

New Energy for the Netherlands

Election program D66 2023-2027

Introduction

We are optimistic about the future. Even now, in a world full of uncertainty. While we're experiencing changes in our climate. While Russia has started a war on the European continent. While many people are struggling to make ends meet. Even now, we believe that tomorrow can be better than today.

D66 believes in a country where every citizen has the opportunity to live a healthy and prosperous life. Where everyone can afford a place to live. Where we take care of our planet, for now *and* for the future. Where everyone gets a fair shot, no matter where you were born. Where we are part of a strong and democratic Europe and our asylum policy is clear and just.

To bring this vision to life, we need to make choices. Choices that require us to make sacrifices, establish boundaries, and push limits. Most of all, it means that we have to look beyond our own needs and consider those of others. Because D66 wants to do more than dream – we want to act. We do have to be honest: we can't make it all happen tomorrow. But what we *can* do, is get started.

The changes we need have already begun. Every day, people are working to make the Netherlands and Europe better. Neighbors team up to generate clean energy. Family doctors collaborate to improve the health of their patients. Farmers join forces to positively impact agriculture and the environment. These people are showing us how it's done. In our plans, we are following their lead.

This program outlines the steps D66 wants to take in the coming four years. To improve the way we live and work in this country. As part of a strong Europe and a better world. If we want to succeed, everyone should be able to join in. Without anyone left behind. This is how we prepare our country for the future.

New energy for the Netherlands.

Hans Vijlbrief, Chair of the Election programme committee

Fleur Gräper-van Koolwijk, Chair of the Permanent programme committee

1. An Energetic Economy: Climate, Energy & Entrepreneurship

What we see

The Netherlands is one of the most thriving and happy countries in the world. We are well educated, benefit from modern infrastructure, and live in a safe and stable environment. That's beneficial to the business community, and a flourishing business community is beneficial to society. But it's not something that just happens. We have to work for it. In order to stay successful, we need to change.

The earth can no longer sustain the way we currently consume and produce. There is a limit to our natural resources. The quality of our water supply, soil, and air is getting worse. Biodiversity is in decline. There are not enough people for the jobs we rely on the most, like in healthcare and education. And we also need people to work on the transition to a digital and more sustainable world. A lot is changing, and that's an adjustment. But it also means new jobs and new opportunities.

What we want

In our transition to a sustainable economy, everyone should be able to keep up. Working more hours will actually lead to more disposable income. For anyone who wants to, working past the AOW retirement age will be more appealing. We will make a focused effort to attract skilled workers from other countries, and every person part of the labor force will have an increased say over their own career and work.

We will limit pollution and ensure that we decrease our use of natural resources. Our economy will be structured in such a way that a sustainable company will be the most profitable company, because societal costs will be factored in. The power of large companies will be curbed, and profits shared equitably.

Our government should ensure we always have access to essential goods in Europe, without having to rely on other countries like China or Russia. It has to set conditions and rules within which companies can operate, and create a favorable environment to launch a business and to embark on a transition to sustainability. In this way, the Netherlands is not just wealthy, but healthy and happy.

What we'll do

1. We are setting a higher target for the reduction of CO₂ emissions: 60 percent by 2030 and climate neutrality by 2040. In 2030, we want to use 50 percent fewer natural resources. In 2050, our economy will be completely circular.

2. Every adult will receive a climate bonus, compensating for the extra costs incurred due to the sustainable transition. With a climate ticket, you can use public transportation outside of rush hour for a fixed low price.
3. Each year, we will spend one billion euros to encourage the creation of sustainable products. We will phase out subsidies for fossil-based energy.
4. Gas extraction in Groningen will be halted indefinitely on October 1st, 2024. This will be codified into law.
5. We will create a so-called win-win loan. This makes it easier for small businesses to take out a loan from friends, family, or fans, who will receive an attractive return on their investment.

