

Authority for
Consumers & Markets



2025 ACM Annual Report

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About ACM

The Netherlands Authority for Consumers and Markets (ACM) is an independent regulator that is committed to ensuring that markets function well for all people and businesses, now and in the future. When markets function well, businesses compete fairly with one another, and people and businesses are not harmed by unfair practices. People and businesses know what rules apply, and how they are able to exercise their rights.

ACM examines the question of whether markets are working well by taking a broad perspective and different perspectives. Economic efficiency is one important criterion, but values such as fairness and environmental impact can also play a role in the assessment, just like innovation and societal resilience. Well-functioning markets contribute to our prosperity in a broader sense as well as to our well-being.

ACM ensures that markets work well in different ways:

- Through education and communication, ACM gives clarity regarding the rules and how businesses must apply them. ACM offers individuals information and practical advice regarding their rights as consumers. In that way, ACM promotes broad compliance with the rules.
- ACM conducts oversight in order to prevent businesses from using harmful practices, and to take action against such practices if they do occur.
- ACM conducts sector-specific oversight over the energy, telecommunications, transport, and postal markets in order to safeguard affordability, quality, continuity, and accessibility in these markets.

- ACM enforces compliance with due diligence obligations, with an eye to a safe and fair digital economy, among other reasons.
- ACM conducts broad market investigations, looking into any impediments that exist in those markets.
- ACM offers solicited and unsolicited advice to the Dutch legislature and to society as a whole about how markets can work better.

Choices

ACM uses its limited resources in the most effective manner in order to ensure that markets work well. That means that ACM constantly needs to make choices about what market problems it wishes to handle and how. Three questions are central in that decision-making process:

- How harmful is the behavior that we have identified to the well-functioning of markets and to the confidence of people and businesses in those markets?
- What is the magnitude of the societal interest in ACM's actions?
- How can ACM, through its actions, help solve the problem in a quick and effective manner?

In 2025, ACM focused on the digital economy, the energy transition, and the sustainability transition, in addition to its regular oversight efforts.

Foreword from the Board



Dear reader,

Ensuring that markets work well for all people and businesses, now and in the future. That mission was central to our efforts in 2025. It was a remarkable year for several reasons, including geopolitical developments, which also had a major impact on markets. In 2025, ACM gave special attention to general market investigations, aimed at examining the underlying causes and consequences of poorly functioning markets. In that way, ACM, as a mission-driven regulator, wishes to put forward solutions in order to ensure that markets work better, even if no violation has been established.

Conducting market investigations is but one aspect of conducting oversight. In this annual report, you can read about all of our oversight efforts in 2025. One new element is a chapter in which we look back on our oversight and organization in 2025, while also looking ahead to the future. Additionally,

we would like to draw your attention to the chapter with evaluations and impact assessments, which we, as a learning organization, regularly perform.

In 2025, ACM gave special attention to the digital economy, the energy transition, and the sustainability transition. You can read more about these in the overview of our oversight activities within these focus areas. The through line here is our aim of having our oversight efforts have the largest possible impact on the Netherlands' broad prosperity.

Mission-driven oversight makes demands on the organization. In 2025, we continued making our organization future-ready, particularly with regard to corporate services and information services. We are working on a solid foundation of our organization, which is firmly rooted in the present and also ready for the future. Later in this annual report, we go into this in greater detail, particularly into the various recommendations for turning ACM into an autonomous administrative authority (in Dutch: *zelfstandig bestuursorgaan*, or *ZBO*) with its own legal personality, in line with the organization type of other market authorities.

Markets are constantly in flux, today perhaps more so than ever. In 2025, that was one of the reasons as to why a lot has changed for both ACM and our way of conducting oversight. As mentioned in the chapter Looking back and ahead: changes and unpredictability have become a given by now. What remains unchanged though are the people at ACM who work in an open, independent, and resourceful manner to help fulfill ACM's mission of ensuring that markets work well for all people and businesses, now and in the future.

Martijn Snoep
Manon Leijten
Martijn Ridderbos

Report from the Advisory Board

Introduction

In 2025, ACM's Advisory Board committed itself to further fleshing out its role as well as to contributing to ACM's continued development as an independent market authority. The advisory board was created in 2024 on the initiative of the Board of ACM. This chapter looks back on its activities and findings in 2025, and also offers several perspectives on the future.

The advisory board's formal basis is not found in any law, but rather in the ministerially approved Regulations of the Board of ACM. The advisory board's duties are described therein as follows:

- There is an Advisory Board that gives ACM solicited and unsolicited advice on the following topics:
 - a. Strategy
 - b. Corporate services
 - c. Finances
 - d. The relationships with relevant ministries
 - e. Important changes to the organization
- The advisory board holds discussions with ACM and with individual board members about their performance.
- The advisory board does not give advice on planned decisions that ACM will hand down on the basis of its statutory powers.

Strategy and corporate services

In 2025, the advisory board focused on ACM's strategic direction and independent position, and it gave recommendations about strengthening ACM's corporate services and information services as part of ACM's improvement project IPA (in Dutch: *Integraal Plan van Aanpak*). The advisory board has given compliments and has expressed its appreciation for IPA.

The right direction and building blocks are in place, and the advisory board has recommended keeping up the pace of IPA in order to meet the ambitious timescale.

ACM had, for some time already, been working on improving its corporate services and information services (IV), for example through two dedicated programs, called Insight and Accountability (in Dutch: *Inzicht & Verantwoording*), and IV-strategy (in Dutch: *IV-strategie*). These programs were absorbed into IPA. The advisory board has recommended embedding the following topics with the board in order to give these a solid foothold within the organization: the link between corporate services and IV, the systematic attention to ownership within the line departments, and the strengthening of IPA's management.

Over the course of the year, the advisory board sat down with the Board discussing the progress of IPA. With regard to corporate services, the advisory board has seen that ACM has made good progress in strengthening the internal processes, but also that further improvement is needed. The advisory board advises investing in innovation and digital tools in order to keep the organization efficient, agile, and ready for the future.

With regard to strategic matters, the advisory board in 2025 put several substantive topics on the agenda. For example, in-depth discussion sessions were held with regard to the energy transition and the challenges facing the newly created Information and Digital Services Department (DI). The advisory board discussed with the Office of the Chief Economist (EB) the publication of the State of the Market, and how this publication can strengthen ACM's position and reputation. With regard to IPA, the advisory board gave advice regarding the strategic building blocks Organizational Vision and Leadership Vision.

Governance and further development of ACM

A major topic in 2025 was the progress made in the process of taking ACM's governance to the required level. In 2024, the advisory board published its observations regarding this topic¹. In early 2025, external experts, commissioned by the Minister of Economic Affairs, gave recommendations regarding ACM's transition to a full, so-called, large autonomous administrative authority² (in Dutch: *groot zelfstandig bestuursorgaan*, or '*groot ZBO*'), with its own budget, legal personality, and a supervisory board. Building on that, the advisory board also looked into the impact of these proposed changes on the organization itself. Since early 2025 already, the external experts' recommendations have been on the desk of the Minister of Economic Affairs for assessment and implementation. The advisory board emphasizes that a clear and timely decision-making process regarding this change in governance is crucial for ACM's proper functioning, now and in the future. Transitioning to a large autonomous administrative authority is necessary for enabling ACM to fulfill its ambitions of taking responsibility for both the operational direction and the strategic direction of the organization.

ACM has actively cooperated with the Ministry of Economic Affairs in this proposed transition process. The then-Minister of Economic Affairs did not fulfill a request of the advisory board to discuss ACM's governance and functioning. However, the advisory board was able to maintain good relations with the then-Minister of Climate Policy and Green Growth (KGG), who may not have had ACM in their portfolio, but who, as the principal in matters relating to the energy market, was a prominent stakeholder for ACM within the cabinet.

The advisory board sees the next few years as a period of, once again, close cooperation with the departments in order to implement the necessary legislative, administrative, and (in part also) operational adjustments.

The interaction between ACM and the relevant ministries remained an important point of discussion in 2025, both between the advisory board and the Board of ACM as well as between the advisory board and the most relevant ministries. The advisory board has established that, although a constructive collaboration does exist, there is also room for improvement in terms of communication and coordination between ACM and the ministries. The advisory board recommends maintaining a formal and structured dialog, where ACM's independence continues to be safeguarded.

As part of the five-year evaluation of ACM as an autonomous administrative authority, the advisory board was interviewed by the external firm that performed the evaluation commissioned by the Ministry of Economic Affairs.

Performance review and appointments of Members of the Board

In 2025, the advisory board laid the foundation for a professional, annual process for the performance review of the Board of ACM and its individual members. As such, a substantive foundation has also been laid for the advisory board's involvement in the appointment (and reappointment) of board members. In 2025, that was the case for each of the board members. The advisory board was involved in the appointment of a new Board Member, Martijn Ridderbos. In addition, the advisory board focused on reappointing

¹ Publication of ACM's Advisory Board: Recommendations regarding ACM's governance (in Dutch)

² The report *Advies sturing en governance Autoriteit Consument en Markt*, dated February 11, 2025, Borstlap & De Leeuw, and the report *Verkenning zbo-status ACM*, of mid-January 2025, PwC

Manon Leijten as well as on reappointing the Board's chair Martijn Snoep. With these successful steps, the current composition of the Board of ACM is solid, and it has realized a strong starting position for the coming years.

Self-evaluation of the advisory board

Also in 2025, the first steps in the evaluation process of the advisory board's functioning were taken. The first (still incomplete) year of 2024 was internally evaluated by the advisory board. However, with an eye to the envisaged governance structure as a large autonomous administrative authority, the advisory board has organized its own processes as well as its relationship with the Board of ACM and the ministry as much as possible as if it were a true supervisory board, complete with the duties that befit a supervisory board of a large autonomous administrative authority, such as in the abovementioned domains. That is also the benchmark for the evaluation. The self-evaluation led to the conclusion that the advisory board and the implemented commission structure have gotten off to a strong start, within the given circumstances.

In 2026, at the halfway point of its four-year term, the advisory board will evaluate its own functioning with the aid of a third-party expert.

In conclusion

The interaction between the Board of ACM and the advisory board has continually been characterized by an open and constructive dialog. In between meetings too, the advisory board was active, and the Board of ACM actively involved the advisory board in situations where such involvement was appreciated by the Board of ACM. These interactions concerned both internal matters as well as situations in the relationships with external stakeholders, and were prompted by an ambition on ACM's part to get better and better

where possible, as well as on the advisory board's part to help realize that ambition where it can.

In 2026, the advisory board will focus on further working out its procedures, with attention to corporate services and governance, but also to substantive aspects such as the role and added value of data-based oversight to the functioning of markets. In that process, the advisory board will build on the basis that was created in 2025.

The advisory board is impressed with the professionalism, involvement, and commitment of ACM's staff, as well as with the social relevance and impact of the work that is carried out each day. The advisory board would like to express its gratitude to all ACM colleagues, and would like to thank the Board of ACM for the constructive and pleasant collaboration.

Jeroen Kremers

Ton de Jong

Rafik Majiti

Pauline Meurs

Looking back and ahead

ACM in 2025: looking back and ahead

ACM's mission is to ensure well-functioning markets for all people and businesses, now and in the future. With that mission in mind, ACM seeks to contribute as much as possible to the broad prosperity level of the Netherlands as a mid-sized country within the European Union. Broad prosperity encompasses more than money alone. The general well-being and quality of life of individuals are just as important, including health, the environment, security, and the rule of law.

Competing markets are the drivers for innovation

Our level of broad prosperity has come under pressure as a result of demographic trends, ecological limitations, and geopolitical shifts. We will have to do more with fewer people, with a lower burden on the environment, and with a reduced dependence on imports from non-EU countries. Productivity growth is crucial to maintaining the current level of prosperity.

Within the limitations that our level of broad prosperity sets, innovation is essential. And competition drives innovation: effective competition stimulates businesses to invest and to innovate, so that new and improved products and production processes become available. In that way, competition contributes to innovation and productivity. In the long term, this value creation supports the level of broad prosperity.

One of ACM's most important duties is to protect and promote competition, where necessary. In addition to its oversight over acquisitions and anti-competitive agreements, ACM in 2025 conducted a study into the level of competition in the Netherlands at the sectoral level. The resulting publication 'the State of the Market' showed that indicators suggest that competition in the

Netherlands has, on average, decreased over the past ten years. ACM looked at indicators such as the concentration rate, entry and exit rates, and profit margins. These indicators are moving in an unfavorable direction. The Dutch situation is not unique, as a similar picture is painted in other Western nations.

Individual causes can be identified behind the indication that competition has, on average, decreased. However, the question also rises whether ACM and its fellow authorities may not have been strict enough. In hindsight, was perhaps too much faith placed in the self-correcting power of markets, for example by the entry of new competitors? In any case, the findings underscore the importance of strict oversight. They also offer a foundation for the new powers that ACM has asked, and which enable ACM to protect and promote competition better for productivity growth and the necessary ability to innovate. ACM is pleased that the coalition agreement of the new Dutch cabinet (the Jetten cabinet) contains a call-in power for smaller acquisitions as well as the ability to intervene in markets where competition is not strong without there being any violation.

Energy fuels growth

If competition is the engine for innovation and, by extension, for productivity growth, then energy is the fuel. Without sufficient energy, there is no growth. Ecological limitations and geopolitical shifts call for phasing out fossil fuels, carbon capture and storage (CCS), and increasing the share of electricity, hydrogen, and nuclear power in the energy mix. As a result, our energy system is undergoing a profound transition from production, via transport, to consumption by individuals and businesses. That calls for all kinds of innovation.

This transition produces major changes in the Netherlands and in its neighboring countries. Ideally speaking, production, transport, and consumption change to a similar degree, but that is not the case. Production and consumption of sustainably generated electricity are yet not balanced. At certain times, surpluses result in negative prices. Geopolitical shifts and the changing energy mix increase the importance of security of supply, supported by, among other things, storage of natural gas and electricity, and efficient and flexible grid utilization by individuals and businesses.

