



Utrecht Region steady at the top

Europe's second most competitive region

EU Regional Competitiveness Index (RCI) 2019



UTRECHT REGION



Thanks to the best efforts

of a great many people, Utrecht has once again been designated one of the most competitive regions in Europe. We should all feel very proud of this achievement. After all, it implies that Utrecht is not only the heart of the Netherlands, but also the beating heart of Europe.

The fact that we came joint second can be partly attributed to our fortunate location in the centre of the Netherlands. In addition, Utrecht is increasingly acclaimed for its wide range of quality education (university, higher and secondary vocational education), its excellent business climate and its pursuit of 'Healthy Urban Living for Everyone'. The last of these is a guiding principle for us. We would be both pleased and proud to pass on the stories behind it.

To Utrecht, acquiring the title 'Europe's most competitive region' is not an objective in itself. However, we consider a high score on the list to be the ultimate benchmark for companies that want to compare locations. It is also a form of recognition for the smart choices we make. We endeavour to achieve Healthy Urban Living for Everyone.

Klaas Verschuure

Alderman for Economic Affairs
Municipality of Utrecht



“ Utrecht
as the
beating
heart of
Europe ”

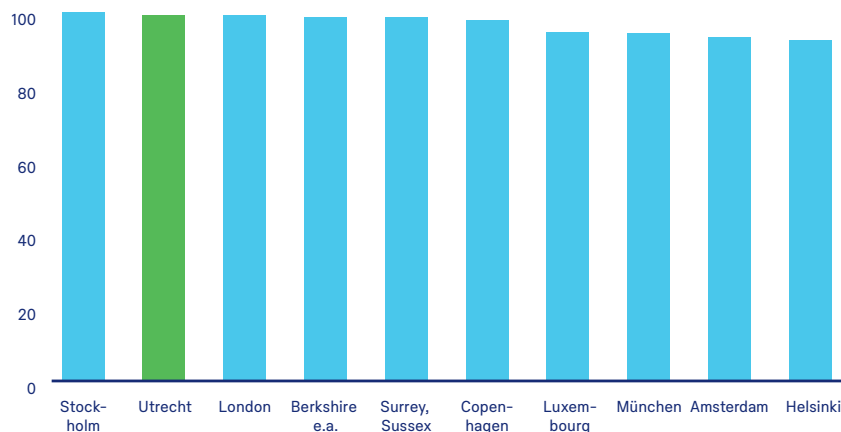
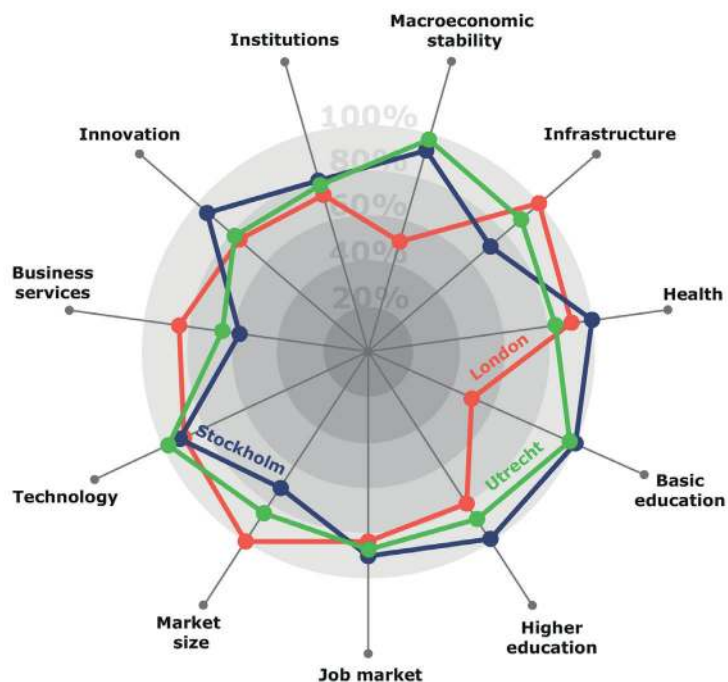
Top 5 Regions

2010	2013	2016	2019
1. UTRECHT REGION (NL)	UTRECHT REGION (NL)	London (UK)	Stockholm (SE)
2. Copenhagen (DK)	London (UK)	UTRECHT REGION (NL) Berkshire e.a. (UK)	UTRECHT REGION (NL) London (UK)
3. Amsterdam (NL)	Berkshire e.a. (UK)		
4. London (UK)	Stockholm (SE)	Stockholm (SE)	Berkshire e.a. (UK)
5. Stockholm (SE)	Surrey, Sussex (UK)	Surrey, Sussex (UK)	Surrey, Sussex (UK)