2. An Energetic Foundation: Housing, Healthcare & Livelihood

What we see

Not being able to afford housing or dealing with increasingly high rents can seriously impact your life. Having a job doesn't mean you actually make a living, and too many children grow up in poverty. Our benefits system is supposed to help people but is incomprehensible to many. The healthcare system can barely function and is on the brink of collapse.

What we want

In order to live a good life, there are several things you can't do without. A decent roof over your head. A living wage. Quality healthcare that's accessible. And that's what we need to get in order. So that when people are having a tough time, they are able to fall back on a strong safety net. No matter your current or previous situation. To create a reliable foundation, we are increasing the minimum wage and working toward free childcare. If you're on welfare, we're making it easier to rejoin the work force. We want to protect anyone who works, regardless of what their contract looks like.

Everyone should have access to quality, affordable healthcare. And that requires that the government will take charge where it previously left matters to the market. Healthcare should focus on people instead of profits. We want to prioritize patients and encourage collaboration between healthcare providers. By increasing the number of houses we build and renovate, more people will have a real home. We'll not only work on affordable housing, but also on healthy neighborhoods.

What we'll do

1. We will introduce a fund that allows us to continue to build affordable and sustainable houses. We'll explicitly explore options to expand, divide, and convert existing houses.
2. We'll invest in more student housing, a quarter of which will be student residences with communal areas.
3. By significantly increasing the minimum wage and welfare, the number of adults and children living in poverty will go down.
4. We will dismantle the benefits system. We will begin to replace it by providing each adult a baseline amount of money.
5. It will be easier to access all your healthcare information. You can safely share this data with healthcare providers.
6. We are investing in the prevention of illnesses. We will make it easier for healthcare providers to work together, and reduce both competition and paperwork so there will be more time for human interaction.
7. We will pay more attention to mental healthcare, especially where it concerns young people. Together with employers and educational establishments, we will introduce measures to

prevent mental health issues. When someone has received treatment, we will make sure to offer follow-up care.

3. An Energetic Society: Education, Science & Radical Equality

What we see

Where you're from too often defines your level of education and your future. Having wealthy or poor parents, born in the Netherlands or somewhere else, needing care or not, having practical or academic skills – it determines how you're valued and what opportunities you have access to. A lack of teachers is a persistent problem, especially in schools serving vulnerable students. Too many young people are not taught the basic skills they need to function in society. That has to change.

In the past year, our government and our king have apologized for our history of slavery. It is symbolic for a meaningful start to the process of making things right. But it's not enough. Discrimination continues to be part of our institutions and daily lives. Whether that's based on gender, skin color, socio-economic status, disability or illness, nationality, religion, sexuality, age, or other differences. The government needs to be aware of every type of discrimination and inequality, as well as how they can intersect.

What we want

Children need to learn to read, write and count properly. But they also need to be taught how to be a citizen of our country. A rich school day will be the norm, where children will also have access to tutoring, sports, and culture. We will practice patience with children and young people – we don't all have to have the same timeline when it comes to learning. A good education requires teachers who feel valued and who are encouraged to grow.

Everyone should have the opportunity to explore and use their talent. If there are more barriers for you to do so, you deserve and will receive more help. Instead of hierarchically ranking different educations and talents, each one will be valued. Students will be given the opportunity to get more than one education and to study abroad. Learning and developing never ends. That's why everyone will receive a personal learning budget.

Our society is more fun and interesting when we embrace diversity. True freedom requires us to acknowledge old patterns that resulted in disadvantage and inequality and actively work to overcome them. Because while our constitution considers every citizen to be equal, that principle will only become reality when we live and act like it. Our goals are radical equality and an end to discrimination and racism.

What we'll do

1. We are working toward making childcare a public service, for every child up to 12 years old. In the short term, we will introduce childcare that's almost free.