Grid congestion (and, as such, the transport between grid users) is currently the biggest bottleneck for the energy transition. The transport system is not yet capable of accommodating the increased production and demand for electricity, and thus hinders innovation and productivity growth in the economy. Pressured by users and regulation, the government, system operators, and ACM over the past few years were primarily focused on efficiency and lower grid tariffs. In hindsight, we can now establish that this focus came at the expense of timely capacity expansions. That is why, since 2024, we have devoted all of our attention to a new regulatory model that fully stimulates capacity expansions, while keeping in place the incentive to do so efficiently.

As long as this capacity expansion has not been completed (and it won't be for many more years), the scarcity must be shared, and capacity must be used in a way that contributes most to the level of broad prosperity. With that goal in mind, ACM in 2025 drew up a new framework that system operators must use when prioritizing capacity requests. Also, ACM helped introduce new flexible types of contracts in order to utilize available capacity optimally. Flexible utilization is expected to remain necessary from an affordability perspective. Since production, transport, and consumption will continue to evolve over the

next years (and not necessarily in equal measure), the energy transition continues to demand much of ACM's attention over the next few years.

Digitalization offers opportunities and risks

Digitalization stimulates innovation and productivity growth. The combination of ever faster and more-powerful semiconductors and larger interconnected data centers that are able to process ever larger amounts of data has unlocked limitless possibilities, for example in artificial intelligence and data-driven decision-making. The European Data Act and the Data Governance Act, among other laws, contribute to the creation of 'the data economy.' In 2025, ACM became authorized to enforce these laws in order to ensure that this market, too, functions well.

A limited number of globally active businesses has, for years now, had a leading position in the area of digitalization. Their influence on the economy and society justifies targeted oversight. Aimed at ensuring that digital markets are open, safe, and fair, the European Digital Markets Act (DMA) and the Digital Services Act (DSA) have come into force. The European Commission enforces these acts for the largest businesses that offer online services. National authorities, like ACM, have an independent regulatory role vis-à-vis the smaller businesses established in their countries, and support the Commission in its oversight efforts. In 2025, ACM became authorized, and launched investigations and educational efforts.

Oversight over powerful businesses that are established abroad is necessary, but not sufficient for fair and open markets within a sovereign and resilient Europe. European providers also need to emerge, with business models that better meet the needs of European users. ACM cannot make this happen, yet it can contribute to this development by taking away perceived or actual

impediments, for example, by educating market participants about what collaborations are permitted between providers and buyers. That is why ACM in 2025 sat down with potential providers and buyers in order to identify impediments, and, if possible, to eliminate them. In that effort, ACM joined forces with the Commission, relevant ministries, and other national regulators, for example as part of the Digital Regulation Cooperation Platform (SDT). Cooperation between different organizations with different missions and visions on the risks of digitalization is not always easy, but it is necessary for ensuring that markets function well. Over the next few years, these activities will continue to be extremely relevant.

Sustainable growth and resilience

The world is approaching its ecological limits, for example due to global CO₂ emissions, and local nitrogen deposition. Climate change and biodiversity loss are threats to the level of broad prosperity. For a sustainable, livable planet, it is necessary that these ecological limits are respected. The envisaged growth must therefore be sustainable. Rules and regulations must mitigate the negative effects of the use of natural resources, and must incentivize the use of alternative resources, saving, and reusing. ACM's role in that context is not insignificant, but it is a modest one. In 2025, ACM focused on, among other topics, making agreements possible between businesses that wish to contribute to sustainable production. Also, ACM continued combating misleading claims of businesses regarding the sustainability aspects of their activities. In that way, ACM contributes to the confidence in claims about sustainability efforts, and to a level playing field for businesses. In addition, ACM launched a public awareness campaign about warranty, and ACM increased the pressure on manufacturers and retailers to repair more products. In 2026, ACM prepares itself for its oversight over large businesses that

are responsible for making their supply chains more sustainable, in order to prevent serious environmental damage and human rights violations.

Geopolitical events also necessitate the development of alternative resources, saving, and reusing. Europe must become more self-sufficient in areas where it currently still relies on imports from a small number of countries in order to be able to absorb external shocks and preserve its sovereignty. Sustainability and resilience therefore go hand in hand. In 2026, ACM also adds resilience to its key priorities, next to sustainability.

People are central

In all of these shifts in the economy and society, people must remain central. The inevitable uncertainty that comes with change generates tensions among people and in society at large. In 2025, ACM educated people about their rights vis-à-vis businesses, and about how they are able to exercise those rights. It did so on its website ACM ConsuWijzer as well as through individual educational efforts in emails and over the phone. In this way, ACM gave help 1.3 million times. In addition, ACM gave training to its staff about putting people central in their work.

ACM's behavioral experts offer insight into behavioral pitfalls and actual behavior, instead of relying on theoretical assumptions and models that are based on the idea of people making rational decisions. ACM confronted businesses with exploitation of behavioral pitfalls of people, and, in particular, of minors. One of the consequences of digitalization is that businesses are getting better and better at manipulating people, for example using addictive algorithms that deliberately focus on constant attention or polarization. Not only does this have negative effects on the well-being of individuals involved, but also on society as a whole.

It is not always easy to find the right balance between, on the one hand, individual freedom of choice and responsibility, and, on the other hand, the protection of society as a whole. There is no public support for a paternalistic government, yet, at the same time, people do expect to be protected against negative effects, which sometimes only appear later. Giving full latitude to the individual freedom of choice is not always the best for society. The public debate on finding the right balance will, in the coming years, gain in importance.

ACM's toolkit

ACM is a mission-driven regulator. That means that the mission is central to its actions, not the tools with which ACM conducts oversight. Regulatory tools include fines, orders subject to periodic penalty payments, sector-specific regulation, and education. Oversight is more than imposing fines if a business violates the law. It also encompasses educating businesses and consumers, communicating with the public, conducting broad market investigations, collaborating with other regulators, and giving recommendations to the legislature.

In 2025, ACM conducted various broad market investigations, including one into veterinary services for pets. These market investigations offer insight into the functioning of markets, identify obstacles, and offer solutions. In addition, ACM in 2025 drew up a new oversight vision. This vision touches on all tools in ACM's toolkit, and was published in 2026.

Fines continue to be part of ACM's toolkit, but are not the only tool. Many market problems can be solved better in another way. For example, fines do not offer the opportunity to compensate directly those that have been harmed.

Moreover, fines require a lot of effort for a longer period of time. In 2025, the European Court of Human Rights handed down a ruling in a case following a fine imposed in 2010. After more than 14 years, that ruling brought an end to the longest case in which ACM had been involved.

In 2025, ACM imposed just a single fine. That was a confluence of events, and does not represent a deliberate policy choice. In addition, the amount of the fine depends on the relevant turnover of the companies involved, which means that the total amount of all fines varies considerably each year. It is expected that the average number of fines over the next few years will be lower than in the past few years, but higher than in 2025.

Little of ACM's work has been standardized. Most regulatory situations are unique. That is why the effectiveness of interventions cannot be easily predicted. As a learning organization, ACM in 2025 evaluated several of its interventions, and reported on them in its annual report.

Digitalization and AI also offer opportunities for ACM to improve and accelerate its oversight. The Taskforce Data and Algorithms (TDA) (which will become a full-fledged department in 2026) is in the lead in that effort, in close collaboration with other departments. In addition to offering workshops and raising awareness within the organization, ACM launched its very first AI tool, which has been based on the technology of Large Language Models (LLMs). This tool (which is a summarizer tool) makes it possible to analyze and summarize external and internal documents in a safe manner, thereby enabling ACM officers to draw conclusions faster and more efficiently. In 2026, new tools will be introduced.

A future-ready organization

Mission-driven oversight puts demands on the organization. In 2025, ACM took a closer look at the organization because of developments in the outside world as well as the growth of the organization. This has led to a comprehensive plan of action to make the organization ready for the future, particularly in terms of business operations and information services. In 2025, ACM started with the implementation of this plan. At the end of 2025, a large part of the plan has already been realized. The implementation will continue into 2026. ACM's advisory board and the Ministry of Economic Affairs (EZ) monitor the realization of the goals.

At the beginning of 2025, much was uncertain about ACM's multi-year financial outlook. That is why ACM imposed a hiring freeze, except for several crucial positions. In mid-July 2025, the much-desired certainty was given, and the hiring freeze was lifted. In the second half of 2025, ACM was unable to clear the hiring backlog that had been built up or to spend the earmarked budget for those positions. It is expected that the backlog will be cleared by the end of 2026.

In 2025, the report drawn up by external advisors Hans Borstlap and Johan de Leeuw about a future-ready management and governance structures for ACM was published. They came to the conclusion that ACM's current management and governance structures are insufficiently effective and future-ready, and they recommended, among other suggestions, that ACM evolve into a large autonomous administrative authority (in Dutch: *groot zelfstandig bestuursorgaan*) with its own legal personality, its own budget, and a statutorily enshrined advisory board. ACM subscribes to these conclusions.

Looking ahead

In 2025, a lot has changed for ACM, both in the world around us as well as within the organization. Change and unpredictability have become a given by now. The digital economy, the energy transition, and developments with regard to sustainability and resilience continue to draw ACM's attention. With an open mind, an agile mindset, and a future-ready organization, ACM, over the next few years, will continue to adapt and evolve to fulfill its mission.

Our oversight in 2025

The energy transition

The energy transition requires major efforts from consumers, businesses, and system operators. ACM contributes to a reliable, affordable, and future-ready energy system. It stimulates efficient utilization of the congested grid, regulates tariffs, and protects consumers against unreasonable costs and unclear information provided by energy suppliers. In addition, ACM is committed to European coordinated oversight and to integrity and transparency in energy markets.

Dealing with grid congestion

Grid congestion continues to be a major bottleneck for the energy transition. ACM stimulates solutions for a better utilization of the existing grid, such as flexible contracts, joint connections, and local energy hubs. In addition, ACM offers system operators scope to recoup the investments that they make in the expansions of the grid.

Flexible contracts, group transport agreements, and energy hubs

In many regions, the grid is congested. In order to utilize available capacity better, ACM stimulates the use of flexible contracts. With flexible contracts, more businesses are able to connect to the grid. Starting January 1, 2026, ACM will make group transport agreements possible. With this kind of agreement, businesses on the same site are able to share transport capacity, while they keep their own connections with the system operator. By efficiently coordinating generation, storage, and utilization within a group transport agreement, capacity is freed up for businesses to grow without overburdening the grid. With this, ACM promotes the development of energy hubs.

Giving priority to projects that contribute to major social objectives

Following a 2025 court ruling, ACM set a new prioritization framework for access to the grid. With this framework, system operators are able to continue giving priority to projects that contribute to major social objectives, such as residential housing, schools, and hospitals. The framework ensures that the allocation of grid capacity takes place on the basis of objective and transparent criteria. In the development of the framework, ACM made clear choices between social and economic interests. ACM oversees the implementation of the framework, and checks whether system operators use the framework correctly. The European Commission follows the development of the social prioritization framework with great interest, and refers to it as a good example in its recommendations document 'EU Guidance on Efficient Grid Connections'.

System operators ordered to make improvements

ACM imposed an improvement order on system operators as the measures against grid congestion are making too little progress. The system operators must realize a better overview of actual grid utilization. In addition, they need to offer more often the flexible contracts that ACM allows. They had until 6 February 2026 to submit their improvement plans. ACM subsequently made arrangements regarding the execution of those plans, and it monitored their

progress. ACM also finds it important that system operators inform businesses properly about the options that are still available for connecting to the grid.

Study into lower grid costs because of battery systems and electrolyzers

Alternative transport rights make it easier to connect flexible systems to the grid, such as battery systems and electrolyzers. ACM will study whether these systems also lead to lower grid costs. The study is expected to be completed in the second half of 2026.

Location-based grid tariffs

ACM carried out a preliminary study into the possible introduction of location-based grid tariffs for large-scale users. ACM will first evaluate what the effects are of all other measures before introducing a possible future adjustment to the tariff structure.

Study into increased grid utilization

In collaboration with the Ministry of Climate Policy and Green Growth (KGG), ACM had a study carried out into the opportunities for increasing grid utilization in a responsible manner, which was aimed at making more capacity available than is currently possible. In 2026, ACM and the ministry will complete the study.

Oversight over system operators

The energy transition calls for major investments from system operators. ACM sets the allowed revenues for system operators. With that, system operators have certainty that they are able to recoup their investments

on time. ACM sees to it that tariffs are not higher than necessary, and that affordability is maintained.

New regulatory method for system operators

In 2025, ACM published a draft decision regarding a new methodology for determining the revenues of system operators. This methodology offers scope for investments in grid expansions, and it also ensures that the resources are spent efficiently. In December, ACM signed a market-wide agreement with system operators and representative organizations of network users regarding the new method. With these arrangements, the parties involved chose stability and clarity, each having a common goal in mind: accelerating the energy transition. Starting in 2027, ACM will set the system operators' new tariffs in accordance with the new method.

Tariffs of system operators have risen further

Each year, ACM sets the transport tariffs. For 2026, the tariffs will go up as a result of high investments costs and maintenance of the congested networks. In 2026, households pay, on average, 25 euros more than in 2025. ACM sees to it that the tariffs are not higher than necessary for a reliable electricity and natural-gas network.

Preparing for a feed-in tariff for producers

ACM launched a consultation on a possible feed-in tariff for market participants that feed electricity into the grid. At the moment, only users pay for grid construction and maintenance costs. With a feed-in tariff, ACM seeks to have producers pay their fair share with regard to these rising costs, and that they have an incentive to utilize the grid more efficiently.

Setting the tariff rules for the off-shore grid

In 2025, ACM set the new tariff rules for off-shore electricity users, such as maintenance platforms, hydrogen plants, and other companies that consume electricity there. For the time being, they will pay the same transport tariff as large-scale on-shore users. In that way, off-shore electricity users, too, will pay towards the construction and operation of the grid. This decision ties in with the commencement date of the Dutch Energy Act on January 1, 2026. This marks the first step toward a clear and future-ready way of setting tariffs for the off-shore grid.