Source: RCI, European Union (2010-2019)

A broad basis for success

According to the European Commission, the Utrecht region is once again one of the most competitive regions in Europe. In the Regional Competitiveness Index (RCI) 2019, Utrecht is ranked joint second with London. This European Benchmark offers Utrecht the opportunity to objectively assess its performance year after year in comparison with globally renowned regions such as London. The triennial index assesses the competitiveness of 268 European regions on the basis of more than 70 indicators. These relate to criteria including innovation, accessibility, digital infrastructure, education, health and the job market. Since the RCI was launched in 2010, Utrecht has been ranked one of the most competitive regions in Europe. The region has continually achieved high scores, across the entire scope of the survey. In fact, it was the leading region in both 2010 and 2013.



As the global weather authority, we marry meteorological and technology expertise in MeteoGroup (DTN). By relocating our headquarters to Utrecht, which is one of the best places to work and live in the Netherlands, we get better access to national and international technology talent to work on our weather algorithms and global platforms.

Marc Chesover
President MeteoGroup

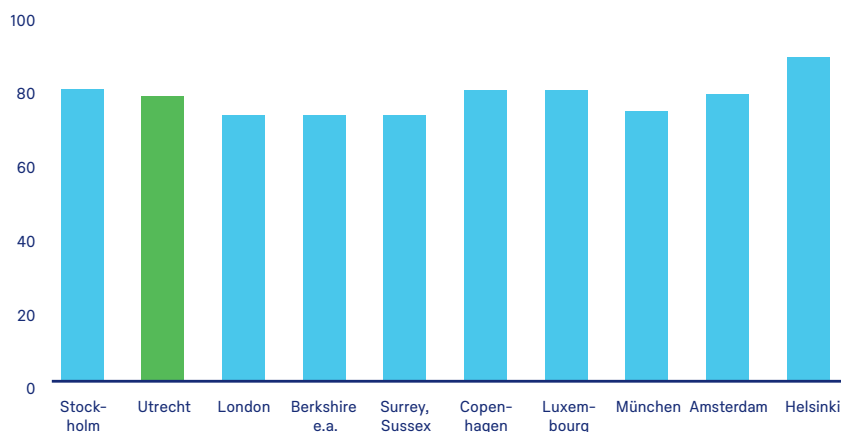
Institutions

Political stability, corruption, security and crime. These are all aspects that influence the business climate of a region, country or city. One of the Utrecht region's major strengths is its close cooperation between authorities, businesses and academic and educational institutions. Utrecht boasts a stable administrative and political climate. For example, Utrecht entrepreneurs, residents and local authorities often informally join forces to seek solutions to social issues. This applies not only to the city, but also the region. Such positive economic, social and political behaviour suits 21st century entrepreneurs in search of a suitable region in which to set up business. Of the 268 regions participating in the RCI, Utrecht is ranked 6th in terms of institutions. An overall score of 77.4 was awarded.



At BvdV, social and sustainable enterprise is not an agenda item, but a matter of course. And we are in good company, as this applies to increasing numbers of businesses in Utrecht. Utrecht offers a marvellous blend of urbanity and quality of life that undoubtedly contributes in this regard. Joint application of corporate social responsibility creates a bond. Wherever possible, we prefer to work together with local parties who also consider social entrepreneurship important, while we have a preference for long-term partnerships. This is not only sustainable, but also simply a logical choice.

