

## **“Benelux business leaders express their support for closer Benelux cooperation in the field of Energy”**

The Benelux Business Roundtable (BBR) issued three recommendations for the Benelux governments to improve the energy sector during its plenary session on 26 October in Antwerp. Topics of discussion were the BBR [Energy Paper](#) and the proposals of the working groups on Infrastructure and Digital Single Market.

### **Grid reinforcement**

The BBR warmly welcomes the intention of the Belgian and Dutch grid operators, Elia and TenneT, to reinforce electricity transport. During the plenary session, the BBR members reaffirmed their continued commitment and support on this issue. At EU level, the European Commission has considered Belgium and the Netherlands as Member States with complementary energy mixes that would benefit from stronger cooperation. Cooperation between the grid operators is therefore an important step in the right direction.

### **COP 21**

It is of major importance to the BBR how the sustainability ambitions as set out at the Paris Climate Top (COP21) will be translated into national climate policies. Its members propose that, within the EU, the Benelux speaks with one voice and at a “consolidated level” rather than organizing the discussions at an individual national level. Furthermore, the BBR believes that the non-ETS sectors should be emphasized more, such as e.g. transport and (residential) heating, so as to prevent the weakening of the competitive position of the EU industry.

### **Collaboration between research centres and universities**

The fight against Co<sub>2</sub> emissions will certainly be accompanied by the emergence of more innovation. The Benelux could contribute to this by creating an innovation friendly environment. This should be realised not only with financial incentives but also by promoting the collaboration between Benelux universities and research centres.

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The [Benelux Business Roundtable](#) (“BBR”) brings together business leaders from the Benelux, representing companies with significant interests in terms of contribution to GDP, employment and assets within the Region. Together they identify areas and actions where closer collaboration is required and promote recommendations to political leaders at national and EU level, when political action is considered necessary.