Level playing field in Europe

At the European level, ACM advocates a level playing field through a uniform interpretation and application of European rules, for example, when it comes to setting tariffs for connections and transport of electricity. In June, ACM gave a presentation about its grid tariff structure in a workshop organized by the German energy regulator Bundesnetzagentur. The workshop was part of the preparations for the decision-making regarding a new tariff structure in Germany.

Reliability and security of supply, now and in the future

ACM supports a reliable and future-ready energy system. It examines how flexibility, storage, and cooperation contribute to security of supply, and follows trends and developments on the markets for natural gas and electricity.

Analysis of security of supply of electricity

ACM published a memo on security of supply. The energy system in the Netherlands is reliable, but choices regarding security of supply are becoming more and more important. ACM emphasizes the importance of flexibility and cooperation.

Protection of consumers on the energy market

ACM is committed to integrity and transparency in energy markets. It conducts oversight over the practices of energy suppliers. ACM monitors the financial positions of suppliers, takes action against deception, and ensures that consumers are able to make well-informed decisions. Transparency regarding rates and contractual conditions are central.

Financial positions of energy suppliers

ACM keeps a close watch on the financial positions of energy suppliers in order to make sure that energy suppliers are prepared for sudden price fluctuations as much as possible. The financial positions of many energy suppliers improved in 2025. ACM put six suppliers under heightened oversight. Shortcomings among suppliers often also have organizational causes. ACM adjusts its oversight in order to find those causes, and to deal with them.

Monitoring and oversight over prices of energy contracts

ACM follows the trends and developments on the energy markets, and publishes the prices of suppliers in monthly monitors. In 2025, price differences continued to exist, but the average energy bill went down as a result of lower purchase prices. Each month, ACM publishes an overview of contracts with significantly higher prices.

Monitor on the consumer experience

Many households actively think about what energy contract to take out and how to make their homes more sustainable. Yet, after comparison-shopping and comparing different contracts, many people choose to stay with their current supplier. This was revealed in the annual Monitor on the consumer experience held among approximately 1,600 energy consumers. At the same time, ACM saw that many consumers faced obstacles when comparing contracts and offers. The comparability of contracts must improve, according to ACM. In 2025, ACM together with its team of behavioral scientists revised the questionnaire, for example, by adding questions on the way in which consumers make choices, and on the role of customer recruitment and comparison websites.

Taking action against wrongfully charged early-termination fees

Following complaints involving six suppliers, ACM in 2025 launched an investigation into early-termination fees. Five energy suppliers (Greenchoice, Essent, Clean Energy, Innova Energie, and Mega Energie) fully cooperated with ACM's investigation, and immediately committed to taking measures to prevent future errors from occurring. Gulf Gas + Power made a commitment to ACM: customers that have paid wrongful or too high early-termination fees will get the excess amount refunded. In order to give suppliers more guidance on how to comply with the rules, ACM sent all suppliers guidelines.

Study into feed-in costs for households with solar panels

ACM conducted a study into the ways in which suppliers incorporated the costs for solar panels into their prices. The results revealed that feed-in costs were not unreasonable compared with the costs that suppliers incur. ACM expected these costs not to go up any further, if market conditions remain the same. The study also revealed that suppliers calculate the feed-in costs in

many different ways. ACM argued in favor of suppliers charging feed-in costs for solar power per unit of power fed into the grid, in order to increase transparency.

Education about new opportunities offered in new Energy Act

The new Dutch Energy Act, which came into effect on January 1, 2026, offers households and businesses more opportunities to utilize the grid more efficiently, more flexibly, and more sustainably. One of the new opportunities is 'energy-sharing'. With energy-sharing, apartment buildings (including condominiums) or energy communities are able to collectively consume energy generated by shared solar panels or wind turbines. ACM published a study to inform consumers about the opportunities and points of attention regarding energy-sharing.

The Dutch Energy Act stipulates that suppliers must, in addition to a model contract with variable rates, also offer a model contract with fixed rates. In 2025, ACM set new model contracts, and, in these model contracts, enabled suppliers to charge feed-in costs for solar power too.

Investigation into disconnection of consumers by suppliers

ACM received reports that suppliers failed to follow the rules on disconnection of households from natural gas or electricity. ACM established shortcomings at three energy suppliers. These suppliers committed to implementing the necessary improvements. ACM published guidance containing examples of best practices, in order to ensure improved compliance in the future.

Heat as attractive alternative

In the Climate Agreement of the Dutch government, it has been agreed that, by 2050, all homes must be gas-free. In some districts, connection to a heat network is the most efficient and most sustainable way of achieving those goals. Heat users are not able to choose their own suppliers. In order to protect them against too high rates, ACM sets the maximum heat rates in accordance with a statutory method. In addition, ACM conducts oversight over the financial returns of suppliers.

Uncertainty surrounding costs may delay the heat transition

Housing corporations and municipalities play a key role in the roll-out of heat networks. With the new Dutch Collective Heat Act (in Dutch: *Wet collectieve warmte, Wcw*), ACM will in the future determine the heat rates on the basis of the efficient costs that heat suppliers incur. Cost-based tariffs are not a guarantee for affordable tariffs, and do not automatically make heat the most attractive alternative to natural gas. ACM notes that uncertainty surrounding long-term affordability for tenants of rental apartments constitutes an important obstacle when switching to a heat network.

Improving measurement of heat consumption and customer services to heat consumers

ACM conducted a study into how heat suppliers measure and register heat consumption. In order to stimulate good customer services, ACM published a list of good practices. Suppliers must properly inform businesses and households, and solve disruptions quickly. Following complaints filed by consumers, ACM imposed orders subject to periodic penalty payments and a binding instruction on a company that acted as the de facto heat supplier, yet did not meet the statutory requirements.

Financial returns of heat suppliers

ACM adjusted the accounting rules (RAR) for heat suppliers, as a result of which they needed to start using general allocation formulas. That offered ACM a better overview of the financial returns of heat suppliers as well as of the difference between the regulated and non-regulated parts. ACM carried out the 2024 Financial-returns monitor on the basis of the new rules for the first time.

Preparing for the Dutch Collective Heat Act (Wcw)

ACM gave advice regarding the Dutch Collective Heat Act (in Dutch: *Wet collectieve warmte, or Wcw*) and the Decision on collective heat (in Dutch: *Besluit collectieve warmte*). It also launched preparations for the gradual introduction of cost-based tariff regulation, determining the value of heat networks that are transferred into public hands, and performing the competency review for heat companies.

Wholesale market integrity and transparency

ACM conducts oversight over the wholesale markets for natural gas and electricity. ACM ensures fair price-formation processes and responsible risk management. International cooperation strengthens cross-border oversight.

Taking action against market manipulation

In 2025, ACM took action against an international energy company that sought to manipulate prices. The company was reprimanded for market manipulation. This company, a major competitor in the wholesale market, committed to ending this behavior. ACM kept a close watch on the company's conduct. In that way, ACM demonstrated that fair price formation is essential to well-functioning markets.

ACM checked risk management in algorithmic trading

ACM examined how traders that use algorithms the wholesale markets for natural gas and electricity manage their risks. It checked whether businesses have sufficient safeguards in place to prevent market disruptions. The check revealed that businesses are aware of the risks, but that there are also areas of improvement. ACM published several points of attention, which businesses need to have in order.

Looking ahead

In 2026, ACM introduces the new regulatory method for system operators. That new method offers them scope to invest in grid expansions, while keeping the costs for users as low as possible. ACM sets improvement plans for each system operator. With these improvement plans, system operators must ensure that they have a better overview of grid utilization so that congestion measures become available quickly. ACM will also continue its investigation into the comparability and transparency of energy contracts so that consumers are able to make well-informed choices more easily. In addition, ACM continues its preparations for the new cost-based method for tariff regulation among heat companies in the future Dutch Collective Heat Act (Wcw), and ACM works out the method for determining the standardized asset value (in Dutch: *gestandaardiseerde activawaarde, GAW*), the regulatory value of heat networks. Also, ACM monitors and assesses the financial returns of heat suppliers, and performs a financial-returns assessment at four heat suppliers. In that way, ACM continues to work on an energy supply that is reliable, affordable, and sustainable for everyone.

Digital markets

ACM ensures that online environments are safe and trustworthy, and promotes an open and fair digital economy. In 2025, emphasis was placed on enforcement of compliance with new European digital laws, the protection of online consumers, and dealing with misleading practices and abuse of power in digital markets.

Enforcement of compliance with new European digital laws

In 2025, ACM became the competent authority charged with enforcement of multiple European digital laws, for example, the Digital Services Act (DSA). ACM handles reports about, among other topics, account restrictions and poor reachability of platforms. Reports about providers in other EU member states are forwarded to the competent authorities in those member states. ACM developed guidelines, and, in 2025, introduced an online DSA check to help businesses determine what obligations they need to comply with. In addition, ACM promoted awareness of the rights and obligations that follow from these new rules.

Protection of minors

Online platforms must take sufficient measures to protect minors online. In collaboration with other Dutch and European regulators, ACM investigated whether online platforms do so. ACM took enforcement action, where necessary.

In 2025, ACM in collaboration with the European Commission launched an investigation into social-media platform Snapchat due to the illegal trade in vaping products on the platform.

Webhosting companies

Webhosting companies are statutorily responsible for helping create a safe online environment, for example, by handling reports about illegal content swiftly and efficiently. ACM launched an investigation into the compliance with these rules among webhosting companies, which continues into 2026.

Trusted flaggers

Trusted flaggers are organizations that detect, identify, and report illegal content to online platforms. Online platforms must prioritize these reports. Upon request, ACM grants the status of trusted flagger to organizations that meet all conditions. In 2025, ACM granted the status of trusted flagger to Brein, Offlimits, React, and MOD.

DSA study among consumers and business users

ACM conducted a study into the experiences of consumers and business users on online platforms. This study revealed that both consumers and business users often run into problems on online platforms. The problems cited the most are deception by algorithms, blocking accounts or content without any explanations, or inadequate contact options. It is often indicated that users can only contact the platform using a chatbot. This is not allowed under the DSA. The study also revealed that users are unfamiliar with their rights and with the rules for online platforms. That is why ACM in 2025 launched an awareness campaign.

Oversight over online platforms during election campaigns

In the run-up to the 2025 Dutch general election, ACM reminded online platforms of their responsibility to contribute to a trustworthy public debate online. Platforms must handle reports about illegal content with care, and need to act with transparency when restricting or removing accounts and messages.

ACM informed large online platforms about their obligations under the DSA, and asked them to provide insight into the measures that they took to mitigate risks. In addition, ACM organized a meeting with platforms, other regulators, the European Commission, and civil-society organizations to discuss the application of the DSA during election campaigns. Prompted in part by reports, ACM additionally held bilateral discussions with several platforms, and asked them to share with ACM their post-election evaluations.

The data economy

In September 2025, ACM became authorized to enforce the Data Act. With this act, users have more control over data from 'smart devices'. In addition, it becomes easier to switch cloud providers as well as to connect different cloud services to each other. That creates opportunities for more competition and innovation. ACM finds it important that businesses and people are properly informed of their rights and obligations in the Data Act, and therefore puts emphasis on education. ACM published guidelines in order to explain the new opportunities and obligations.

ACM approved the first data intermediation service under the European Data Governance Act (DGA). With this registration, oversight over data intermediation officially started. ACM received multiple registration requests, and called on other market participants to register themselves.

Education and cooperation (national and European)

Education is a key element of ACM's oversight over the digital economy. ACM developed campaigns, videos, and online tools to inform consumers and businesses about their rights and obligations when making online purchases or when using platforms. ACM published short explainer videos on social media in which the most common problems are explained: illegal content, blocking of accounts, and a lack of transparency with regard to paid ads. ACM's campaign is widely covered by Dutch media in August 2025. This attention also led to a brief peak in the number of reports.

ACM gave advice to the legislature regarding the European Digital Fairness Act (DFA). ACM saw that consumers are insufficiently protected against unfair and misleading architectures, which exploit psychological vulnerabilities. That affects purchase decisions, but also mental well-being of individuals. AI applications accelerate this development. That is why additional protection is needed, particularly for minors. Rules are needed to prohibit the provision of fake reviews. ACM also gave advice about taking into consideration the importance of simplification of the rules for businesses, and argues for maximum harmonization of the DFA.

ACM works closely together with other Dutch regulators that are members of the Digital Regulation Cooperation Platform (in Dutch: *Samenwerkingsplatform Digitale Toezichhouders*, or *SDT*) as well as with European partners. The SDT organized the conference on 'How oversight contributes to a fair, safe, and open online society.' Over 300 representatives from businesses and platforms, government organizations, and civil-society organizations attended the conference.

Protecting online consumers

The online environment must be a safe and accessible place for all people and businesses. Providers of online services, such as online stores, apps, platforms, and search engines, must do business with users in a transparent manner, and handle the content of their services with care. For example, they must have their complaint-handling process and points of contact in order. ACM takes action against online services that fail to meet their responsibilities.

Taking action against unclear online services

Many consumers reported that they unwittingly used an online service and were subsequently faced with costs. That is why ACM took action against CVneed (which draws up résumés) and FixitFaster (which downloads manuals). Both businesses stopped recruiting new customers, following an ACM intervention. FixitFaster also stopped collecting outstanding payments. These actions prevented further harm to consumers.

Untrustworthy online stores and dropshippers

ACM takes action against untrustworthy online stores and dropshippers. Consumers complain about, for example, receiving their orders too late (or not even at all), not receiving refunds when returning their purchases, or not being able to get in touch with the online store's customer service. Consumers are entitled to know where a product is shipped from so that it can anticipate longer delivery times. The return address must also be clear. In one case, ACM imposed a fine for unclear information about deliveries and returns.

SHEIN must adjust its website

The European consumer authorities, including ACM, established that Chinese online store SHEIN violated consumer protection law by engaging in harmful and misleading practices. As a result, consumers are being misled, and are unable to make well-informed choices. In addition, it constitutes unfair competition for online stores that do comply with the rules. SHEIN was given one month to indicate how it would comply with consumer protection law. ACM had a leading role in the investigation.