Sjoerd van der Velden
Lawyer and founder of BvdV

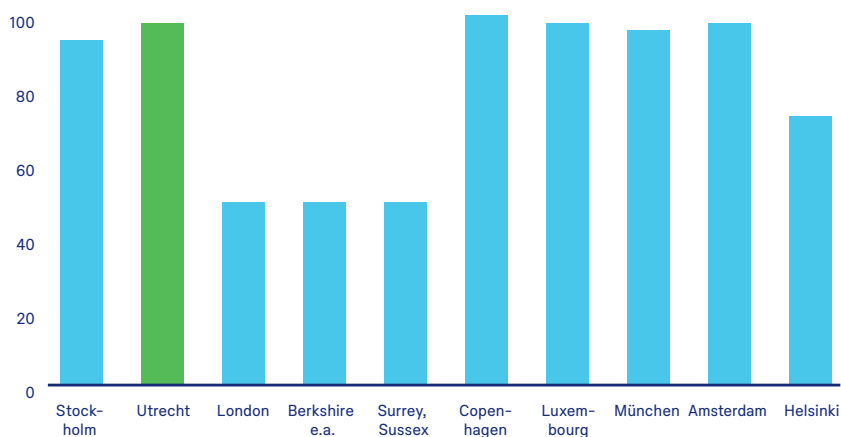


Macro-economic stability

Utrecht is an enterprising region. From an economic perspective, Utrecht is stable and therefore not very susceptible to fluctuations. Whenever the economic situation in the Netherlands improves, Utrecht is invariably one step ahead of such developments in a relative sense. If developments in the Netherlands suffer a decline, however, then Utrecht can be expected to continue to do comparatively better. Utrecht's macroeconomic stability is derived from national indicators. These include aspects such as austerity measures by national government, bond yields and the financial position of the public budget. Utrecht ranks second in the RCI in terms of macroeconomic stability. An overall score of 97.8 was awarded.

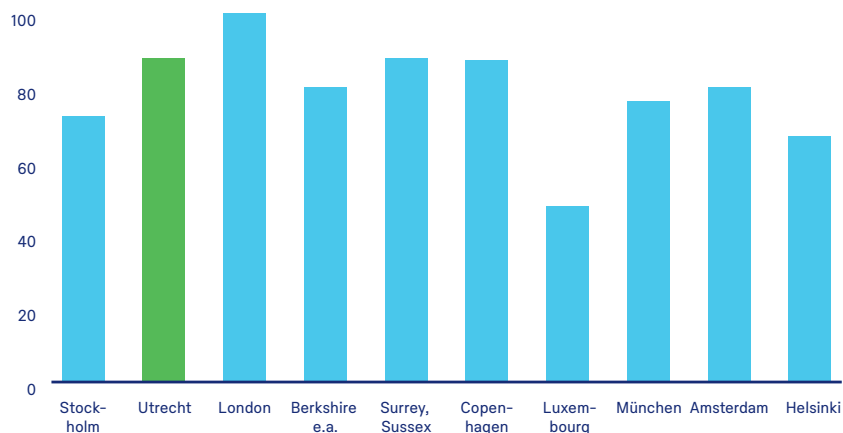
The Utrecht region has a long-term vision aimed at maintaining, but also (re) developing, sound formal and informal work locations. The focus is on a good mix of working, living and accommodation. The region makes optimal use of its favourable location in the centre of the Netherlands. The Utrecht region has the confidence to make strategic choices, with a focus on the city and hub sites, but also scope for economy in the urban region. For example, the Utrecht region is attractive to numerous market parties: clear starting points and a solid policy vouch for transparency and therefore a favourable investment climate.

Guido van der Molen
Senior Consultant Stec group



Infrastructure

Utrecht is located in the heart of the Netherlands, and at the centre of the region. A place where one has access to a (highly) skilled workforce of eight million within a travelling radius of just one hour. Accessibility is naturally a competitive factor for entrepreneurs. The perfect location in relation to Amsterdam Airport Schiphol is therefore a plus for internationally oriented companies. After all, it implies that not only the Netherlands, but the whole of Europe is within easy reach. Zoom in on the region, and Utrecht immediately stands out as the Netherlands' major public transport hub. Some 88 million people use Utrecht Central railway station annually. And it is not without good reason that Utrecht has the world's largest bicycle parking facility, as it puts bikes first! Sustainability and health are in the DNA of Utrecht's employees and employers. Utrecht ranks second in the RCI in terms of infrastructure. An overall score of 87.8 was awarded.



Utrecht Central is the Netherlands' busiest railway station. The station receives over 300,000 passengers and passers-by on a daily basis. They visit our shops and make use of facilities such as luggage lockers, bicycle sheds and public transport bikes. Utrecht Central is a place to travel, to spend some time or to meet one another. The station serves as a gateway to all that the marvellous city of Utrecht has to offer. Thanks to its favourable accessibility, Utrecht is highly attractive to both companies and private citizens looking for a place

to set up business or home respectively. Together with the Municipality of Utrecht, we continue to pursue the objective of keeping the city and region of Utrecht accessible, both now and in the future. We are also endeavour to achieve this by means of innovative spatial planning projects, such as the Cartesius Triangle, as well as continuing research into the possibilities of using the space above the railway lines.

