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Highlights of Ecorys in 2024

| ECORYS NETHERLANDS

This year, Ecorys celebrates its 95th anniversary. In 1929, Ecorys was founded in Rotterdam as the Netherlands Economic Institute (NEI). Since then, we have been helping our clients with research and advice to help them make sound (policy) choices and provide answers to societal challenges. In a period of significant political shifts, our work and the need for independent economic research is greater than ever. Therefore, we are proud to present our annual selection of highlights from our projects.



Answering
tomorrow's
challenges
today



Digital infrastructure accounts for €24.3 billion and 200,000 jobs annually

Commissioned by the Ministry of Economic Affairs (EZ), Ecorys has mapped the economic value and footprint of the Dutch digital infrastructure.

Our research shows that this infrastructure generates an annual value of €24.3 billion and accounts for around 200,000 jobs. The footprint of our digital infrastructure on energy, material and space use is large. However, when we look at the ratio of energy consumption to added value, we find that the digital sector consumes relatively little energy.



Criminal exploitation of Rotterdam youth barely reported

Research shows that the number of young victims of criminal exploitation is significantly higher than official registrations show. These are young people forced to participate in money laundering, drug trafficking and recruitment for prostitution. The City of Rotterdam launched the pilot 'Tackling criminal exploitation' early last year. The aim is for social workers to recognise signals earlier and for them - and the victims - to report criminal exploitation more often.

Ecorys evaluated this pilot and concluded that the pilot was perceived as positive, but that the number of reports did not increase. Our advice is to focus more on (follow-up) training of professionals and awareness amongst young people, as well as expand the pilot to other Rotterdam neighbourhoods. Sharing positive stories from reporters can help increase trust in the reporting system.



Government subsidy indispensable for climate-proof agriculture

Due to climate change, the Netherlands is increasingly facing more extreme weather.

These weather extremes increase the risk of disasters with large financial losses - including in the agricultural sector. This is why the Dutch government subsidises 'broad weather insurance' to ensure that farmers are more financially resilient to storm damage.

Our research for the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature (LVVN) shows that this subsidy will remain necessary in the coming years. In this regard, it is important that farmers also continue to pay an own contribution, so that they continue to take preventive measures themselves. This includes, for instance, placing nets to protect fruit and vegetables from hail.



EU supports refugees in Turkey

Turkey's border region with Syria has faced large refugee flows for many years. Millions of refugees, mostly from Syria, seek refuge in Turkey or travel through the country to other countries.

This has significantly increased the pressure on Turkish society and infrastructure. Therefore, the EU supports refugees in Turkey with projects that provide basic needs, protection, education, healthcare, infrastructure and socio-economic support.

Ecorys has been monitoring the progress and effectiveness of this EU support since 2018. Our evaluations of 167 projects provide valuable insights, improve results and ensure accountability for the aid provided.



Streaming services and social media increase social value of top-level sport

Top-level sport and media are closely linked. Commissioned by the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS), Ecorys conducted an international exploration of the relationship between media, top-level sport and government policy in five countries: the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, Sweden and Japan.

In all countries, we see a growing fragmentation of the media landscape and a greatly increased influence of newer media forms. For instance, streaming services and social media are increasingly contributing to the popularity, and thus the social value, of top-level sport.



Full power grid hinders growth and sustainability of Dutch economy

The energy transition is placing increasing pressure on the electricity grid in the Netherlands.

The demand for electricity transmission increasingly exceeds the available capacity. This hampers the growth and sustainable development of the Dutch economy.

Ecorys was the first to estimate for the Ministry of Economic Affairs (EZ) and the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) the economic damage caused by grid congestion, expressed as the social gross costs for different business sectors. This shows that if one megawatt-hour (MWh) of electricity cannot be delivered to companies, it can cost up to €49,931 per MWh. For every undelivered MWh, the Netherlands also loses revenue and grid operators lose market share to foreign competitors.



Waste tax earns Dutch government €238 million annually

Dutch companies and households collectively produce about 60 million tonnes of waste a year. That is around 3,500 kilos of waste per inhabitant per year.

Waste management companies pay the Dutch government a waste materials tax (ASB) on the waste they receive or produce themselves.

Ecorys and CE Delft evaluated the functioning of the ASB for the Ministry of Finance and concluded that this tax generates €238 million annually for the government. However, waste management companies hardly pass on the ASB to municipalities and households, which means that the costs are mainly borne by themselves. By better passing on the tax, households will also be encouraged to produce less waste.



European rail equipment supplies are essential for global economy

The supply of European railway equipment is vital to the global economy. A study by Ecorys for the European Parliament shows that the global market for 'rolling stock' is expected to continue growing until 2030, with annual growth of 2-3% for Europe.

Currently, 20 European companies account for as much as 80% of global turnover, offering opportunities to boost Europe's competitiveness against countries such as China and the United States.

The Ecorys report was recently mentioned in a report by Mario Draghi on the competitiveness of the European Union.



Bypassing the Juliana Canal costs over €5 million a month

The Juliana Canal is part of the Maasroute and connects Dutch ports with ports in Belgium and Germany.

Rijkswaterstaat (RWS) is committed to a future-proof Maasroute and wants to make the Juliana canal suitable for so-called two-barge pushing ships (class Vb ships). This requires widening and deepening part of the canal. To ensure safety, Rijkswaterstaat has decided to temporarily close part of the shipping lane. This closure has significant consequences for commercial shipping, recreational shipping, and businesses that depend on the supply and removal of goods by water.

Ecorys has calculated that the total diversion costs resulting from the closure come to €5.1 million per month.



Growing European transport sector struggles to find staff

With 10 million employees, the European transport sector accounts for about 5% of European employment.

Commissioned by the European Parliament, Ecorys has identified the main trends and developments for the European transport sector. While the sector is expected to continue to grow, it is at the same time struggling with an ageing workforce and a lack of attraction for younger generations. As a result, workers from other EU and non-EU countries are increasingly being used. In addition, digitalisation and automation are becoming more important, increasing the demand for new skills.



Informal psychosocial care improves quality of life for (ex-)cancer patients

The Dutch healthcare system is insufficiently equipped to offer (former) cancer patients the relevant psychosocial care. At branch organisation IPSO (Institutions for Psychosocial Oncology), people can receive informal care and additional support during and after their cancer treatment outside the hospital.

Research by Ecorys for IPSO shows that this informal care provides relief and greatly improves the quality of life of patients and their loved ones. For example, 70% of visitors to IPSO centres experience an improvement in their health. Without IPSO centres, 150,000 to 200,000 additional consultations with healthcare providers such as GPs would take place annually. The centres thereby save €8 to €11 million in healthcare costs and promote reintegration, saving employers up to €30 million a year.

EU losing ground in Net-Zero technologies

On behalf of the European Commission, Ecorys conducted research on the production capacity and competitiveness of EU member states in Net-Zero technologies. This includes technologies such as solar panels, wind turbines, batteries and heat pumps.

Our research focuses on the challenges faced by European manufacturers and the increasing role played by China thanks to lower costs and economies of scale. Moreover, Europe remains too dependent on imported critical raw materials and components, especially from China. To remain competitive, it is critical that Europe invests further in its own production capacity for Net-Zero technologies and become less dependent on imports.



In the coming year(s), we will remain dedicated to helping our clients find answers to society's key challenges. We want to thank our clients, partners, experts, and colleagues for their trust, collaboration, and shared commitment to create genuine, sustainable change.

Are you interested in working with Ecorys or want to know more? Please reach out to us!

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