Clarity regarding the use of in-game currencies

ACM, together with other European consumer authorities, drew up key principles on the use of in-game virtual currencies. Consumers are put on the wrong track if it is not clear that in-game purchases are real transactions where real money is involved. That is why game providers must present a price in euros when offering in-game items.

Responsible use of chatbots in customer-service settings

The Dutch Data Protection Authority (AP) and ACM called on businesses to use chatbots in customer-service settings responsibly. They did so following a rising number of reports filed by consumers. Businesses must offer the option for human interaction in addition to a chatbot. They also need to maintain control over the information that the chatbot provides, and they need to ensure that users know that they are communicating with a chatbot.

Taking action against abuse of power on digital markets

ACM contributes to a healthy and innovative digital economy by making sure that businesses compete fairly with one another and that they do not harm anyone through unfair practices. The power of international tech firms is large, and can disrupt fair competition. They cannot exploit the dependence of buyers on their products and services. Specific rules are in place in the digital economy in order to allow everyone to take more advantage of the benefits of the digitalization.

Investigation into market power of online platform

ACM conducted an investigation into an online platform that might have given preferential treatment to itself or that it might have used data of business users in order to strengthen its own position. This investigation is taking longer than anticipated, and is expected to be concluded in 2026.

ACM also launched an investigation into possible abuse of dominance by a large, internationally operating software supplier on the business market. Users may rely on a specific software supplier, and may thus pay too much or may face unfair conditions. That, too, can disrupt competition. ACM is investigating whether the software supplier violated the competition rules, and expects to complete the investigation in 2026.

Market investigation into cloud services

Together with the European Commission, ACM launched a market investigation into possible barriers to switching to other cloud service providers, and to the simultaneous use of multiple cloud services. In addition, ACM launched an investigation into access to data for business users, and the use of bundling with other services. When barriers are eliminated, the market will function better, and businesses will be able to compete more fairly.

Health care IT

Opening up health-care information systems in a secure manner, so that the systems of different suppliers and care providers can be linked securely, is seen by ACM as a precondition for accelerating the transition to suitable care and for facing social challenges such as an ageing population and labor shortages. ACM cannot structurally mandate this, and has therefore recommended the Ministry of VWS to mandate opening up digital information

systems through legislation. In that situation, health care IT suppliers will have to open up their digital information systems, by default, in a secure manner for links with other suppliers and health care providers. The goal thereof is to promote innovation in health care IT, so that health care providers and patients benefit from reduced administrative costs as well as from higher-quality health care.

Looking ahead

Enhancing resilience and reducing critical dependencies in the digital economy are key priorities in ACM's oversight efforts. Together with the European Commission, ACM investigated whether major international tech firms also needed to comply with the DMA. ACM remains committed to independence from cloud and IT services, to a safe online environment where users, especially minors, are protected against age-inappropriate content, illegal trading, and deceptive designs. ACM is committed to accessible and inclusive digital markets, education for businesses, and taking action against serious accessibility problems.

As during the campaign for the 2025 Dutch general election, ACM will keep a close watch on compliance with the due diligence obligations among online platforms in the run-up to the 2026 municipal elections in the Netherlands. Also, political parties and other organizations are informed about their rights and obligations.

ACM contributes to a well-functioning data economy in order to stimulate European innovation and to enhance our competitiveness. Access to, the use (and reuse) of data are getting more and more important. ACM launched a market scan into the opportunities and challenges surrounding the sharing of data from vehicles. ACM informs businesses and organizations about their rights and obligations when switching cloud providers or linking different cloud solutions.

The sustainability transition

ACM contributes to the transition to a more sustainable economy as well as to the innovation that is needed for that. ACM does so, for example, by promoting honest and clear sustainability claims. In addition, ACM gives advice about sustainability collaborations, and it takes action against anti-competitive practices that harm the sustainability transition. ACM gives recommendations about how to make the agricultural chain more sustainable. And it prepares itself for the enforcement of new European rules regarding warranties and repairs as well as the rules on corporate social responsibility.

Sustainability claims

Correct and clear claims are important to consumers, so that they are able to use them in making purchase decisions. In April, ACM called on large food companies to check their sustainability claims themselves, and to adjust them, where necessary. ACM saw that many claims did not comply with the rules, and started to check them. If ACM finds claims that do not comply with consumer protection regulations, it will launch an investigation.

Within the food sector, ACM in 2025 focused on businesses in the coffee and cacao sector. It was the sector where ACM found the most possibly misleading claims, not just claims with regard to climate but also with regard to working conditions and human rights. In addition to this general call, ACM in 2025 confronted Dutch department store De Bijenkorf and multinational Unilever with their unclear sustainability claims. Also, ACM sent a large international market participant a draft order subject to periodic penalty payments for the use of carbon-neutral claims. The company subsequently stopped using the term 'carbon-neutral'.

At the international level, ACM worked together with European and global counterparts in its efforts to combat misleading sustainability claims. For example, various regulators jointly confronted fashion and textile companies with their claims. And, following a joint action by European consumer authorities, 21 major airlines in November committed to adjusting their sustainability claims.

Informal assessments of sustainability initiatives

ACM helps businesses work together in accordance with the competition rules when seeking to realize sustainability objectives. ACM in 2025 gave positive assessments of various sustainability initiatives. For example, companies in the natural-stone sector were allowed to make arrangements on improving the working conditions in natural-stone quarries, a living wage for employees, and fewer greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, ACM was positive about two collaborations regarding international corporate social responsibility. In the metal sector and the textile sector, companies wished to collaborate in order to combat the negative effects on humans, animals, and the environment in the

entire chain, also outside the Netherlands. In addition, ACM allowed brick manufacturers to work together on creating a return and deposit fee system for reusing pallets. In that way, they could reduce their impact on the environment.

In its assessments, ACM sees these collaborations as good examples of how companies are able to take steps towards sustainability, within the competition rules.

Taking action against conduct that restricts competition and sustainability

ACM takes action against conduct that restricts competition and sustainability. ACM pointed out to the UPV Textiel association and textile trade association VHT that textile companies must be able to decide themselves whom they wish to contract for the recycling of textile. ACM had concerns that, as a result of communications by UPV Textiel and VHT, textile companies were not fully aware of their freedom of choice. ACM saw a risk that companies could have gotten the impression that only UPV Textile could be contracted. Freedom of choice, however, results in competition and, by extension, in a wider selection for recycling, reduced prices, and higher quality. Both organizations indicated they would adjust their conduct.

Recommendations on how to make the food production chain more sustainable

The Agro-Nutri Monitor 2025 looked at the price-formation process in various stages of the food production chain (such as farmers, wholesalers, and supermarkets). ACM concluded that the profitability of organic farmers was under pressure. Their costs for organic production have risen more sharply than do their revenues.

ACM recommended the Ministry of LNV a set of measures on how to make the food chain in the Netherlands more sustainable, for example by reducing the price difference between conventional and organic products, and by reducing the number of sustainability labels.

New European regulations

ACM in 2025 prepared itself for its enforcement of rules regarding corporate sustainability (CSDDD). Priorities in these oversight efforts lie in dialogs with stakeholders, offering clarity through guidelines, rewarding the use of good practices, and collaborating with other relevant regulators.

For several months in 2025, the preparations progressed at a slower pace, when it became clear in late February that the European Commission would review the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD). In a blog in October 2025, ACM Member of the Board Martijn Ridderbos argued that the CSDDD obligations should remain broad and effective. In December,

the European Parliament adopted a revised directive with a more limited scope. In 2026, the Dutch legislature will work on the implementation of these rules in the Netherlands. ACM in 2026 will continue to make the necessary preparations for its oversight.

In discussions with the Dutch legislature, ACM contributes to the effectiveness of sustainability rules. ACM does so by publishing Feasibility and Enforceability Assessment (UHTs), for example. In April, ACM argued in a UHT on the Implementing Act of the Directive regarding better sustainability information for consumers for a clearer explanation of the open standards for sustainability claims as well as for standards for planned obsolescence.

Warranties and repairs

In 2025, ACM focused on the rights of consumers to warranty and repair. If consumers know and exercise these rights, it will help towards longer lifespans and sustainability of products. ACM warned sellers of consumer electronics and domestic appliances to improve their compliance with the warranty rules. ACM saw in the first half of 2025 a significant increase in the number of reports regarding warranty issues compared with 2024.

Consumers mostly complained that they were told that they were no longer entitled to anything after two years. In order to make consumers aware of their rights, ACM opened a pop-up warranty store inside Utrecht Central Station, marking the launch of an awareness campaign about warranty. By having products repaired or having components replaced instead of buying a new product, consumers reduce waste, and extend the lifespans of products. Behavioral research shows that many consumers do not know that warranty

can be longer than two years, and that a significant large group of consumers does not exercise their rights.

Looking ahead

In 2026, the Implementing Act of the Directive regarding better sustainability information will enter into force.

ACM will continue taking action against misleading sustainability claims in the food sector, and, in the course of 2026, will decide on new priorities. In addition, consumer education efforts with regard to warranties and repairs will be continued. At the European level, ACM will focus on a clear and uniform interpretation of the new sustainability rules. In that way, ACM contributes to predictability and a level playing field for businesses in the EU. In addition, ACM will continue to be open to informal assessments of collaboration initiatives with regard to sustainability.

In the 2026 Agro-Nutri monitor, ACM will, next to its regular monitoring activities, also explore the state of the sustainability transition in the food service sector, as well as the opportunities that supermarkets have to stimulate consumers to make more-sustainable choices.

Oversight over other sectors

In addition to the activities that follow from its strategic objectives, ACM is committed to ensuring that markets work well in all sectors of the Dutch economy. ACM safeguards competition, protects consumers, and conducts oversight over businesses in regulated sectors. In that context, ACM prioritizes cases about and investigations into problems that lead to major economic and societal harm, and it selects from its toolkit those instruments that solve the problem at hand the most effectively and efficiently.

Protecting competition

Acquisition of RTL Nederland by DPG Media

ACM attached strict conditions to the acquisition of RTL Nederland by DPG Media, following an extensive competition-law investigation. With these conditions, news consumers continue to be able to choose from different independent news sources. ACM finds that important, because a varied and pluriform news landscape plays a key role in democracies. One major condition attached to the acquisition is that the different newsrooms of RTL Nieuws, NU.nl and other titles must continue to operate as separate news brands. The editorial statutes will be updated in order to strengthen editorial independence. Another condition is that the news sites of RTL and NU.nl continue to be freely accessible. On the markets for news, online ad space, and audio-visual content, competitive pressure will continue to be exerted by other media companies and international platforms.

Acquisition of DWP and Vierhouten Palletindustrie by Foresco

ACM granted pallet seller Foresco a license for the acquisition of its competitors DWP and Vierhouten Palletindustrie. This was the first time that ACM assessed an acquisition within the context of a strategy of serial acquisitions (or roll-up strategy). ACM not only looked at the effects of the acquisition at hand, but also at the effects of all of the previous acquisitions (including those that had not been notified), and also took into account the effects of future acquisitions that would be sufficiently likely to go through. ACM concluded that the acquisition would not lead to higher prices. The investigation also revealed that, after the acquisition, Foresco would still face sufficient competitive pressure from other pallet sellers. Buyers have various alternatives besides Foresco.

Dealing with unfair commercial practices in potato sector

Following reports of unrest among potato growers, ACM took action against Dutch fries manufacturer Farm Frites. Farm Frites must give growers more time and clearer information to decide on changes to their contracts. This strengthens the bargaining position of the growers.

Measures taken by credit-card issuer International Card Services

Dutch credit-card issuer International Card Services (ICS) took measures to refund too high interchange fees. It decided to do so following conversations with ACM. ICS had incorrectly classified its ICS Go Card as a credit card, as a result of which, too high fees were charged. ACM saw to it that ICS refunded the excess fees and that it would prevent a repeat occurrence.

Warning to suppliers of dog food

ACM issued a warning to nine suppliers that sell dog food. These suppliers influenced the selling prices of their products sold by retailers such as pet stores. That is prohibited, because it keeps the consumer prices of their products artificially high. For ACM, the effect of its actions is central. That is why, ACM, in consultation with its team of behavioral experts, chose to issue a warning, as a rapid intervention to ensure that the businesses adjust their practices and to prevent further harm to consumers or businesses. A subsequent check revealed that the conduct of these suppliers had improved, and that they were more aware of the rules.

Investigation launched into acquisition of Ziemann by Brink's

ACM launched an investigation into the acquisition of the Dutch branch of German cash-in-transit company Ziemann by rival company Brink's. There had already been concerns about the cash-in-transit market, due to the limited number of market participants as well as the market position of Brink's. This acquisition increased those concerns. A lack of competition typically leads to higher prices, poorer services, and less innovation. Brink's had indicated that ACM did not need to be notified of this acquisition in advance, because the turnover thresholds had not been met. ACM investigated whether or not the

competition rules had been violated, including the prohibition on abuse of dominance.

Dawn raids at contracting companies following municipal tender process

ACM conducted a dawn raid at contracting companies that are active in the civil-engineering sector. With these raids, ACM examined whether three contracting companies had rigged their bids in a municipal tender process.

This investigation was prompted by serious indications that these contracting companies had allegedly coordinated their bids. That is not allowed as it distorts competition, and leads to the government (and ultimately taxpayers) paying too much for contracts.

Socially acceptable prices of expensive prescription drugs

Together with the National Health Care Institute (ZiN) and the Dutch Healthcare Authority (NZa), ACM drafted a joint advice containing recommendations for the Dutch minister of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS) regarding socially acceptable prices of expensive prescription drugs.

One of the conclusions is: it is necessary to determine more accurately what prices for expensive prescription drugs are socially acceptable. In that way, more health gains for Dutch society can be realized with the same health care budget. That is important because the expenditures on health care are getting higher and higher. The three organizations put forward 6 basic principles for making that social assessment more accurately. In addition, they recommended taking certain measures for increasing competition between drug manufacturers as well as for strengthening market oversight.