Sebastiaan de Wilde
Director Real Estate NS Stations

Health

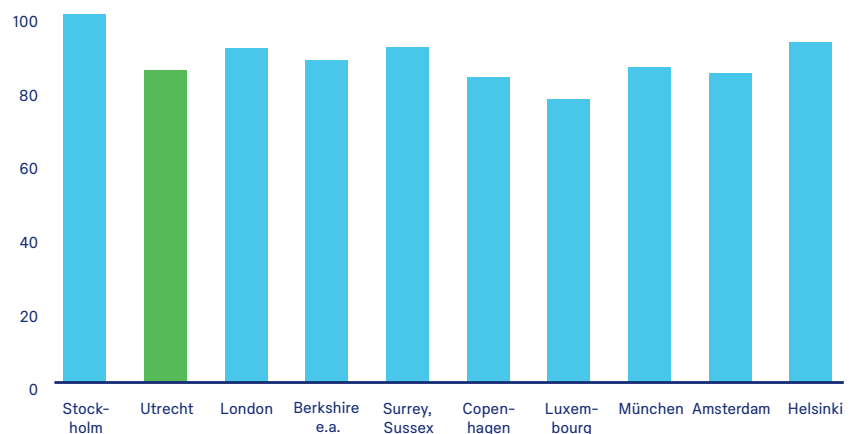
The economy of healthcare is highly developed in Utrecht. While educational institutions prepare their students for work in the sector, prospective employers are located just around the corner. Education, research and entrepreneurship all rub shoulders with healthcare at Utrecht Science Park. The prominent institutes it houses include Nutricia R&D, the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM) and the Princess Máxima Center. Healthcare and technology go hand in hand here. As one another's neighbours, the university and potential employers jointly tackle the daily challenge of raising healthcare to a higher level. Utrecht adopts an integrated approach to physical, social and economic issues. For instance, entrepreneurs, institutes and the authorities jointly endeavour to create opportunities and possibilities to contribute to healthier housing, working and living. Utrecht has the highest concentration of national knowledge institutes, interest groups and professional associations in the field of healthcare. Of the 268 regions participating in the RCI, Utrecht is ranked 7th in terms of health. An overall score of 84.7 was awarded.



The Princess Máxima Center for Pediatric Oncology hosts a combination of the cutting edge of specialist care for children with cancer and associated research. This innovative, integrated facility is unique to the Netherlands and Europe. Our mission: to cure every child with cancer, while offering optimum quality of life. Scientists from all over the world continue to join our ranks. They are attracted by both our aspirations and the drive to achieve our mission. This drive to be meaningful to people is characteristic of the Princess Máxima Center for Pediatric Oncology in particular and the Utrecht region in general.

Diana Monissen

CEO Princess Máxima Center for Pediatric Oncology



Basic education

Throughout the entire range of courses in the region, we pay close attention to the connection to the job market. Utrecht is the Netherlands' leading region in the field of higher education.

At least as important, however, is the fact that our total package of secondary and vocational education sets us in good stead. For example, we continue to invest in our plumbers, construction workers and solar panel installers of the future.

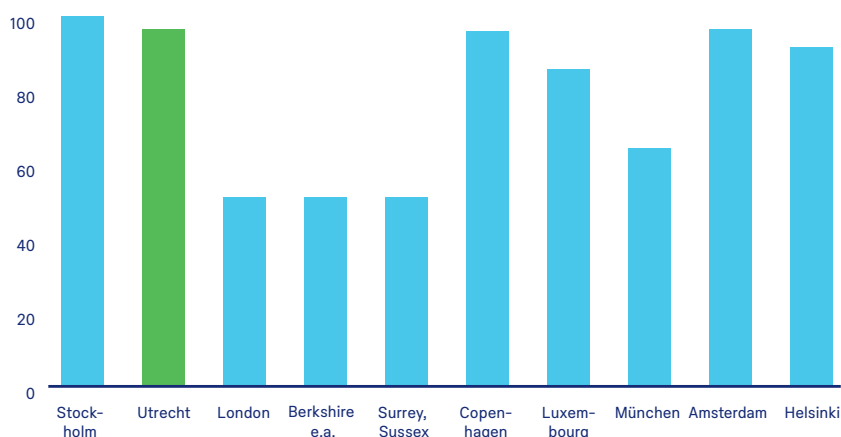
Above all, however, we endeavour to identify market opportunities that will enable these students to make favourable choices for their own futures and those of consecutive generations. Utrecht ranks second in the RCI in terms of basic education. An overall score of 96.6 was awarded.