2. We will expand parental leave, so parents who are part of the workforce have the opportunity to be at home with their children in the first year of their life.
3. We will take a radical approach to the teacher shortage, with a better salary for teachers, improved working conditions, and less paperwork. We trust teachers to do their work well.
4. Students in higher education will all receive the same supplementary financing, whether they attend vocational school, a college for applied sciences, or university.
5. The temporary increased financing for students who don't live at home will become permanent. For anyone who did not receive a basic grant, interest rates will be limited.
6. We want Ketu Koti to be an annual national holiday, just like Liberation Day on May 5th.

4. An Energetic Environment: Food, Agriculture, Nature, Mobility & Land Use

What we see

We live in a beautiful country. With dynamic cities, characteristic villages, and the ever-changing Wadden Sea. It's a country that has been going through transformations for centuries and continues to do so. The coming years won't be any different, while we face challenges like climate change and a growing population. There is a housing shortage and both soil and water systems are no longer adequate.

And there are many things we want. That we're able to grow enough food, in a sustainable way. That nature can get stronger, and our dikes remain sturdy. We want to continue to travel. That requires that we make innovative choices. In recent years, those choices have been delayed again and again. But they've only become more urgent. Together, we need to work on a pleasant, healthy, and sustainable living environment.

What we want

We are building the Netherlands of tomorrow. A country that's more green, more livable, and better connected. A country where we embrace the differences between regions and build upon the strength of each region. We need to acknowledge that the state has previously only invested in some of those regions. We will work to rectify this mistake by investing more in regions that were overlooked and had less opportunities. Because to overcome the challenges we face, we need every part of the Netherlands.

That is also why the entire country needs to be well connected. With new, sustainable public transportation and bike routes. And with connections to our neighboring countries and the rest of Europe. There is a limit to the space we have available, making it essential to use it in a sustainable and smart way. By combining several purposes in one space, for example.

We are making changes to the food system. Growing food should have less impact on our environment, and a new system will also create new agricultural opportunities. Our main focus is complete circularity and a value chain where transparency, sustainability, and honesty are key. We recognize the value and power of our nature and take care of the landscape and biodiversity. We strive for a green and healthy living environment, throughout the Netherlands.

What we'll do

1. We work towards climate neutral agriculture in 2040. That requires significant investments. We need to strengthen the position of farmers compared to the food industry.
2. We will cut back nitrogen emissions by half by 2030, in line with the Remkes Committee report.

3. We make sustainable and healthy food sustainable by abolishing VAT on vegetables and fruit. We will ban 'kiloknallers' – extremely cheap meat – and work to prevent food waste.
4. We will give nature more space, create buffer zones around Natura 2000 areas, and protect the Wadden Sea.
5. We will increase the number of long-distance bike routes and invest in the missing links of the railway network.
6. A climate ticket will be introduced, enabling people to take public transportation for a reduced price outside of rush hour.
7. With road pricing (also known as road user charges) driving a car will become fairer. You'll pay a fee for each kilometer you drive, with a surcharge for driving in congested areas and during rush hour.
8. Short-distance flights will become more expensive, as will business class and private flights. Night flights will no longer be allowed at Schiphol, and we definitely won't open Lelystad Airport.

5. An Energetic Democracy: Government, Rule of Law & Security

What we see

A strong democracy requires maintenance. It's like software: if you don't update regularly, the system crashes. In countries like Poland and Hungary democracy is under fire. And examples from the past teach us that democracy is not a given. Criminals and foreign powers threaten to abuse our open society. To protect our country and the rule of law, we have to keep fighting for its values: participation and inclusiveness, as well as accountability and a strong system of checks and balances.

What we want

Maintaining our democracy is essential, but how we behave within that system is also important. That applies to both citizens and our government. Not a single democracy can withstand hate speech, polarization, or the deliberate dissemination of misinformation. Honesty, transparency, and accessibility should be our goals. With plenty of room for participation, initiative and experimentation, and important conversations.

Our government and judicial system are here to implement the law and protect our citizens. A just society cannot do without a well-equipped judiciary. But it has to work for everyone. We all need to feel safe and have the freedom to be who we want to be.