Collaborations in health care

ACM also issued recommendations on the opportunities for collaborations in the health care sector. Within the current competition rules, collaborations in health care are very much possible and important. Patients and insured can benefit from them. Collaborations can lead to higher quality and better accessibility of health care. ACM also contributes to the discussions on concentration of high-complex care as part of the implementation of the Integral Healthcare Agreement (IZA).

Protection of consumers

Heightened oversight over unsolicited telemarketing calls

ACM intensified its oversight over telemarketing calls. ACM's consumer information portal ACM ConsuWijzer receives many complaints about telemarketing calls, particularly in the telecom and energy sectors. Some businesses sign up unwitting customers using authorizations or unclear conditions. ACM issued public warnings against such practices. ACM organized a meeting for these two sectors in order to remind businesses of their obligations and the rules regarding telemarketing. ACM checked whether these businesses adjusted their practices in such a way that they were able to prevent unsolicited telemarketing calls, including at the call centers that make such calls on their behalf. This is known as chain responsibility. Telecom operator VodafoneZiggo made a commitment to ACM that, going forward, it would comply with the telemarketing rules. It acknowledged that it is responsible for all telemarketing activities that are carried out by it and on its behalf.

Commitment made by provider of medical alert systems for seniors

A provider of medical alert systems (also called personal alarm systems) for seniors compensated individuals who purchased alert systems from door-to-door sellers between January 1, 2022 and August 31, 2024, and offered these individuals the opportunity to cancel their subscriptions free of charge. In addition, this provider drastically adjusted its practices. This provider made this commitment to ACM in 2025 following an intervention. ACM received reports about aggressive customer-recruitment practices, unclear prices, and unfair cancellation conditions in connection with sales of medical alert systems for seniors. Since the company targets an often vulnerable groups of individuals, it needs to act with extra care.

Dealing with misleading discounts

In order to help sellers indicate their prices in an honest manner, ACM published its Guidelines regarding price indications and comparisons. Only with fair prices are consumers able to properly compare the many different offers. In the run-up to Black Friday and the holidays, ACM warned against misleading discounts. An investigation revealed that 75 percent of retailers did not present their discounts correctly. Consumers are thus misled since the discount seems higher than it actually is. In addition, ACM launched an awareness campaign: check before you buy (in Dutch: *eerst checken, dan bestellen*). ACM confronted businesses that did not comply with the rules, and asked them to adjust their price presentations. If businesses fail to do so, ACM can impose sanctions. On November 11, 2025, the District Court of Rotterdam confirmed that ACM had previously rightfully imposed fines on online stores for using fake discounts.

Sector-specific oversight

Postal and Parcel Markets Scan

The annual Postal and Parcel Markets Scan is a visual presentation of market trends in the delivery of postal items and parcels, in which the volumes and turnover figures are central. For this scan, the largest postal operators each year submit data regarding their activities. In 2025, ACM published the 2024 ACM Postal and Parcel Markets Scan. The scan revealed a drop in the number of postal items sent, while also observing an increase in the number of parcels sent. Mail-delivery reliability dropped to 86 percent, which is well below the statutory requirement of 95 percent. This led to more complaints about postal items arriving either late or not at all. The scan also reveals that sustainable transport methods are used more and more often, such as electric buses or cargo bikes. Although pick-ups at service locations or package lockers have become more popular, at-home delivery remains the favorite option.

Amsterdam airport Schiphol's charges

ACM dismissed complaints about Amsterdam airport Schiphol's charge adjustment that came into effect on April 1, 2025. These are charges that airlines pay for security checkpoints and the handling of passengers, and for takeoffs and landings at Schiphol. The average increase of these charges over the next three years is 33 percent. That is a significant increase, which is caused by, among other factors, higher costs (including wages), lower passenger volumes, and pandemic-related losses. Schiphol can also set higher charges for nighttime flights as well as for aircraft that cause more noise, and it can set lower charges for quieter aircraft. Furthermore, Schiphol can pass on the insulation costs of homes in the airport charges.

Telecom Monitor and the Number Issuance Monitor

Each quarter, ACM publishes the Telecom Monitor. That revealed that the mobile-data consumption and the number of fiber-optic connections continued to grow. In the first quarter of 2025, the number of households with fiber-optic plans exceeded, for the first time ever, the number of plans based on cable connections. In addition to monitoring the telecom market, ACM also manages the supply of all phone numbers in the Netherlands. On the basis of the annual Number Issuance Monitor, ACM concluded that sufficient numbers were still available for all number types for the time being.

Rail

ACM handed down four decisions regarding complaints filed by Dutch rail infrastructure manager ProRail. A complaint filed by rail company Arriva was about the capacity allocation in northern Netherlands for the 2025 timetable. In that allocation, Arriva's request for running trains during peak hours was largely dismissed, because ProRail claimed there was insufficient capacity. Arriva challenged that argument, and argued that ProRail insufficiently explained the dismissal of its capacity request on several points. ACM did acknowledge the lack of explanation as flagged by Arriva. With regard to other points, ACM finds ProRail's explanation sufficient. In addition, ACM handled two complaints filed by Arriva and QBuzz about ProRail's Network Statement. According to Arriva and QBuzz, ProRail explained insufficiently clearly in its Network Statement how the maximum number of trains that can use the tracks is determined. ACM ruled that the Network Statement was sufficiently clear, and therefore disallowed both complaints.

Finally, ACM handled a complaint filed by several freight undertakings regarding the compensation that ProRail pays to transport undertakings in case of any disruptions, and as a result of which rail undertakings are required to incur parking or deviation costs. These freight undertakings found the compensation too little, and not in line with statutory obligations. ACM disallowed this complaint.

ACM in 2025 investigated the higher rate that rail undertakings need to pay for using the high-speed railway (in Dutch: *HSL*): the HSL surcharge. ACM investigated whether the HSL surcharge complied with the conditions in European rail regulations. ACM's investigation revealed that the HSL surcharge did so.

Market investigations

Market investigations offer ACM better insight into the functioning of markets and any bottlenecks on those markets, such as barriers to entry, restrictions in the consumers’ decision-making process, and poor innovation incentives. That is how ACM carries out its duty of conducting general oversight over the functioning of markets, also without any suspicion of a violation of the rules. In 2025, ACM published its Procedure regarding market investigations. In such market investigations, ACM looks at the underlying causes and effects of a market that is not functioning well, and it offers solutions for ensuring it functions better. On the basis of market investigations, ACM can offer recommendations to consumers or businesses or, whichever is more logical, suggest solutions to third parties, such as other regulators or policymakers. Table 1 contains an overview of the market investigations since 2024 and 2025, including the follow-ups to the recommendations (including policy recommendations) that followed from these market investigations.

Table 1. Market investigations and status of recommendations

Market investigation	Status	Status of recommendations
Digital learning materials	Ongoing	In 2026, ACM wishes to get a picture of how the market for learning materials (digital or otherwise) in education is functioning. This market is evolving because of the digitalization thereof. In addition, digital products of international tech firms become more and more integrated in this market.
Grocery prices in supermarkets	Ongoing	ACM launched a market investigation into the prices of food products in Dutch supermarkets, following reports that the prices of certain food products are higher in the Netherlands than in neighboring countries. With this market investigation, ACM wishes to gain further insight into the question of whether there are any market problems that lead to higher prices. The investigation focuses on the price breakdowns of and price formations for products in the average grocery basket of consumers. ACM looks into, among other aspects, the profit margins of suppliers of food products (including suppliers of leading-brand items), as well as the profit margins of supermarkets, and possible explanations of high or low margins.

Market investigation	Status	Status of recommendations
Computer-controlled consumer prices in the airline sector	Ongoing	ACM has observed that consumer prices are increasingly formed using data and algorithms. In 2025, ACM launched a market investigation into computer-controlled consumer prices. The investigation focuses on dynamic and personalized pricing, as well as on the possible consequences thereof for consumers. ACM chose to conduct empirical research into pricing in the aviation sector. This market investigation has been split in, on the one hand, gaining insight into pricing methods using airlines' transaction data, and, on the other hand, gaining insight into the influence thereof on perception, knowledge, and behavior through consumer research.
Veterinary services for pets	Ongoing	In its draft report on the market for veterinary services for pets, ACM recommended prohibiting commercial incentives for vets, and introducing measures that strengthen the position of pet owners as well as improve emergency care. Vet clinics have become, on average, more commercial, as a result of the rise of chains owned by private investors, among other reasons. The behavioral research showed that pet owners often lack the time, knowledge, or a good overview in order to be able to make an informed decision, especially in emergency situations. Also, several regions have limited choice and competition. ACM wishes that pet owners are better protected due to the increased risk of higher prices as well as overtreatment. However, that risk will continue to increase due to the continued commercialization of the sector as well as the continued growth of chains. That is why ACM recommends, just like in the health care market for humans, creating safeguards so that pet owners are able to count on suitable care at a fair price.
<u>2024 Market Scan of the Dutch Telecom Market and market investigation into prices of fixed broadband</u>	Ongoing	The 2024 Market Scan of the Dutch Telecom Market revealed that fixed and mobile telecom services in the Netherlands are of high quality, also in comparison with other countries. Discounts that consumers receive if they switch operators or sign a new contract with their current operators do affect prices. It also turned out that most consumers have 'sleeping' contracts, which are contracts the initial period of which has already expired. These consumers often pay more than consumers that regularly switch providers or that take out new contracts. These sleeping contracts are predominantly prevalent among households with broadband plans with speeds of up to 100Mbps. ACM conducted a market investigation into the functioning of this segment, and will also more strictly enforce compliance with the obligation of providers to inform customers about their contract status and the most-competitive prices. The draft report of the market investigation was published in early 2026, which also contained actions and recommendations. For example, ACM will publish in the summer of 2026 guidelines, explaining what the information obligations means for telecom operators. In addition, the Telecom Monitor revealed that the switching rate among consumers did not change yet (still approximately 12 percent).
<u>Competition among EV charging stations and shops at rest areas</u>	Publication in July 2025	ACM recommended the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management (I&W) to organize competition at highway rest areas (or service areas) by allowing multiple operators of EV charging stations and shops to provide their services at such rest areas. The report revealed that competition at rest areas results in more choice, lower prices, and higher quality for road users. Restriction of competition (for example by giving one provider exclusivity) will harm those benefits. ACM has given multiple recommendations for enhancing competition. A bill has been submitted to the Dutch Council of State (RvS), which includes many recommendations that have been put forward. For example, competition at rest areas will be permitted under several conditions.

Market investigation	Status	Status of recommendations
<u>Public EV charging infrastructure and tender processes</u>	Publication in July 2025	ACM conducted a study into the different options for improving competition among operators of public AC EV-charging infrastructure in the interest of consumers. AC EV-charging infrastructure refers to the system of EV-charging stations that use alternating current (AC) to charge electric vehicles. Competition among operators of public AC EV-charging infrastructure contributes to a well-functioning, innovative, and affordable EV-charging infrastructure, and, by extension, to the acceleration of the energy transition. ACM concluded that municipalities play a key role in the roll-out of public EV-charging infrastructure, but do not always choose the optimal solution from a competition perspective. ACM pointed out to municipalities, when choosing a roll-out model, to expressly take into account the benefits of competition for consumers. They can do the following to promote competition: putting out smaller contracts to tender, admitting multiple providers within a concession, better coordinating tender processes, so that more bidders are able to participate, as well as promoting transparency, by publishing tender information widely, and by involving multiple participants in consultation rounds. ACM's recommendations were discussed with stakeholders, and were published on the website. ACM does not keep track of whether municipalities carry out the recommendations.
<u>Hydrogen transport tariffs</u>	Publication in May 2025	A market report on affordable network tariffs for hydrogen transport revealed that the tariffs may go up considerably since hydrogen volumes are lagging behind, and investment costs are higher than expected. ACM concluded that the development of the hydrogen market is getting off to a slow start in the Netherlands, because of various obstacles and uncertainties. As the costs for the roll-out of the network are higher than expected, and the volumes are lagging behind, the tariffs for the hydrogen transport network can increase considerably without any additional measures compared with the current tariff that has been set by the Ministry of Climate Policy and Green Growth (KGG). Starting in 2033 at the latest, ACM sets the network tariffs for Hynetwork's hydrogen transport network, which is subsidiary of Gasunie. A cohesive set of measures is needed to get the hydrogen market off the ground. Several market participants, including the government, must do their part. In order to realize the hydrogen ambitions in the Netherlands, policy measures are needed that are aimed at increasing hydrogen volumes transported. Higher volumes of hydrogen additionally contribute to an affordable hydrogen transport network. Also, there are several other options for preventing a tariff increase. For example, European rules offer scope to allow hydrogen system operators to recoup the costs of hydrogen transport networks by spreading these costs over a greater period of time (intertemporal cost allocation). This requires the Dutch legislature to make this possible through legislation, and ACM to subsequently approve this. KGG is studying the desirability and feasibility thereof. ACM is positive to this, since it can help get the hydrogen chain off the ground, and also contribute to a fairer distribution of the initial costs of the roll-out of the network between the first and future users. In parliamentary letters (July and December 2025), KGG announced various additional measures on the demand side, supply side and transport side in order to get the market for renewable hydrogen off the ground. Low-carbon hydrogen could play an important, supplementary role in the transition to a climate-neutral energy system, particularly because it creates volume, and, as such, can help the hydrogen chain get off the ground. This was welcomed in a memo written by two of the three coalition parties during the 2025-2026 government-formation talks.

