



TOGETHER FOR
A STRONG NETHERLANDS



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AmCham wants to contribute actively and constructively to the dialogue between government and the business community. This starts with sharing our vision on themes that we believe are most relevant for the Netherlands and which will play an important role in policy-making in the coming years, but which are also high on the agenda for individual companies.

Recent events like the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian invasion in Ukraine make more visible that the world is changing, with potential impacts like stagflation, food- and refugee crises, and financial challenges for citizens coming at us rapidly.

It is now more than ever necessary for all parties – public, private and civil society – to join forces to tackle societal challenges.

Sustainability, innovation and a more inclusive labor market and society are goals on which both the private sector and the government want to fully commit. We believe that we can achieve those ambitions by maximizing the many benefits of a level playing field in Europe, by finding workable solutions together through fair and open public-private dialogue, and by pursuing policies – fiscal and other – that are consistent and realistic and that support high-quality economic activity.

A stable and predictable regulatory (including tax) regime, is a precondition for the large, long term investments that are required to achieve our societal goals. If the average regulatory and tax burden is in line with the EU average, then the Netherlands may well win competitively with the stability and predictability and therewith reliability of its investment climate. This is the attractiveness AmCham strives to achieve across all parties.



PRIORITY POINTS



Accelerating sustainability
is an absolute must



Innovating is
investing



Diversity & Inclusion –
because every voice counts



The Netherlands in the
European Union



Achieving economic
resilience *together*



Fiscal policy that stimulates sustainability,
innovation and inclusive employment



I ACCELERATING SUSTAINABILITY IS AN ABSOLUTE MUST

We are on the brink of the greatest transition humanity has ever known. This is not a Dutch or European project, it is an assignment for the entire world, which will underlie a fundamentally new reality and which is by definition transnational in nature. Both business and government have shown that they are prepared to play a key role, each from their own strengths. Many steps are already being taken towards the goals of 2030, but the road to full climate neutrality in 2050 and subsequently climate positivity and the need to address the biodiversity crisis, will still pose many challenges. The speed of the transition is one of the biggest issues at the moment, and the lack of mutual trust between politics and business to move more decisively beyond the first steps seems to be one of the reasons. AmCham can play a key role in bringing these sides together on a frequent and active basis to discuss mutual opportunities and coordinated action plans to progress on critical sustainability investments.



- AmCham wants to work on **mutual trust** between the government and international companies in order to be able to take steps more quickly in the energy transition and proceed with the actual implementation of agreed trajectories..
- In the energy transition, use all available options to enable a **fast and affordable transition**, including solar, wind, hydrogen and nuclear energy sources. In a successful transition, energy remains sufficiently available and affordable. The affordability of energy in the Netherlands compared to other EU countries threatens to become a major problem. High energy prices in the Netherlands compared to other European countries will not only affect citizens, but will also have a very negative effect on the investment climate.
- • In all sectors confronting the net-zero transition, **fast, clear and innovative decision-making** are absolute preconditions for taking action. The realization that “What got us here, won’t get us there” is driving more and more organizations to look for solutions that did not exist before. The same is needed in terms of regulations and procedures.
- AmCham makes an appeal to think big and **long term**. Make use of global innovations, translate these nationally and dare to take on long-term projects, and make success in the Netherlands a leading light for global inspiration and action.



2 INNOVATING IS INVESTING

The Netherlands has traditionally performed well in innovation rankings and has the potential to be a leader in many sectors, but is in danger of losing its leading position in innovation and the economy as a result of stricter regulations. The Netherlands benefits from strong innovation hubs in the Netherlands itself. Start-ups and scale-ups thrive in a well-functioning ecosystem that also includes multinational companies. Therefore, it is important to sufficiently value large international companies, and disseminate the message about their contribution widely. The negative sentiment surrounding large companies does not do justice to the contribution of multinationals to employment, cooperation with small and medium-sized enterprises, knowledge institutions and local organizations in many Dutch regions.

Mission-driven innovation policy also means capitalizing on choices already made. An example is the arrival of many life sciences companies after the establishment of EMA in the Netherlands. The presence of these companies offers opportunities to further expand the sector in the Netherlands and to become leading in Europe – an ambition that can be realized with targeted government incentives.



- 🔗 Promote the **value of multinationals** within the innovation ecosystem. Multinational companies are indispensable for start-ups and scale-ups.
- 🔗 Work with industry to create **clear data protection regulations** that work for the EU and the US. A protectionist data policy towards the US should not hinder innovation. For example, also make use of institutions such as the Trade and Technology Council between the EU and the US.
- 🔗 Support companies also during the **roll-out phase of innovations**. In addition to support in the research and development phase, the government can provide an important stimulus at this stage. More opportunities can be exploited here than is currently the case.
- 🔗 AmCham applauds the government's willingness to **invest in education** and the knowledge economy in the Netherlands, because innovation can only be achieved with an inclusive and high-quality education system.
- 🔗 Treat **intellectual property rights** respectfully and unambiguously. This is essential to keep it attractive for companies to invest in innovation.



3 DIVERSITY & INCLUSION – BECAUSE EVERY VOICE COUNTS

A healthy society is a society where no one is left behind and where everyone has an equal opportunity to participate. Companies and government together must be aware of groups and individuals that are at risk of falling behind and dare to look honestly at where there is still progress to be made - both within organizations and in society. That certainly means more diversity at the top, but equal opportunities should already start in childhood. High-quality education has the potential to be a 'great equalizer', but at the moment it is far from that. There is also a lot of untapped labor potential, which is very unfavorable in a social but certainly also in an economic sense in the current tight labor market.



