

# Industry in the Netherlands after 2030



**Although the transition of industry in the Netherlands towards sustainability is heading in the right direction, it needs to progress faster and requires a different approach. This conclusion can be drawn from the Energiepodium Dinner, which took place on Monday 4 December, at Hotel New York in Rotterdam with approximately 25 attendees. The Energiepodium Dinner is part of a series of discussion meetings made possible by PwC.**

As this edition focused on industry, the location can at the very least be described as appropriate. Just as the former headquarters of the Holland America Line provided thousands of emigrants with a springboard to a better future, the (petro)chemical industry would do anything to have a springboard to a sustainable future.

## Leadership and determination

However, it is not as fast and easy as it seems, as revealed during a lively discussion. The main topic was who should show leadership and determination in the transition of industry towards sustainability. Some of the attendees suggested that the gap between the current, mainly fossil fuel-based energy system and the sustainable energy system of the future is still so large, perhaps because the energy transition in the Netherlands has been approached from a negative perspective from the start: if CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are not reduced, the earth will warm up with all the negative consequences. It would have been better to emphasize the perspective of a prosperous, economically strong country and a sustainable, innovative industry, with CO<sub>2</sub> reduction as a positive outcome.

## Stable, attractive, and sustainable

While the energy transition has only just begun, the industry is facing a second enormous challenge with the transition of resources. Optimizing existing production processes is not enough, as some participants pointed out. It is especially important to invest in areas where the Dutch industry excels and has grown large: technology and R&D.

Most attendees agreed that more attention should be given to the necessary “license to produce”. Especially in light of the energy transition and the transition of resources, society needs to be made aware of the

enormous value and importance of the industry and how it can continue to thrive. Considering that many Dutch (petro)chemical companies are part of multinational corporations and investment decisions are made abroad, it is crucial to create a consistent industrial policy that establishes a stable, attractive, and sustainable investment climate.

## Nourishing ground

The discussion drew comparisons with China and Germany, and extensively addressed the polarized debate on subsidizing the fossil industry and the customized agreements on the transition of industry towards sustainability. The bottom line was that this Energiepodium Dinner met expectations as a nourishing ground for a substantive discussion that provided new insights and enriched existing ones. It made it clear that there is certainly a sustainable future for the industry “beyond 2030”, but that the extremely complex energy and resource transition needs progress faster and requires a different approach.

## About Energiepodium.nl

[Energiepodium.nl](https://www.energiepodium.nl) is an online platform with news, opinions and background information about the energy transition. PwC is a platform partner because it makes an important contribution to the social debate on energy and climate. In addition to the online platform, Energiepodium also organizes physical events, such as dinner meetings. This series theme is ‘Beyond 2030’. In doing so, we look ahead and create insight into what the energy market and climate policy will look like – or should look like – in the next decade.