Market investigation	Status	Status of recommendations
<u>Study into the Dutch postal market</u>	Publication in April 2025	A joint study conducted by various ACM departments into the future of the Dutch postal service revealed that cutbacks to the postal service are inevitable for keeping it affordable. Reduced delivery speeds could save costs. The study further showed that both consumers and business users found reliability (the assurance that mail will arrive at the agreed upon time) the most important aspect, and that there was still room for improvement regarding this reliability. One of the options would be to introduce general statutory reliability requirements for all types of mail, including business mail. In addition, ACM also concluded that the affordability for all types of mail is important. The legislative process regarding the postal service is still ongoing.
<u>Competition on the energy market: study into rockets and feathers</u>	Publication in October 2024	At six energy suppliers, ACM found no evidence that cost increases were passed on sooner than cost decreases during the period from 2021 through June 2023. This means that the suppliers that were investigated (including the three largest suppliers in the Netherlands) did not raise their margins during the energy crisis by passing on increases in the wholesale price sooner than price decreases. This outcome fits in with previous investigations by ACM into the reasonableness of the rates of energy suppliers. Although the investigation showed that the tariffs were reasonable during the energy crisis, it did not take away the concerns about affordability. After all, even competitive tariffs can be unaffordable, and that is why ACM will continue to keep a close watch on the situation. Following this investigation, ACM did not put forward any recommendations.
<u>Policy differences and consumer choices on the health-care market</u>	Publication in June 2024	The Dutch Healthcare Authority (NZa) and ACM conducted a joint study into differences in standard health-insurance plans and consumer choices. One of the conclusions was that 61 percent of consumers in 2023 had policies for which a more affordable alternative existed. This can be an indication of obstacles in the decision-making process of consumers. According to the regulators, possible causes of these results lie in the offerings of health insurers, and put forward recommendations for policymakers, the Dutch legislature, and health insurers for improvements. ACM and NZa recommended reducing the number of identical (or nearly identical) insurance policies per health insurer as well as mandating health insurers that, with each standard health-insurance plan, consumers have access to all additional health-insurance plans of that particular health insurer. Finally, consumers will benefit if reimbursements for out-of-network providers (health-care providers with which health insurers have no contract) are simplified. The Dutch legislature has reflected on these recommendations, but has not followed up on them, as of yet.

Market investigation	Status	Status of recommendations
<u>Market study into the functioning of the Dutch savings market</u>	Publication in May 2024	In the report, ACM concluded that a lack of competition between banks is a major cause of the low savings rates for consumers. ACM currently does not have powers to take measures to boost competition on the Dutch savings market. That is something the legislature must do. In its report, ACM offered the Dutch legislature several recommendations for lowering switching barriers for consumers, such as improving transparency, creating a mandatory switching service for savings accounts, introducing a prohibition on tying, and transitioning to a European deposit guarantee scheme. All recommendations were meant for the Minister of Finance, to which the minister responded in two letters to the Dutch House of Representatives. The recommendations have partially been followed. For example, the minister remains committed to improving transparency and the provision of information, as a result of which consumers become better able to make their own choices, as well as to introducing a European deposit guarantee scheme IBAN number portability. The minister sees less added value in the creation of a switching service and a ban on tying. These recommendations have not been followed.
<u>Fuel-price study 'Rockets and feathers'</u>	Publication in January 2024	ACM conducted a study into the effects of oil price fluctuations on fuel prices. It turned out that owners of gas stations (or petrol stations) pass on oil price increases sooner than oil price decreases. If an oil price decrease were to be passed on as quickly as an oil price increase, consumers would save 2.2 to 4.8 cents per liter. Recommendations were the introduction of a New Competition Tool (NCT) and more transparency, for example through an Application Programming Interface (API). Price transparency can be increased, for example, by mandating gas station owners to automatically publish their fuel prices digitally using an API. The API recommendation has not been followed. The proposal for introducing an NCT has been added to the coalition agreement of the current Jettten cabinet.

Our oversight efforts in facts and figures

For each regulatory department, ACM keeps data regarding their enforcement efforts. These figures can vary each year due to the types of investigations as well as the amount of time that is needed for investigations. ACM’s goal is ensuring that markets work well for people and businesses. That is why ACM also looks at the efficiency and speed of an enforcement intervention. In each case, ACM chooses the instrument that can best achieve that goal.

Consumer education

Consumer education is a major element of ACM’s efforts. On the website of ACM ConsuWijzer, consumers can find information about their rights, and they can download, for example, sample letters for making it easier to confront companies with problems they encounter. Consumers find it easy to visit the ConsuWijzer website. In 2025, the site attracted approximately 1.3 million visitors (Table 2).

ACM’s website ACM.nl provides information for businesses, their advisors, journalists, and other individuals that are interested. In 2025, this website attracted over 1.5 million visitors, which is considerably less than in previous years. One explanation is that, in 2025, ACM no longer spent any money on ads promoting its websites. As a result, its websites no longer feature in the top of the search results of search engines. In addition, ACM uses a tool to block ‘bots’. Another possible explanation for the decline is the rise of AI, as a result of which individuals no longer click on the URL of the website, but instead are satisfied with the information generated by AI.

Table 2: Visits to websites

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
ACM ConsuWijzer.nl	2,312,431	3,579,439	3,051,363	3,110,673	1,285,339
ACM.nl	1,246,729	1,588,215	1,993,461	2,053,264	1,517,563
Total	3,559,160	5,167,654	5,044,824	5,163,937	2,802,902

Reports filed by consumers

Consumers contact consumer information portal ACM ConsuWijzer for various reasons. They can ask questions, but also file complaints about a company. We refer to such questions and complaints as ‘reports’. ACM bases its oversight also on the number of reports it receives. Table 3a offers an overview of the number of reports filed with ACM ConsuWijzer. In 2025, ACM started using telemarketing forms, which enable consumers to file reports about unsolicited telemarketing practices, which can explain part of the increase. In addition, campaigns, such as the warranty campaign, could also play a role in the rise in the number of reports.

The reports filed with ACM regarding the DSA have not yet been included in the figures (or not completely). This is discussed in a separate annual report. In 2025, ACM started using a new system for categorizing consumer reports. The top 5 natures of consumer reports can be found in table 3b.

Many reports are related to online purchases. This can also be seen in table 4, where many reports concern retail. The complaints are mostly about getting purchased items late or not at all, or, if the items are delivered, that the items do not meet expectations. Consumers may also wish to return items, and, when doing so, experience problems or have a hard time reaching the company. In addition, many reports are about misleading customer-recruitment practices, particularly over the phone for energy and telecom products, but consumers also feel misled online by enticing ads for products and/or services, which were too good to be true.

Table 3a: Number of reports filed with ACM ConsuWijzer*

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Over the phone	27,537	16,538	18,419	17,372	14,382
By email	41,019	37,703	49,245	56,843	67,948
By regular mail	142	129	125	140	85
Over WhatsApp	2,125	4,200	-	-	-
Over sociale media	3,521	2,003	4,357	3,572	3,188
Telemarketing forms					3,965
Total	74,344	60,573	72,146	77,927	89,568

*The table shows the number of interactions, which can be multiple per report.

Table 3b: Top 5 natures of consumer reports*

	2025
Faulty product/service	15,679
Misleading customer recruitment	15,237
Termination and cancellation of contracts	11,926
Delivery issues	9,512
Interactions with customers	8,436

*A report can be counted in multiple categories.

Table 4: Top 5 sectors of consumer reports

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Retail	15,717	11,607	17,268	24,709	35,877
Energy and heat	13,619	16,659	11,198	11,984	8,961
Services	13,143	8,890	9,821	11,390	15,940
Telecom services	2,821	1,859	3,365	5,179	5,023
Digital*					2,101

*Digital is a new category starting in 2025.

Reports filed by businesses

Businesses are able to contact ACM's business desk if they have questions or complaints, for example, if they are unsure whether they comply with the rules, or if they suspect competitors having concluded illegal agreements. Just like with reports filed by consumers, ACM started using a new system for registering and categorizing reports filed by businesses. In 2025, ACM received almost 5,000 reports filed by businesses, which is similar to the numbers in previous years (table 5a). Most reports were about unsolicited calls, misleading customer-recruitment efforts, and competition (table 5b).

Table 5a: Number of reports filed with ACM's business desk

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Telecommunications and internet	1,214	1,007	1,176	2,174	671
Energy	788	997	926	1,258	759
Services					621
Retail					488
The Digital Economy					163
Other	3,319	2,679	4,458	2,628	2,247
Total	5,321	4,683	4,560	6,060	4,949

Table 5b: Top 3 nature of business reports*

	2025
Unsolicited calls	972
Misleading customer recruitment	837
Competition	689

*A report can be counted in multiple categories.

Investigations

ACM carries out investigations on the basis of reports and ACM's own detection efforts. Our enforcement teams assess whether a violation has been committed. If such is the case, an enforcement team can use different instruments to end the violation.

A breakdown of completed investigations per instrument can be found on the next page. In 2025, ACM launched fewer investigations than in 2024, particularly with regard to consumer protection (table 6a). One of the reasons for this is the phase that ongoing investigations are currently in. In addition, ACM in 2025 focused more on alternative instruments, which is reflected in table 7b. An intervention using a different instrument does not always result in an investigation being launched. The category 'other instruments' primarily consists of binding instructions, binding courses of conduct, commitments, warnings, early-warning letters, guidelines, sectoral letters, discussions with trade associations in which information is given or standards are explained, and rapid interventions. The goal of this shift in instrument selection is to increase the effectiveness and impact of our oversight efforts. ACM imposed seven orders subject to periodic penalty payments, all of which in the energy sector (table 7a).

Differences in the number of investigations between enforcement teams can be explained by the nature of the investigations, the magnitude of other enforcement activities, and the size of the teams themselves. Taking action against a single illegal practice may result in the launch of multiple investigations or interventions. Consumer investigations into energy-related matters are included in the category 'Energy'.

Table 6a: Number of investigations launched

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Consumer protection	92	104	186	106	15
Energy	9	10	6	32	29
Competition	3	7	12	12	10
Telecommunications & postal services	9	33	32	15	8
Transport	0	2	0	2	0
Digital	0	0	0	0	7
Total	113	156	236	167	69

Table 6b: Number of investigations completed

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Consumer protection	101	99	104	178	9
Energy	5	3	5	22	42
Competition	9	4	14	20	9
Telecommunications & postal services	11	15	19	10	8
Transport	0	0	0	0	2
Digital					0
Total	126	121	142	230	70

Table 7a: Number of orders subject to periodic penalty payments

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Consumer protection	3	4	1	4	0
Energy	2	1	1	0	7
Competition	1	0	0	1	0
Telecommunications & postal services	0	1	2	0	0
Transport	0	0	0	0	0
Digital	0	0	0	0	0
Total	6	6	4	5	7

Table 7b: Number of interventions using other instruments

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Consumer protection	106	106	101	117	414
Energy	4	3	3	19	35
Competition	4	7	5	10	24
Telecommunications & postal services	4	7	14	8	4
Transport	0	0	0	1	0
Digital	0	0	0	0	0
Total	118	123	123	155	477

Newly imposed fines

ACM can impose fines for violations of the laws it enforces. It starts with an investigation in which a statement of objections is drawn up. On the basis of that statement of objections, a fine can be imposed. In 2025, ACM imposed one fine (table 8a). The fact that only one fine was imposed in 2025 is a confluence of circumstances, and does not represent a deliberate policy choice. Since the amount of the fine is dependent on the relevant turnover of the undertakings involved, the total amount of all fines can vary each year. The totals of the fines exclude the periodic penalty payments that businesses need to pay as well as the calculated statutory interest (table 8b). The fining decisions are not always known. The courts may prohibit publication of these fining decisions. The standard statutory period when imposing fines is 91 days after drawing up a statement of objections. The fine imposed in 2025 was within the statutory period.

Table 8a: Number of undertakings and de facto executives fined

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Consumer protection	5	6	5	9	1
Energy	0	1	0	0	0
Competition	7	5	7	2	0
Telecommunications & postal services	3	0	0	2	0
Transport	0	0	0	0	0
Digital	-	-	-	-	0
Total	15	12	12	13	1

Table 8b: Newly imposed fines (in euros)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Consumer protection	€455,000	€2,361,000	€1,905,000	€2,236,000	€90,000
Energy	-	€150,000	-	-	-
Competition	€63,249,500	€29,161,500	€10,658,500	€59,000	-
Telecommunications & postal services	€2,014,000	-	-	€13,000,000	-
Transport	-	-	-	-	-
Digital	-	-	-	-	-
Total	€65,718,500	€31,672,500	€12,563,500	€15,295,000	€90,000

Concentrations

Businesses are required to notify ACM of their plans for mergers, acquisitions or joint ventures (these are all called concentrations), if certain turnover thresholds have been met. If ACM has been notified of a concentration, ACM will determine, in a so-called first phase, whether or not the concentration can go through or whether a further investigation is required.

If, after the first phase, ACM is concerned about the effects on competition, the businesses in question will have to apply for a license. As some cases run into the next calendar year, the number of notified concentrations is not equal to the number of decisions. Large undertakings are, normally speaking, only allowed to merge after they have notified ACM of their planned concentration, and after ACM has completed its assessment thereof. In critical situations, ACM can grant an exemption in order to prevent irreparable harm inflicted on the undertakings involved if they had to wait for ACM's assessment. In the tables, such cases have been included under 'Exemptions granted under Section 40 of Dutch Competition Act'.

The abolition of the temporarily reduced turnover thresholds for the health-care sector as of January 1, 2023, has resulted in a reduction in the total number of notifications in 2023. In 2024, the number of notifications went up because of an increase in acquisition activity in the Netherlands, and the number of licenses required is high. Acquisitions that require a license require a lot of investigation capacity.

In 2025, the number of concentration notifications remained virtually the same. The number of license applications was lower. In 2025, ACM granted the license applications filed in 2024.

Table 9a: Number of concentration notifications

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Concentration notifications	169	144	120	152	146
Withdrawn notifications	3	1	1	4	2

Table 9b: ACM decisions on concentration notifications

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Concentrations cleared	162	137	122	132	137
License required	7	3	1	4	1
Exemptions granted under Section 40 of Dutch Competition Act	0	1	3	0	1

Table 9c: Number of license applications

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
License applications	8	3	1	4	1
Withdrawn applications	0	1	1	0	0

Table 9d: ACM decisions on license applications

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
License granted	4	0	1	1	3
License not granted	2	0	4	0	0

Licenses and exemptions

ACM grants licenses and exemptions in the energy sector. For the supply of electricity and natural gas, suppliers need to have a license. All providers that supply heat to consumers and small-scale business users, too, have a license requirement. This obligation does not apply to small heat providers and providers that own or rent out the building to which heat is supplied.

