

Netherlands

1. Industrial Strategy

The Dutch government's current industrial policy is closely linked to its climate and innovation agendas, with a strong focus on sustainability, digitalization, and strengthening the competitiveness of Dutch industry in the global economy, led by the Ministry of Economic Affairs.¹

The Netherlands Industrial Policy for 2050 is a response to the increasing demand in raw materials and aims to find efficient ways of using raw materials and products. The goal is to make the Dutch economy circular by 2050. The government introduced its **National Programme on Circular Economy 2023 -2030** that sets out the following four ways to make the economy circular quickly:

- Reduction in the usage of raw materials by buying lesser products and sharing products that are already owned.
- Substitute raw materials with sustainably produced, renewable and widely available raw materials so Netherlands is less dependent on fossil resources.
- Extending product life by reusing and repairing them to slow down the demand for new products and raw materials.
- Recycle raw materials to make new products from them to reduce the waste incinerated.

The Programme has measures for specific product groups and focus areas such as education and circular. The Netherlands is also a member of the Platform for Accelerating the Circular Economy (PACE).²

The Netherlands has adopted its **Mission Driven Top-Sector and Innovation Policy (MTIB)** 2011 as a new form of industrial policy that focuses on nine sectors where Dutch industry excels globally including, agri and food, chemicals, creative industry, energy, high tech systems and materials, life sciences and health, logistics, water and maritime, and horticulture and starting materials. The policy encourages public-private partnerships,

¹ Ministerie van Economische Zaken L en I, 'Ministry of Economic Affairs - Government.NL' (24 August 2011) <<https://www.government.nl/ministries/ministry-of-economic-affairs>> accessed 19 July 2025.

² Waterstaat M van I en, 'Circular Dutch Economy by 2050 - Circular Economy - Government.NL' (4 November 2019) <<https://www.government.nl/topics/circular-economy/circular-dutch-economy-by-2050>> accessed 19 July 2025.

research collaboration, and internationalization.³ The Netherlands Enterprise Agency supports programs for innovation, sustainability, and internationalization.⁴

2.Digital (Development) Strategy

The **Dutch Digitalization Strategy 2.0 (Nederlandse Digitaliseringsstrategie)** was first launched in 2018 and is updated annually. The strategy sets out the government's vision for the Netherlands to be a global leader in digital innovation, infrastructure, and security. The strategy focuses on:

- Strengthening digital infrastructure, digital government, digital connectivity and digital resilience.
- Promoting digital skills and inclusion
- Supporting digital innovation in business and government
- Enhancing cybersecurity and data protection
- Fostering the responsible use of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence.

The strategy highlights the previous achievements and the priorities for the coming year. It highlights the importance of applying data to resolve social issues, significance of digitally resilient entrepreneurs, international efforts and collaborations among other things. The government aims for Netherlands to become a digital leader in Europe, aim to be inclusive in terms of both labour market and society, through digital skills and employability and build a digital economy on trust by safeguarding privacy and maintaining digital security.⁵ The **Digital Agenda for the Netherlands Innovation, Trust and Acceleration** highlights the significance of digitalization in the Dutch economy for current and future prosperity. It focuses on education, knowledge and innovation, open and high-speed infrastructure, security and trust and digitization of sectors.⁶

3.Main Constitutional Provisions

The Constitution of the Netherlands does not explicitly reference industrial or digital policy. However, the government's authority to legislate on economic, trade, and technological matters is derived from general constitutional provisions, including, Article 20 that highlights

³ 'STIP Compass' <<https://stip.oecd.org/moip/case-studies/3>> accessed 19 July 2025.

⁴ RVO NEA, 'About RVO' (*business.gov.nl*) <<https://business.gov.nl/partners/about-rvo/>> accessed 19 July 2025.

⁵ 'Dutch Digitalisation Strategy 2.0 published | Nederland Digitaal' <<https://www.nederlanddigitaal.nl/documenten/2019/11/13/english-version-of-the-dutch-digitalisation-strategy-2.0>> accessed 20 July 2025.

⁶ Klimaat M van EZ en, 'Digital Agenda for the Netherlands Innovation, Trust, Acceleration - Report - Government.NL' (1 July 2016) <<https://www.government.nl/documents/reports/2017/04/11/digital-agenda-for-the-netherlands-innovation-trust-acceleration>> accessed 20 July 2025.

the government's responsibility to secure the means of subsistence of the population and to achieve the distribution of wealth. Article 22 highlights the government's duty to promote public health and adequate housing, and promote social and cultural development. The government's responsibility to promote the international legal order, which underpins participation in international agreements is set out in Article 90.⁷

4. Main Regulatory Provisions and Policy Developments

Certain legislative and regulatory acts have a considerable impact on industrial policy aspects surrounding digital development. These include the:

- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR, EU 2016/679) is directly applicable in the Netherlands, implemented via the Dutch Implementation Act;⁸
- Dutch Telecommunications Act 1998;⁹
- The Digital Government Act;¹⁰
- The Cybersecurity Act Netherlands - expected to come into force in 2026;¹¹
- Netherlands DSA Implementation Act – enforces the European Digital Services Act;¹²
- National Security Strategy;
- National Cybersecurity Strategy 2022-2028;¹³
- The Digital Economy Strategy 2019;¹⁴
- Strategic Action Plan for Artificial Intelligence;¹⁵
- Fintech Action Plan;¹⁶
- Smart Industry Program.¹⁷

⁷ 'Netherlands 1814 (Rev. 2008) Constitution - Constitute'

<https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Netherlands_2008> accessed 28 July 2025.