- AmCham appreciates the steps the government is taking to combat **discrimination** in the workplace.
- Focus on **actively diversifying** the workplace. Higher diversity increases the innovative power and earning capacity of companies.
- Use **lost labor potential** by facilitating that everyone can work (full-time). This includes good and affordable or free childcare, and support mechanisms to move from work to work. Such measures encourage full-time rather than part-time work and can provide important solutions to labor market shortages and unequal career opportunities.



4 THE NETHERLANDS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

The European Union offers an indispensable framework for the development and growth of the Netherlands. The logic of the internal market creates benefits of scale that can accelerate the roll-out of innovations without driving up costs excessively. Being able to operate internationally in a market where the same rules apply is a unique advantage for both small and medium-sized businesses and large companies. A strong Europe is good for the Netherlands, but also for companies and for every Dutch and European citizen. Recent geopolitical developments show that strong and smart partnerships with natural allies are needed more than ever in supply chains and the provision of strategic goods, including energy. For AmCham, the United States is a natural and crucial partner with which the Netherlands and Europe share many values. Moreover, the mutual contributions to each other's economy are enormous.



- ★ Make careful choices about where the **Netherlands wants to lead** and where the **Netherlands wants to follow**. Other countries in the EU are making targeted investments to attract American companies, for example with pragmatic legislation and fast procedures. Align the Dutch strategy with the ambitions of neighboring countries.
- ★ Challenge European partners to define in concrete terms the meaning of **'Open Strategic Autonomy'**. Current geopolitical developments confirm the need to choose the right partners. The transatlantic relationship is a natural and crucial relationship for the Netherlands and Europe.
- ★ AmCham is pleased with the commitment to **Horizon Europe**. This program offers many opportunities for the development of knowledge, both for the Netherlands and internationally.
- ★ AmCham appreciates the position of the government when it comes to the **Capital Market Union**. This is essential for investments in a green transition and technological innovation.
- ★ Strive for an **unambiguous European sustainability approach**. The challenges that concern our environment are transnational, and also the private sector operates across borders. Prevent that unclear situations with regard to sustainability regulation and implementation arise in border regions. We aspire to an ambitious and unambiguous approach when it comes to implementing EU sustainability legislation.



5 ACHIEVING ECONOMIC RESILIENCE TOGETHER

In recent years we have been facing crises with global impact: the COVID-19 pandemic, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, climate change. The public and private sectors need each other to respond adequately to these developments. Together we can build the resilience needed to maintain a strong and sustainable economy in the Netherlands in the future.



- Prevent that the **costs of the corona crisis** are being passed on too much to (large) companies. This could be at the expense of investments in innovation and sustainability in the future. There must also be room to cope with the next crisis.
- Be cautious about short-term **tax increases for multinational companies**. The departure of these companies from the Netherlands could affect the earning capacity of the Netherlands and in the long term be at the expense of the revenue from these tax levies. A higher corporate tax rate or abolishing the 30% ruling for expats makes it less favorable for multinationals to settle in the Netherlands and thus affects the business climate in a negative way.
- **Shortages in the labor market** can in the longer term form a serious obstacle to economic growth and prosperity in the Netherlands. Focus on private-public cooperation to solve shortages in the labor market. Stimulate and facilitate large companies to attract talent and workers from abroad, but also look for ways to make better use of the labor potential that is already present in the Netherlands. For example, companies are prepared to train or retrain employees themselves.
- AmCham applauds that the government is embracing the importance of a future-proof traffic, energy and housing **infrastructure**.



6 TAX POLICY

AmCham stands for American companies that bring added value for the Netherlands – as an employer, innovator, driver of sustainability and/or investor. On behalf of these companies, AmCham is happy to contribute by thinking along about the development of tax policy that ensures that the Netherlands is attractive to companies with substantial activities, while preventing abuse. National and international tax developments have a major impact on the attractiveness of the Netherlands for investments by American companies. In recent years, the Netherlands has done a lot to combat abuse of the international tax system by introducing national regulations and by leading the way in international initiatives within the EU and the OECD.



- € **Conduct policy with vision.** Ensure consistency and predictability in the regulatory and tax domain, but also coordinate with other departments. Legislative changes (including tax) often undo positive developments within other ministries, or vice versa. Avoid emotional or impulsive reactions ('knee jerk reactions') to events in society and keep the long-term earning model of the Netherlands in mind.
- € Aim for full implementation of **international initiatives** related to the tax regime, with no exceptions within the EU or beyond. A broad, international level playing field is of great importance to the Netherlands. This allows the Netherlands to distinguish itself more strongly on factors other than tax.
- € **Stimulate investment in innovation** and sustainability for companies and individuals by making these investments tax deductible.



IN CONCLUSION

A stable business and investment climate for AmCham is about more than financial, fiscal and economic interests only. The public and political sentiment has hardened towards multinational companies and this is something AmCham is concerned about. AmCham would like to change this by seeking dialogue and through a constructive exchange of views to better understand each other's positions and dilemmas. Where government and business address the same challenges together, value each other's role, responsibility and ability to find solutions, cooperation to overcome impediments and lead in this changing world is within reach.

That is what AmCham has in mind with this document.

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ABOUT AMCHAM

Since 1961, the American Chamber of Commerce in the Netherlands (AmCham) has been the representative of the American business community in the Netherlands and of Dutch / international companies with major interests in the United States. AmCham represents the interests of its more than 320 members in the field of trade and investment, and aims to strengthen the investment climate in the Netherlands

and the transatlantic economic relationship. In doing so, we recognize the value and importance of an open economy without trade barriers, a good public-private partnership, and the creation of mutual social and economic well-being in the Netherlands, Europe and America. From this perspective, our members have been driving economic activity between our countries for decades.

A SELECTION OF OUR MEMBERS