Owners of grids or gas transmission networks must designate a system operator. Sometimes there may be circumstances in which it is unreasonable to require the designation of a system operator. In such cases, owners can apply for an exemption with ACM (or for an extension thereof). The lead times for applications for supply licenses for electricity, natural gas, and heat were lower than the long-term average.

Table 10a: Number of licenses for suppliers of electricity and natural gas

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Granted	10	0	2	0
Amended	6	6	1	11
Withdrawn	4	3	7	0
Changes to license instructions	0	1	0	0
Rejected	2	2	2	2

Table 10b: Number of licenses for suppliers of heat

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Granted	2	3	0	0
Amended	1	1	4	4
Withdrawn	2	2	1	1
Changes to license instructions	0	0	0	0
Rejected	2	0	0	0

Table 10c: Exemptions for closed distribution systems

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Granted	5	6	10	5
Amended	8	6	7	4
Withdrawn	2	2	2	8
Extended	14	15	13	5
Rejected	0	1	2	0

Spam complaints board

ACM is charged with receiving reports of spam-related complaints. Spam is the use of electronic communications for commercial, non-profit, or charity purposes without prior consent. The table shows the number of reports filed about spam. The number of reports remained constant in 2025 compared with 2024. ACM is in favor of ending public enforcement of spam regulations as part of the effort to spend public resources more effectively. Spam is obviously a nuisance to consumers and businesses, but it can, at least partially, be prevented by using a spam filter, and rarely results in economic harm, unlike phishing for example. Oversight by ACM hardly helps in curbing spam communications, particularly if senders are not located in the Netherlands.

Table 11: Number of reports filed with spam complaints board

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Total	7,051	4,642	5,870	5,475	5,355

ACM and the courts

Many of ACM's important decisions are brought before the court. In 2025, the courts ruled in 34 cases on ACM's actions. In 25 of the 34 rulings (approximately 74 percent), the courts largely or fully upheld ACM's decisions. That percentage is close to the long-term average of 75 percent, which is ACM's target rate. In 2025, in no less than 19 cases, parties withdrew their appeals before a hearing had taken place. Those rulings thus became irrevocable. Combined with the 74 percent of cases that were upheld (fully or largely), this was a good result for ACM.

ACM in proceedings between third parties

ACM can also play a role in proceedings between other parties in which it is not a party to the proceedings, for example, when recommendations of ACM are put forward in a case. For example, the District Court of Rotterdam on July 1 confirmed the care with which ACM drafted recommendations to the Ministry of Economic Affairs (EZ). In those recommendations, ACM concluded that a maximum of three FM frequencies per market participant are needed to ensure sufficient competition in the radio, listening, and ad markets. This will ensure that at least three competitor station owners remain active. The court ruled that ACM's decision came about in a proper manner. EZ can therefore follow ACM's recommendations, and is thus able to offer a sound economic justification for the cap on the number of FM frequencies after all.

In addition, it may happen sometimes that documents are requested that come from ACM but that are located at other organizations. Under the Dutch Open Government Act (Woo), a market participant requested the Erasmus University in Rotterdam to publish a document drawn up by ACM in the assessment of the acquisition of IJsselland hospital (the so-called statement of objections). The District Court of North Holland (in Dutch: *rechtbank Noord-Holland*) ruled

that the Establishment Act of ACM (Iw) took precedence over the Woo, and that only ACM (and no other administrative body) can decide whether it can publish the document in question (under Section 12w of Iw). The court thus dismissed the request for publication.

ACM was also involved in four cases in which the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) in 2025 handed down rulings in connection with two fining decisions of the Netherlands Competition Authority (NMa), which was one of ACM's legal predecessors, from 2010. At the time, the Netherlands Public Prosecution Service (OM) gave information from criminal proceedings to the NMa, which established violations of the Dutch Competition Act (Mw) on the basis thereof. In 2013, the court ruled that this exchange of information was at odds with the right to respect for one's private life (Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights). After a protracted national and subsequently European procedure, the highest European court ruled that, under the Dutch Judicial Data and Criminal Records Act (Wjsg), exchange of information between the OM and regulators is not at odds with the right to respect for one's private life. ACM could thus use the information as evidence.

Rulings offering guidance

The District Court of Rotterdam and the Dutch Trade and Industry Appeals Tribunal (CBb) in 2025 handed down rulings in cases to which ACM was a party. These rulings offered ACM guidance. Many of these rulings involved competition-law cases. In ten of 12 cases, the courts ruled in ACM's favor (largely or fully). The District Court of Rotterdam followed ACM, for example, in the cases against Leadiant (17 million euro fine for too high a price for a prescription drug), and against Apple (unreasonable conditions for dating-app providers). The CBb will rule on appeals in these cases.

In the MKB Multifonds/DVI case, the CBb ruled that the minister of EZ did not give preferential treatment to their government organizations, the DVI funds, by giving subsidies. ACM had rightfully established that EZ did violate the ban on preferential treatment by recruiting investors for DVI. In addition, ACM had to establish a violation of the ban on the blending of roles because an EZ civil servant had been involved in both the recruitment of investors (the economic activity) as well as the granting of subsidies to DVI (the civil-law activity). This may create the appearance of a conflict of interests, since both activities were performed by the same individual.

In December, the CBb dismissed the appeal filed by PostNL against the merger with Sandd. That ruling brought an end to legal proceedings that had lasted over six years about ACM's 2019 decision to block the merger. PostNL eventually did acquire Sandd because the then-minister of EZK decided to grant a license anyway. The CBb already overturned that licensing decision in 2022. The CBb in 2025 ruled that ACM's 2019 decision had been rightful. According to the CBb, ACM rightfully concluded that digital communication did not belong to the relevant market, and that Sandd would keep on exerting

competitive pressure. In addition, ACM rightfully decided that the universal service obligation (USO) for PostNL would not be jeopardized if the merger were not to go through. PostNL and Sandd thus merged without the required license. In such cases, unbundling would be the logical step, but which no longer seems realistic at this point. The acquisition of Sandd has now become an irreversible fact, and Sandd's distribution network has been integrated into PostNL's network. ACM is in discussion with all parties involved regarding the ruling's implications.

Regarding ACM's use of power, the CBb in 2025 handed down a major ruling about the decision on opportunities for prioritization of transport requests. The CBb ruled that ACM is authorized to determine how the currently scarce electricity should be allocated among a large number of important social organizations. However, ACM had to hand down a new decision in which it clarified the system it used as well as the criteria it used for that system.

The courts also handed down rulings offering guidance in terms of procedure. For example, the court ruled that ACM used its investigation powers with care, for example in the case against the egg traders. In the case against LG, ACM had sufficient serious indications of a violation for conducting an unannounced dawn raid, and ACM looked for evidence in a sufficiently targeted manner. In the Intermediairs GMB case, there was no reason to exclude evidence. Although it turned out that evidence was gathered from a company that was no subject of the investigation, this was not an unlawful act against the company that had been fined. As such, ACM's powers were not abused.

With regard to access to files, the CBb handed down a ruling offering guidance in the so-called cigarettes case. The CBb ruled that the data room procedure, which ACM introduced in the case on the cigarette manufacturers' cartel, offers access in a suitable manner to the many digital pieces of evidence that were taken in the dawn raids at the time. With this ruling, a protracted battle about the rights of the defense (access to documents) has finally been concluded. The court reaffirmed this opinion in the LG case, in which a data room was used, too. In other proceedings, too, appeals were filed about access to specific documents. In a ruling under the Dutch Open Government Act (in Dutch: *Woo*) by the Dutch Council of State (RvS), the case revolved around documents that were not in the file of the fining case involving Leadiant, because they were not connected to the established violation. Leadiant wanted to get those documents anyway, by filing a request under the Woo. This concerned, among other documents, a scientific article that ACM experts had written (in a personal capacity) following the Leadiant case. This article qualifies as personal policy opinions of employees, which, under Section 5.2, under 1 of the Woo, can be refused.

In another ruling, the District Court of Rotterdam decided on documents that concerned the position of an applicant themselves on the basis of Section 5.5 of the Woo. These included documents in which ACM exchanged information about a civil arbitration procedure in which a system operator was involved. ACM cannot provide those documents on the basis of a Woo request. These documents were also connected to ACM's regulatory duties vis-à-vis the system operator, and cannot be provided under Section 7 of the Establishment Act of ACM. ACM's duty of confidentiality in the Establishment Act of ACM supersedes the Woo. With these rulings, the statutory basis for publication and/or provision or confidentiality of information have been further clarified.

Requests for enforcement

In 2025, the number of requests for enforcement doubled compared with 2024. This increase likely has multiple causes. For example, it may be explained by the introduction of an improved form for filing requests for enforcement. In addition, the rise of AI can be another reason. Individuals use AI for writing their complaints. This has led to a substantial inflow of requests. Following this increase, individuals were contacted, and, in many cases, it turned out that it had not been their intention to file a request for enforcement. The website has been adjusted, and now offers information about requests for enforcement. As a result, the number of requests dropped considerably.

Within the Consumer Protection Cooperation Network (CPC), ACM fulfills the role of liaison office for the Netherlands. In that context, it received 39 requests for enforcement, and it sent out five requests.

Table 12: Number of requests for enforcement

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Consumer protection	10	22	31	64	144
Energy	9	8	10	13	31
Competition	9	8	4	7	22
Telecommunications and postal services	6	4	18	14	12
Transport	0	0	0	2	2
Digital	-	-	-	-	26
Total	34	42	63	100	237

Objections and appeals

If a party disagrees with an ACM decision, it can file an objection or an appeal. Each objection or appeal is counted separately. The statutory lead time for objections is 42 days. In case of postponement, that lead time can be extended to 84 days. In 2025, ACM completed 92 percent of the decisions on objection within the statutory lead time. That is a substantial increase compared with previous years.

Table 13: Number of decisions on objection in objection proceedings

	Founded	Partially founded	Unfounded	Withdrawn	Inadmissible	Direct appeal	Notices of objections
Consumer protection	0	6	2	0	18	0	26
Energy	2	1	11	2	6	1	23
Competition	0	1	8	2	0	0	11
Telecommunications and postal services	0	0	3	2	2	0	7
Transport	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Digital	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
Other	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Total	2	8	25	7	27	1	70

Table 14a: Rulings on appeals: decisions upheld

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Consumer protection	2	2	4	1	4
Energy	5	8	5	10	3
Competition	5	10	5	6	2
Telecommunications and postal services	0	2	0	2	1
Transport	1	1	0	1	0
Digital	-	-	-	-	0
Total	13	23	14	20	10

Table 14b: Rulings on appeals: decisions largely upheld

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Consumer protection	1	0	3	1	1
Energy	1	1	2	2	2
Competition	2	3	0	1	3
Telecommunications and postal services	1	0	0	0	0
Transport	0	0	0	1	0
Digital	-	-	-	-	0
Total	5	4	5	5	6

Table 14c: Rulings on appeals: decisions largely not upheld

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Consumer protection	0	1	0	0	0
Energy	0	3	4	0	0
Competition	1	1	1	0	0
Telecommunications and postal services	0	0	0	0	0
Transport	0	0	0	0	0
Digital	-	-	-	-	0
Total	1	5	5	0	0

Table 14d: Rulings on appeals: decisions not upheld

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Consumer protection	0	1	1	2	2
Energy	1	3	2	2	4
Competition	0	1	2	0	2
Telecommunications and postal services	1	0	2	2	0
Transport	0	0	0	0	0
Digital	-	-	-	-	0
Total	2	5	7	6	8

Table 14e: Number of notices of appeals

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Consumer protection	4	15	6	7
Energy	12	23	15	23
Competition	16	13	9	9
Telecommunications and postal services	2	4	5	2
Transport	2	0	4	0
Digital	-	-	-	0
Total	36	55	39	41

Table 15a: Rulings on appeals by a higher court: decisions upheld

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Consumer protection	0	0	0	0	2
Energy	0	0	0	0	0
Competition	1	3	3	5	6
Telecommunications and postal services	1	0	0	1	1
Transport	0	0	0	0	0
Digital	-	-	-	-	0
Total	2	3	3	6	9

Table 15b: Rulings on appeals by a higher court: decisions not upheld

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Consumer protection	0	2	0	0	0
Energy	0	0	0	0	0
Competition	1	0	0	0	0
Telecommunications and postal services	0	2	0	1	1
Transport	0	0	0	0	0
Digital	-	-	-	-	0
Total	1	4	0	1	1

Table 15c: Number of notices of appeals to a higher court

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Consumer protection	6	0	0	2
Energy	0	0	0	0
Competition	6	4	9	9
Telecommunications and postal services	4	0	5	3
Transport	0	0	0	0
Digital	-	-	-	0
Total	16	4	14	14

Disputes in regulated sectors

Consumers and businesses do not always agree with the methods of operators or suppliers in the energy, telecommunications, postal services and transport sectors. In such situations, disputes can be submitted to ACM. ACM seeks to resolve disputes to the satisfaction of all parties. If parties file an appeal against the dispute decision, the case will be brought before the Dutch Trade and Industry Appeals Tribunal (CBb).

In 2025, relatively many aviation complaints were handled (13 complaints). This is connected to the three-year period for setting new tariffs and conditions by Schiphol. The number of dispute requests for energy went up considerably in 2025. This increase is closely connected to the increased transport scarcity on the grid. Due to limited available capacity, system operators are not always able to meet buyers' connection and transport requests. The dispute requests are about, among other aspects, connection periods, refusals of transport capacity, waiting/list positions, offering alternative transport rights, and contracted transport capacity. As a result, the growing pressure on the networks increases both the complexity and the number of disputes between buyers and system operators.

Lead times of telecom-related disputes have been relatively long: 145 days compared with 54 days in 2024. The reason for this is that the dispute resolution in one case in particular took a long time. That case was one of the reasons to streamline the internal procedure for dispute settlement.