Secondary vocational education is indispensable to the economy of Utrecht. The labour market eagerly awaits its graduates in the fields of construction and energy transition, healthcare, ICT, education and the hospitality industry. The Utrecht region is in the process of building a healthy and sustainable living environment for everyone. Educational institutions, companies, local authorities and social organisations alike are keen to make it Europe's healthiest region. However, this can only be achieved if we all join forces. Thinkers, doers and makers. ROC Midden Nederland trains over 18,000 professionals annually. In doing so, we seek to address the social context, ensuring that our students invariably possess the appropriate knowledge and skills. We do so in close cooperation with professional practitioners. Examples include our Future Care Labs (at the cutting edge of care and technology), the vitality lab in Galgenwaard stadium, professional centres in the field of energy transition, sustainable mobility and manufacturing based at our Tech Campus in Nieuwegein and a Mixed Reality Academy at our Amersfoort campus. This approach enables us to create added value for our students and our environment alike.

Johan Spronk

Chairman of the Executive Board of ROC Midden Nederland



Higher education

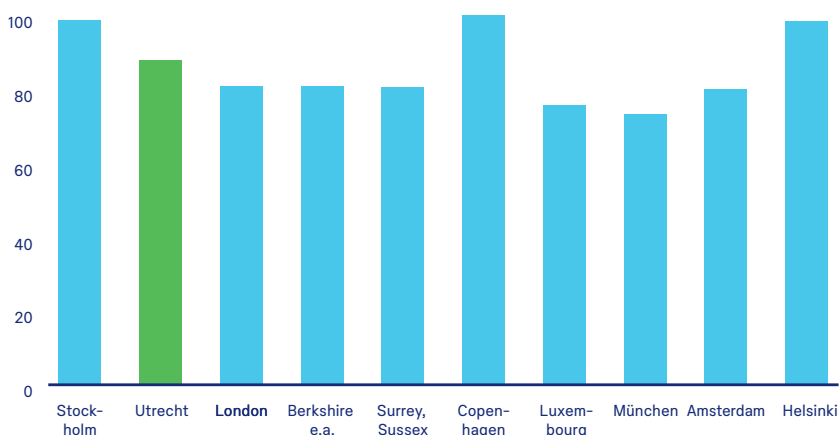
Lifelong learning

Utrecht occupies an exceptional position when it comes to the power of knowledge as a European region. Well over half its population is highly educated. This high percentage can be partly attributed to the fact that it has both a university of applied sciences and a university. The region's geographic location also boosts Utrecht's appeal to the highly educated. People prefer to live in or around the cities where they work. The link between education and employment at Utrecht Science Park is another good example of this. This area is a European life sciences cluster. Furthermore, it is in the immediate vicinity of both the university and university of applied sciences. Utrecht ranks fourth in the RCI in terms of higher education. An overall score of 87.7 was awarded.

This is huge achievement for the Utrecht region, thanks to a broad concerted effort! As the beating heart of the region, the partners at Utrecht Science Park also significantly contribute to our knowledge economy in the areas of sustainability, life sciences and health. The innovations devised here are exported all over the world. The stimulating challenge we now face is to apply more broadly the knowledge gained in the field of healthy urban living in our own region, with a view to further improving both the business and residential climates.

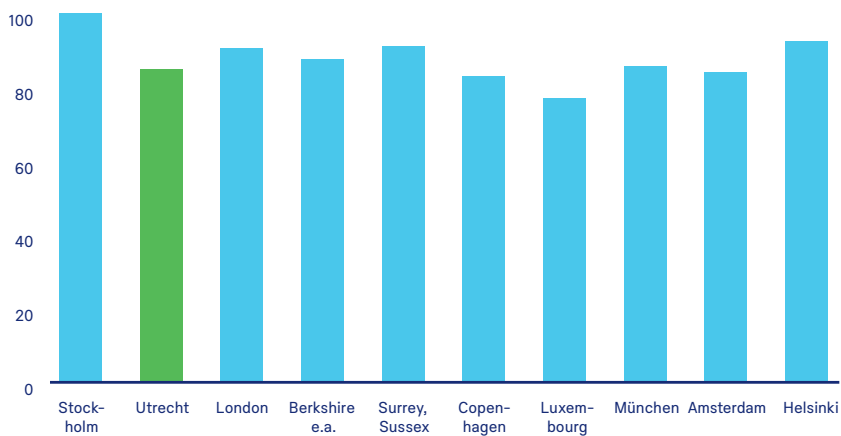
Jan Henk van der Velden

Managing Director Utrecht Science Park Foundation



Job market

When it comes to the competitiveness of the job market, Utrecht is in a strong position. The market in Utrecht is the largest in the region. The increase in employment goes hand in hand with population growth. The basic principle is to utilise talent across the full breadth of the market. From installers to expats with a PhD to ICT specialists, there is demand for all sorts of employees. Furthermore, given the considerable being put into the development of healthcare, talent is attracted which also opts to settle here. With labour productivity, participation of women and young people and the development of unemployment as criteria for competitiveness, Utrecht features prominently in the RCI study. Of the 268 regions participating in the RCI, Utrecht is ranked 8th in terms of its job market. An overall score of 86.4 was awarded.



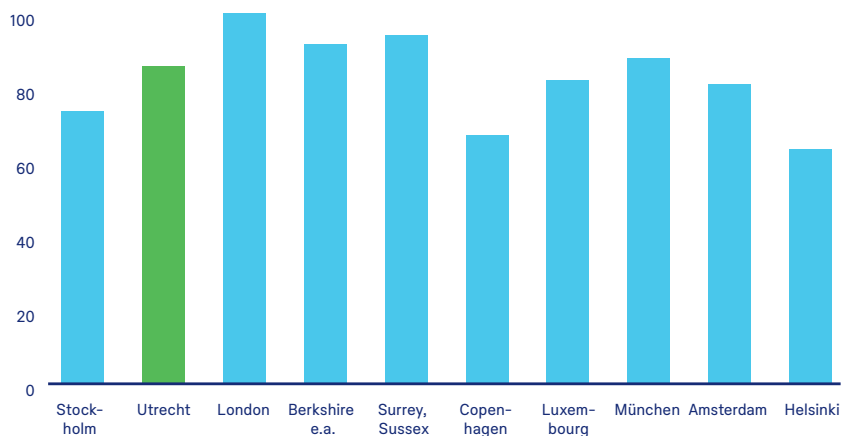
When the merger of Vodafone and Ziggo was announced, we were naturally keen to find new premises where the entire workforce could jointly embark on this new adventure. That meant relocating from five sites to a single central location, and nowhere is more central than Utrecht. A prime location was also available in the city centre, adjacent to Central Station. It is an excellent place to achieve our ambition of creating an office environment that fits in seamlessly with the purpose – pleasure and progress in every connection – and the open culture of the

new organisation. Our new location appeals to literally everyone, given that the office is readily accessible through the station on the one hand, while it offers us the opportunity to simply stroll into the city for Friday afternoon drinks on the other hand. The integration of the five offices in Utrecht was a major milestone for our new organisation, and we are highly satisfied with our central location in the heart of Utrecht.

Thomas Mulder
Executive Director HR VodafoneZiggo

Market size

A strategic location for your company's head office is vital. And we are proud to admit that Utrecht is a popular choice in this regard. The location of our region offers many entrepreneurs the opportunity to serve not only the entire Dutch market, but also their markets across national borders. Its wealthy population makes the region an interesting place for entrepreneurs to invest. As the population continues to expand, so does the regional market. Utrecht ranks fifth in the RCI in terms of market volume. An overall score of 85.7 was awarded.



We already had a European head office and warehouse in Amersfoort and chose to build a manufacturing plant there as well for several reasons: Amersfoort is located in Europe's most competitive region, it has a good infrastructure with two main freeways and a train station and it provides easy access to Schiphol and Amsterdam. Furthermore, people in Amersfoort are highly educated and it is relatively simple to find an international workforce. This, combined with the good relationship which we already had with the local government, weighed up against the lower cost of land in the more remote parts of the Netherlands.