⁸ 'Netherlands Data Protection Act (UAVG): What You Need to Know' (*Velotix*)

<<https://www.velotix.ai/privacy-regulations/netherlands-data-protection-act-uavg/>> accessed 28 July 2025.

⁹ Dutch Telecommunications Act as amended in 2021 <

<https://www.dataguidance.com/sites/default/files/telecommunications-act.pdf>>.

¹⁰ The Digital Government Act 2023 < <https://www.nldigitalgovernment.nl/overview/legislation/>>.

¹¹ The cybersecurity Act Netherlands < <https://humaninprogress.com/netherlands-cybersecurity-act-nis2-implementation/#:~:text=What%20Is%20the%20Dutch%20Cybersecurity,to%20the%20original%20NIS%20Directive.>>.

¹² Markt AC&, 'ACM Is Now Fully Authorized to Enforce the Digital Services Act | ACM' (3 February 2025) <<https://www.acm.nl/en/publications/acm-now-fully-authorized-enforce-digital-services-act>> accessed 20 July 2025.

¹³ National Cybersecurity Strategy 2022-2028

<<https://english.ncsc.nl/publications/publications/2022/december/06/the-netherlands-cybersecurity-strategy-2022-2028>>.

¹⁴ The Digital Economy Strategy 2019 <

file:///Users/applepc/Downloads/National+Security+Strategy_2019.pdf>.

¹⁵ Strategic Action Plan for Artificial Intelligence <

https://wp.oecd.ai/app/uploads/2021/12/Netherlands_Strategic_Action_Plan_for_Artificial_Intelligence.pdf>.

¹⁶ Fintech Action Plan < <https://www.stibbe.com/publications-and-insights/dutch-fintech-action-plan-stimulating-growth-in-the-dutch-fintech-sector#:~:text=Concrete%20goals%20are:,Concrete%20goals%20are:>>.

¹⁷ Smart Industry Program < https://ec.europa.eu/futurium/en/system/files/ged/nl_country_analysis.pdf>.

The Digital Trust Center (DTC) supports businesses in improving their cybersecurity.¹⁸ The Netherlands Organization for Applied Scientific Research (TNO)¹⁹ and the Dutch AI Coalition (Nederlandse AI Coalitie) foster research and innovation in digital technologies.²⁰

5.(Regional) Economic Treaties to which the Netherlands is a Signatory

Netherlands is a participant in multiple economic agreements. These agreements include:

- European Union (EU) Treaties including the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).
- EU Free Trade Agreements: With Canada (CETA), Japan (EPA), South Korea, Singapore, Vietnam, and others.
- European Economic Area (EEA) Agreement: With Norway, Iceland, and Liechtenstein.
- EU–UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement.
- EU–Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) Interim Economic Partnership Agreement.
- EU–Cariforum Economic Partnership Agreement.
- EU–Mexico Agreement.²¹

6. Plurilaterals

The Netherlands participates in multiple plurilateral initiatives and agreements, primarily through the European Union and the World Trade Organization (WTO). Key plurilaterals include:

- WTO Information Technology Agreement (ITA);²²
- WTO Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA);²³
- WTO Joint Initiative on E-commerce;²⁴

¹⁸ Center DT, ‘About Digital Trust Center’ (*business.gov.nl*) <<https://business.gov.nl/partners/about-digital-trust-center/>> accessed 22 July 2025.

¹⁹ ‘TNO (Netherlands Organization for Applied Scientific Research)’ (*EARPA*) <<https://www.earpa.eu/organisations/tno-netherlands-organization-for-applied-scientific-research/>> accessed 29 July 2025.

²⁰ ‘AI Coalitie 4 NL’ (12 December 2024) <<https://aic4nl.nl/over-ons/ons-verhaal/>> accessed 22 July 2025.

²¹ ‘EU Trade Relationships by Country/Region’ (25 July 2025) <https://policy.trade.ec.europa.eu/eu-trade-relationships-country-and-region_en> accessed 29 July 2025; WTO | Regional Trade Agreements’ <<http://rtais.wto.org/UI/PublicMaintainRTAHome.aspx>> accessed 24 September 2024.

²² ‘WTO | Information Technology Agreement’ <https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/inftec_e/inftec_e.htm> accessed 25 July 2025.

²³ ‘WTO | Government Procurement - The Plurilateral Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA)’ <https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/gproc_e/gp_gpa_e.htm> accessed 24 July 2025.

²⁴ ‘WTO JSI on E-Commerce’ <<https://dig.watch/processes/wto-ecommerce>> accessed 29 July 2025.

- WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement.²⁵

7.Proceedings Initiated Against the Netherlands, or by It, Before International Fora for the Adoption/Implementation of Industrial Policy Measures (e.g., Before WTO Panels, the WTO's AB)

The Netherlands, as an EU member state, is represented by the European Union in WTO dispute settlement proceedings. The EU has been involved in numerous WTO dispute settlement proceedings with some concerning industrial and digital policy measures. For instance, EU recently requested consultations with the Chinese Taipei for measures regarding local content requirements in investments in offshore wind installations.²⁶ The Netherlands itself has not been the direct subject of major international proceedings specifically regarding the adoption or implementation of its national industrial or digital policy measures.

Amna Zaman (Last updated 29 July 2025)

²⁵ 'WTO | Trade Topics - Trade Facilitation - Background'

<https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/tradfa_e/tradfathetheagreement_e.htm> accessed 29 July 2025.

²⁶ Chinese Taipei – Measure Relating to Investments in Offshore Wind Installations. Request for Consultations by the European Union, WT/DS625/1, G/TRIMS/D/48 S/L/548, G/L/1532.