By actively taking charge, the government can make the most of the opportunities digitalization has to offer and help us find solutions for challenges in renewable energy, healthcare, and the availability of labor. By reconnecting regions – both literally and figuratively – we can overcome our differences.

What we'll do

1. We're encouraging conversations. Between the government and its citizens and between citizens themselves. We focus on listening and making room for ideas and initiative. We invest in their execution.
2. We will rectify past mistakes and prioritize trust when executing regulations and subsidies.
3. We are lowering the voting age to 16. The number of representatives in the Tweede Kamer (House of Representatives) will be raised to at least 260. We will continue with the civil forum on climate change.
4. We are strengthening the entire chain of justice, from police to public prosecution, judges, and the prison system. We are making access to the law easier by lowering court costs and strengthening the position of legal aid, to make sure the law is there for everyone.

5. We will make significant investments in youth protection. Protecting vulnerable members of society is a core task for the government. Our focus is on the position of both children and parents.
6. We're investing in a digital government, so we can maintain control over our digital world together.

6. An Energetic World: Europe, Migration & Foreign Affairs

What we see

Since February 2022, a war has been raging on the European continent. Russian aggression has shown us that the European quest for freedom, democracy, and security is more important than ever. It has also made painfully clear just how much our economy relies on other countries like Russia, China, and the United States. Europe has shown tremendous resilience in working together and turning our vulnerabilities into opportunities for the future.

It is essential that we work together globally to ensure that our world remains livable. Climate change is making that very hard and has an exponential effect on socio-economic challenges. More and more people are fleeing not only violence, but droughts, floods, and hunger. Focusing on sustainability not only positively impacts our environment, but also offers societal and economic solutions – especially in regions where the effects of climate change are felt the most.

What we want

The world should not be ruled based on the right of the strongest, but on rules, laws, and agreements. We believe that that is best achieved together with Europe and the European Union. Together, we have to continue to strive for our shared ideals, values, and a better future. With the EU, we are able to engage in dialogues with countries like China, India, and Turkey. We can collaborate on a united security and defense strategy to keep our countries safe and enter into binding agreements to strengthen those defenses.

Working with the EU on migration policy is also important. We need better agreements on a fair distribution of refugees and an increase in safe routes. We encourage high quality labor migration and ensure that every step of the road toward asylum is humane.

We will create honest and sustainable trade agreements that will result in opportunities for both the Netherlands and the world. The transition to a sustainable world is not just a necessity, it is the best chance we have at an equal and just future. We will mutually decide on our priorities in completing the transition as fairly as possible.

Together, we will strengthen democratic values and stand up for the protection of human rights and the rights, representation and participation of women and minorities. Together, we will make sure we have an important say in the world.

What we'll do

1. After a year of organizing citizen panels on the future of Europe, we are following the resulting recommendations. We will begin by working on European democratization through European transnational electoral lists and party leaders.
2. We will argue for an EU budget which focuses on the big challenges of our time, like our dependence on autocratic powers, climate change, new technologies, and the changing demographic on our continent. The EU has to increase the opportunities it has to generate its own income and resources.
3. Even after 2026, we will continue to spend 2% of our gross domestic product (GDP) on defense. That requires a significant investment, but a safe world does not come free. The Ukraine deserves our continued support in the war against Russia, both in a military sense and for humanitarian purposes.
4. We will double the budget of the new (international) climate fund and maintain the international standard of spending 0.7 percent of our gross national income (GNI) on development cooperation.
5. We are making sure to have a migration policy that works. We will protect vulnerable refugees, ensure a quick but careful asylum process, and will be stricter when it comes to asylum seekers who have no chance of staying in our country.
6. People in asylum centers will have access to Dutch language classes from the start, and people should be allowed to start work sooner.
7. We will do our best to attract high quality labor from abroad and make sure to take action in case of wrongdoings.