Rob van der Meer
CEO Applied Medical Europe



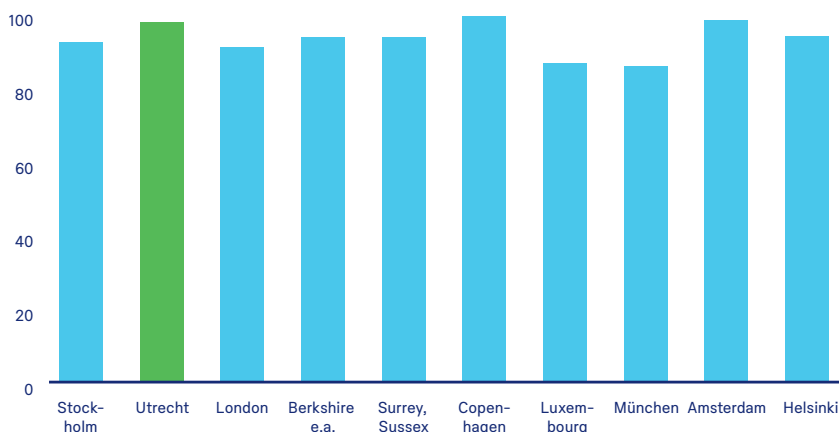
Technology

Utrecht-based start-ups can readily compete with colleagues worldwide. Utrecht has a pretty healthy tech climate after all. With around 120 start-ups in the region, Utrecht has firmly made its mark on the map. And this applies in all areas, ranging from life sciences and health care, to gaming, medical technology and IT. And it should be borne in mind that Utrecht's sustainable lifestyle attracts such young entrepreneurs in particular. Entrepreneurs who devise and implement surprising innovations, and who are able to achieve connection and cooperation where it is required. In the region itself, or even globally. Utrecht ranks third in the RCI in terms of technology. An overall score of 97.5 was awarded.



We found exactly the premises we wanted adjacent to Utrecht Central Station, where we can continue our rapid growth and accommodate even more talented employees. Together with them, we render 3D printing as accessible as possible, so that more and more companies and universities can print concepts, components, prototypes, tools and accessories themselves. We enable professionals to manufacture only what they require, when and where they need it. Since Ultimaker was founded in 2011, we have sold more than 125,000 3D printers worldwide, thereby becoming the market leader in the desktop segment.

Jos Burger
CEO Ultimaker



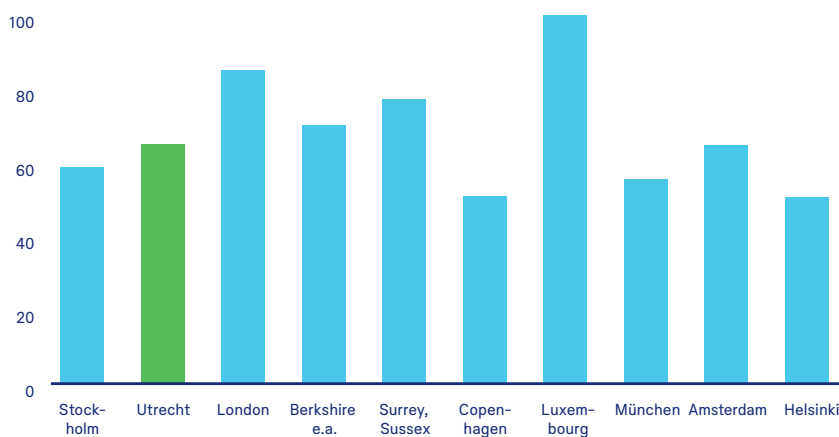
Business services

Business services are traditionally the driving force behind Utrecht's economy. The fact that Utrecht has acquired considerable experience is also reflected in the results of the RCI. Research factors are: employment in foreign-owned companies, employment and gross added value in business services. Utrecht ranks fifth in the RCI in terms of business services. An overall score of 64.9 was awarded.

Capgemini Nederland has strong ties with the city of Utrecht. For over 45 years, Utrecht is the obvious choice for Capgemini as we are a multinational company with clients all over the country. This means we need to have a centrally located and easily accessible head office for our consultants and visitors. Our head office in Utrecht Leidsche Rijn is right next to the train station and also easily accessible by car. There are also plenty of good-quality hotels nearby to cater to our international guests. The fact that Utrecht also hosts several universities of applied sciences and has a vibrant and safe living environment, makes the city extremely attractive to the highly skilled young people we need. Finally, we are also very pleased to be actively involved in several local economic, social and cultural initiatives, including StartupUtrecht and Centraal Museum Utrecht, which makes us feel an integral part of this wonderful city.

