

Sustainable digitalisation manifesto



We need an integral national approach to make the Netherlands a frontrunner in the field of sustainable digitalisation. It is clear that digitalisation is an essential aspect of sustainability and that digitalisation itself must also be sustainable.

In this manifesto, the National Coalition for Sustainable Digitalisation is joined by a large number of other organisations to call for action. A national **roadmap** is needed to remove obstacles and to capitalise on arising opportunities in the digital and sustainability transitions. We think that the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy has an important role to play in this. To achieve an integral approach to sustainable digitalisation, it is essential that government, academia, business and citizens cooperate closely.

Recent developments have made it clear that this subject is timelier than ever:

- The coronavirus pandemic and the war in Ukraine have revealed the fragility of current systems, and how dependent we are on international value chains and non-renewable energy sources.
- There have been significant changes in energy consumption and energy generation, resulting in congestion of the grid. This is hampering new developments.

The importance of the interplay between digitalisation and sustainability is also being acknowledged in the rest of Europe. The EU recognises the important role the ‘twin transition’ – the digital transition and the sustainability transition – can play in achieving the goals of the Green Deal and Digital Europe.

Six aspects that are key to becoming a frontrunner in sustainable digitalisation

1. There is too much fragmentation – we need to work on better cooperation between government departments and create coherent policies.
2. We are lacking the right data – we need to provide facts and transparency in order to ensure our work is fact-based.
3. Current laws and regulations are not sufficient – we need to adjust them where necessary, so that sustainable choices become self-evident.
4. There are serious shortages in the labour market in relevant fields – we need to provide people, knowledge and tools.
5. The energy and digital systems are insufficiently integrated. We need to provide accessible innovation to improve this.
6. The Netherlands lacks international visibility. We can inspire other countries as a frontrunner in an international level playing field.

The transition to a sustainable society requires a huge effort from all parties. Digitalisation can make a fundamental contribution to innovations that support the energy transition. As such, it is a crucial element of accelerating the sustainability transition, and in addition, it itself needs to be a sustainable process. Just like other sectors, the digital economy needs to become more sustainable in order to be future proof.

Time for action!

The action points above will provide transparency, ownership, incentivise opportunities and remove obstacles. They will contribute to the Netherlands being an international frontrunner in sustainable digitalisation.

Signed 18 October 2022

The National Coalition for Sustainable Digitalisation:

