the map as one of the five most attractive metropolitan areas in Europe for its residents, visitors, businesses and influential groups. Under the motto "I amsterdam", we present the region as a dynamic place to live and work, an attractive travel destination and a test market for innovation.