Mark Grimberg

Executive Boardmember Capgemini Nederland



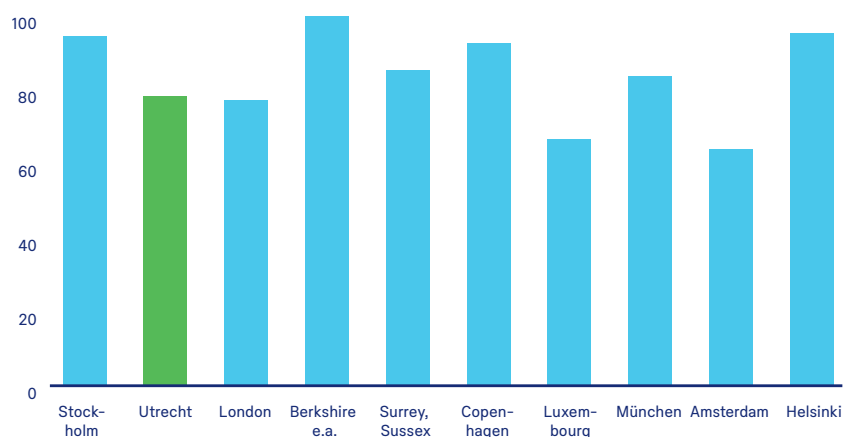
Innovation

Tech innovation lies at the heart of Utrecht. A large part of the city's working population is engaged in scientific research and development. In this regard, healthcare, higher education and technology all merge seamlessly at Utrecht Science Park. It has an innovative climate that can compete with the global standard, which readily persuades start-ups and large companies alike to set up business in the region. There is evidence of continued employment growth in the technological and knowledge intensive sectors in Utrecht. The large number of start-ups is also accompanied by creative mass, which can move flexibly and innovatively throughout the job market. Of the 268 regions participating in the RCI, Utrecht is ranked 7th in terms of innovation. An overall score of 78.2 was awarded.



ViCentra was founded by two British engineers in 2013, with a view to creating a new insulin pump for diabetes patients. They chose Utrecht because of its range of (international) talent, ability to finance and a health market that is innovative and readily accepts new technologies. Now, six years down the line, our hundred-strong workforce comprises 18 nationalities, while the Kaleido product has proven a huge success in the Dutch market. We are also poised to launch it in the United Kingdom this autumn, followed by other European countries during 2020. What makes Utrecht attractive is its scale: suitably large to have a choice of accommodation, talent and nice restaurants for visitors, but also small enough to have business premises within cycling or bus distance from Central Station, which provides convenient links to Schiphol Airport for purposes of international travel.

Frans Cromme
CEO ViCentra



Score Region Utrecht



Basis

Institutions
Macroeconomic
stability

Infrastructure

Health

Basic education



Efficiency

Higher education

Job market

Market size

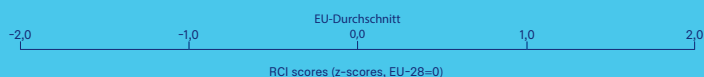


Innovation

Technology

Business services

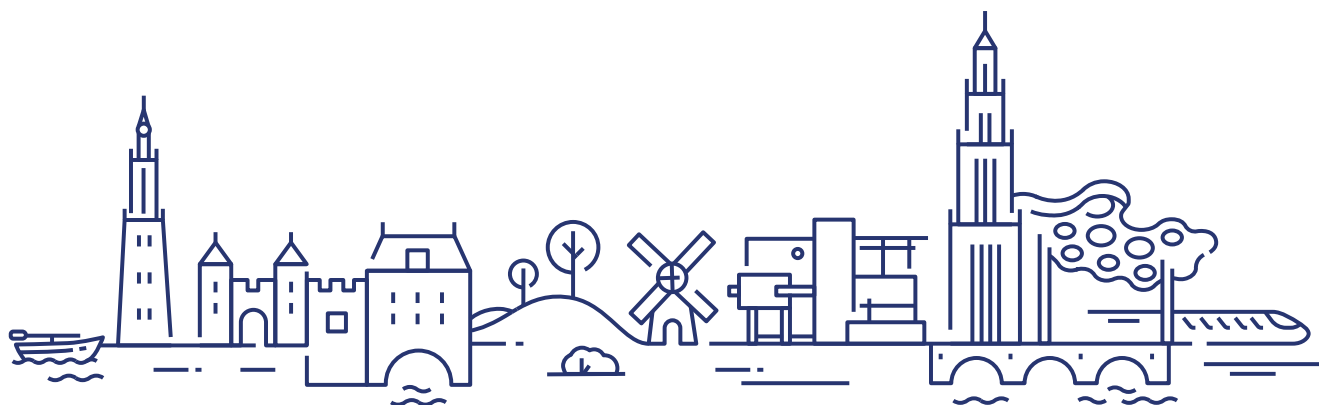
Innovation



Score Utrecht Region, 2019

Score The Netherlands, 2019

Source: RCI, European Union (2019)



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www.ec.europa.eu

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