Table 16: Number of resolved disputes in regulated sectors

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Energy	13	11	11	13	25
Telecommunications and postal services	10	6	6	12	2
Transport	2	10	5	7	17
Total	25	27	22	32	44

Table 17a: Decisions in disputes in regulated sectors: decisions upheld

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Energy	3	1	0	5	1
Telecommunications and postal services	1	1	0	1	0
Transport	0	0	0	0	0
Total	4	2	0	6	1

Table 17b: Decisions in disputes in regulated sectors: decisions not upheld

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Energy	1	1	1	0	0
Telecommunications and postal services	0	0	0	0	0
Transport	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1	1	1	0	0

Table 17c: Decisions in disputes in regulated sectors: disputes inadmissible

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Energy	0	0	1	0	1
Telecommunications and postal services	0	0	0	0	0
Transport	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	1	0	1

Evaluations and impact assessments

ACM aims to have its interventions have an impact on society that is as large as possible in an as efficient manner as possible. In order to stay focused and to be able to change course where needed, ACM regularly carries out evaluations and impact assessments, for example impact assessments in order to gain insight into the effectiveness of specific regulatory interventions, and to be mindful of an effective utilization of its limited resources. However, evaluations of cases, investigations, or team performances are also conducted. Maintaining our focus on effectiveness and efficiency contributes to the quality of our oversight. This chapter describes several examples of impact assessments and evaluations performed in 2025.

Consumers in vulnerable positions

With its focus area Consumers in Vulnerable Positions (in Dutch: *Consumenten in Kwetsbare Posities*), ACM is committed to better protecting and reaching consumers that are vulnerable, such as individuals with low digital skills, adults with low literacy skills, seniors, and youth. The goal of this focus area is getting a better overview of the problems that these groups face, ask counselors and civil-society organizations about their thoughts about this, and, where necessary, take action against businesses that take advantage of vulnerable consumers using unfair commercial practices. In 2025, ACM further expanded its network of counselors and civil-society organizations, and ACM actively involved that network, for example, in workshops, educational campaigns, and newsletters. This led to an increase in the number of reports coming in about consumer problems: in 2025, ACM registered 61 reports from counselors. These reports contribute to ACM's oversight and enforcement efforts, including a commitment decision about providers of medical alert systems for seniors, and an intervention at a provider of recliner chairs for seniors. The evaluation showed that the 'help the helper' approach contributed to reaching vulnerable consumers better, making their problems visible, and enabling ACM to take targeted action.

Digital accessibility

Since June 28, 2025, ACM has enforced compliance with new rules regarding the digital accessibility of e-commerce services and electronic communications services. When ACM started its enforcement, it sent a 'call to action' letter to the CEOs of the largest e-commerce service providers. In this letter, ACM reminded them of the new rules, available guidance documents, and the opportunity to report non-compliance to ACM. In the evaluation, ACM examined to what extent businesses were willing to report non-compliance at the time when the new rules were introduced, and how this information could contribute to effective oversight without unnecessary administrative costs. The evaluation showed that the use of behavioral insights as well as the letters to the CEOs has led to an increased sense of urgency as well as to businesses taking action, but that it has not led to a structural willingness to work on digital accessibility. In addition, it was not always clear whether the letter reached the right individuals within the companies, and a significant share of the businesses that had received the letter did not respond. These results called for additional interventions.

European Platform-to-Business regulation (P2B)

The European Platform-to-business Regulation (P2B Regulation) contains rules for online search engines and digital platforms to ensure that they deal with businesses that offer their products or services to consumers on these platforms in a fair and predictable manner. Since November 2024, ACM has been authorized to enforce compliance with the P2B Regulation. In the run-up to its enforcement duties, and in order to understand the state of play, ACM in 2023 and in 2025 conducted studies into the experiences of Dutch business users of online platforms with the Regulation. The focus of those studies was on transparency and comprehensibility of the general terms and conditions, and on the difficulty to file complaints. There are few clear differences in experiences between 2023 and 2025. For example, no significant differences exist between 2023 and 2025 in the readability and comprehensibility of the general terms and conditions, as well as in the opportunities to file complaints. There were many opportunities to improve the experiences of business users on online platforms. ACM keeps a close watch, and will conduct further studies into possible improvements, and it may take action if online platforms do not comply with the P2B Regulation.

Standard-setting letters regarding price presentations

ACM checked at 24 companies in various sectors whether they complied with the rules regarding price presentations and discounts. Businesses that failed to comply with the rules in the first check received a standard-setting letter. In this letter, ACM explained what the rules were, and what ACM expected from the businesses. The objective of the letter was to inform businesses, and to stimulate them to bring their price presentations in line with the rules. ACM evaluated the letter's effect by comparing the pre-letter level of compliance with the post-letter level of compliance, and to compare that with a control group of 19 similar businesses that did not receive a letter. The evaluation

revealed that, among the businesses that did receive a letter, the level of compliance clearly went up more significantly than among the businesses that did not receive a letter. This is an indication that the standard-setting letter contributed to ACM's objective of stimulating businesses to comply with the rules regarding price presentations, although several businesses still did not comply with the rules following the intervention, which meant further steps were needed.

Acquisition of Youfone by KPN

In March 2024, ACM cleared the acquisition of telecom provider Youfone by rival telecom company KPN. In October 2025, ACM examined whether the expectations as described in the merger assessment did come to pass. Also, ACM explored what changes took place on the mobile telecom market as a result of the acquisition. For the analysis, ACM requested information and data from nine mobile telecom operators. The acquisition seemed to have had a limited impact on the market: the already existing trends of decreasing prices and increasing sizes of data bundles continued. For existing providers without their own networks, the acquisition of Youfone did not seem to have any major impact.

Exercising influence over the price of dog food

In 2025, ACM issued a warning to various suppliers that sell dog food. These suppliers influenced the selling prices of their products that were sold by retailers such as pet stores. With such practices, suppliers kept the consumer prices of their products artificially high. Later in the year, ACM checked the effect of this warning. It turned out that the sector had become more aware of the rules, and that various suppliers had improved their practices.

Warning letters sent to online stores

In 2025, ACM sent approximately 100 letters to online stores and dropshippers about which ACM had received many reports. The goal of these letters was to inform businesses about the consumer rules, and to stimulate them to comply with them. It was explained in the letter what aspects consumers filed reports about with ACM, such as late deliveries, late refunds (or no refunds at all), or customer services that are difficult to reach. The evaluation revealed that some of the businesses were no longer active after receiving the letter. Of the businesses that have remained active, ACM did see that the number of reports have, on average, dropped steeply after receiving the letter. In addition, ACM saw that many online stores had implemented improvements to the website. These findings suggested that the letters contributed to the goal of informing businesses, and to stimulating them to bring their online stores in line with the rules.

Collaboration with behavioral experts

Since 2019, ACM has had a standing collaboration with Utrecht University on the topic of 'Psychology of Oversight' (in Dutch: *Psychologie van Toezicht*). The goal of this collaboration is to promote, from the regulators' side, compliance behavior and broader ethical conduct among regulated organizations by applying insights from behavioral science. This collaboration also includes PhD projects. For example, in 2025, an ACM expert obtained their doctorate with a dissertation on effective fining communication. The conclusions on whether, when, and how fines can be effective in preventing cartels were well received. In addition, the regular meeting for this collaboration was held at the Dutch Authority for the Financial Markets (AFM). These meetings are attended by board members, executives, and regulatory experts from ACM, AFM, and the Employee Insurance Agency (UWV), as well as different researchers from Utrecht University, to share the latest insights regarding effective oversight.

The topics that were discussed in the meeting were the application of cooperative oversight, the study of ACM's behavioral team into the detection of consumer problems, and studies of other regulators into the influence of confidence in the authority, and how to set up experiments with different regulatory styles.

Evaluations of major competition cases

After several positive court rulings in major competition cases, ACM evaluated these cases, focusing on the internal proceedings (from detection to appeal). The goal of the evaluation was to gain insight into the efficiency, the required capacity, and how choices in the proceedings affected these. In addition, the possible benefits of proceedings were also taken into consideration. The evaluation and the thereto-related recommendations were primarily based on an analysis of the lead times and registered hours per research phase in each case, an analysis of the relevant documents drawn up in each case, and discussions with colleagues involved and management teams. The recommendations concerned the improvement of management of longer-term projects where possible, and confirmation or re-evaluation of roles and responsibilities.

Performance review of ACM's Office of the Chief Economist

As part of its responsibility to protect the quality of the economic substantiations of ACM's oversight efforts, the Office of the Chief Economist (EB) took the initiative to have an external performance review carried out. A review commission was created, consisting of Prof. Jan Krämer (University of Passau), Prof. Jeroen Hinloopen (The Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis CPB and University of Amsterdam), and Griet Jans (Chief Economist of the Belgian Competition Authority). The evaluation focused on the EB's contribution to the economic substantiations of ACM's decisions

and recommendations, including the way in which EB interpreted its objectives, and contributed to ACM's objectives. In the third quarter of 2025, the commission collected the required data through document research and interviews. The report is expected to be published in the first quarter of 2026.

Enforcement process

In a study, ACM's behavioral team evaluated an enforcement process where the political and societal pressure was high. In that context, colleagues and also external stakeholders were interviewed. Key lessons were that clear arrangements needed to be made regarding the goals of the process, the delegation of responsibilities, and management of the process. The study also highlighted the importance of always empathizing with consumers as a regulator.

Schiphol's charges

Every three years, a consultation round takes place where Amsterdam airport Schiphol sets charges that the airlines must pay in order to be able to fly to Schiphol, the so-called aviation charges. ACM oversees this process. In 2025, the behavioral team launched an evaluation of this process because of widespread dissatisfaction among the airlines. Through interviews with Schiphol, trade associations, and airlines, ACM's behavioral team looked at where ACM could and/or should play a different role in order to have the process take place smoothly, and to reduce dissatisfaction (and, by extension, reduce the increase in complaints). The investigation is still ongoing.

Barriers for consumers in the energy transition

It is important for ACM to understand how well different target audiences are able to keep up with the developments in the market. This is especially true for rapid changes, like in the energy transition. That is why ACM looked into what possible barriers consumers experience in connection with the energy transition and ACM's thereto-related plans. In that context, the researchers held discussions with the plans' coordinators, and complemented these insights with desk research. In that way, ACM got a better and more complete picture of consumers' real-life experiences as well as the impact on consumers. ACM uses these insights to have its plans fit better with the outside world, and to have its experts and teams working on these topics collaborate better. In that way, ACM takes away the barriers for consumers, or prevents them, where possible.

Procedure for handling objection cases

In the context of being a responsive government, preventing proceedings, and being able to litigate succinctly, ACM's Legal Affairs Department (DJZ) developed a procedure that will ensure a suitable approach to objection cases. This procedure is characterized by differentiation and customization in the handling of objections, by applying informal and formal steps. In most cases, ACM will, for example, call the individual that filed the objection to hear why the objection had been filed, what the problem is, and whether there is a possible solution to the problem. In that phone call, ACM can also provide additional information about the decision and the objection procedure. During the procedure, ACM stays in touch with the individual that filed the objection. The first results of this approach are promising.

The role of platforms in election campaigns in the Netherlands

During the election campaign for the 2025 Dutch general election, ACM fulfilled its role of digital services coordinator in the Netherlands. During the election campaign, ACM worked closely together with the European Commission (which oversees the very large online platforms) as well as with other European regulators. This marked the first time that ACM fulfilled this role during election campaigns. That is why an evaluation of the activities was conducted. It revealed that, in that period, ACM received only several election-related reports filed by third parties. ACM is committed to informing third parties better, and to simulating them to file election-related reports. Another conclusion was that, in its role as digital services coordinator, ACM fulfilled primarily coordinating duties with regard to election campaigns. During the election campaign for the 2026 municipal elections, ACM took these and other recommendations into account, and aimed to fulfill its coordinating role in a proactive and agile manner. In 2026, ACM will publish a retrospective on the basis of its experiences in both election campaigns.

Evaluation of public awareness campaign on warranty rights

ACM ran a nationwide public awareness campaign to inform consumers about their warranty rights. Many consumers do not know that, after two years, they still have a right to warranty, in part because, when purchasing a product, they are often told that they can receive or buy warranty from the seller or manufacturer (which is called seller's warranty or manufacturer's warranty), which are often two years or shorter. They often do not know that they are

also entitled to the statutory warranty, which is often longer than two years for big-ticket items. The most eye-catching element of the campaign was the hot pink and purple pop-up Warranty Store inside the Utrecht Centraal train station. Visitors were able to discover for how long they were entitled to statutory warranty for commonly used appliances such as washing machines and vacuum cleaners. It turns out that exercising your right is often difficult in real life, for example, because sellers tell you that the warranty automatically ends after two years, or they wrongfully refer you to the manufacturer. That is why ACM also gave the visitors to the Warranty Store practical tips for holding that warranty conversation with sellers. They were able to rehearse this 'difficult' conversation in-store using a hologram. The pop-up store drew a lot of media attention, complemented with ads on social media, online marketplace Marktplaats, and digital billboards. The pop-up store's effect was measured using, among other metrics, media reach and media performance, visits to the campaign's page on ACM ConsuWijzer, and an increase in the number of questions and reports about warranty filed with ACM. The media campaign performed better than anticipated, and, during the campaign, a clear increase in the number of warranty-related reports could be observed.

Organization

Strengthening our organization

Strengthening corporate services and information services

Since 2023, ACM has, together with EZ, taken steps to strengthen its corporate services (BV) and information services (IV). The starting point for these measures were assignments given to two external consulting firms, asking them to assess the current state of BV and IV. They established that BV and IV had not fully grown along with the organization, nor with ACM's changing regulatory focus. ACM's ambitions to turn into a so-called Autonomous Administrative Authority (in Dutch: *zelfstandig bestuursorgaan*, or *ZBO*) under Dutch law with its own legal personality make it all the more urgent to strengthen the organization further. After the first major results were delivered in 2024, ACM in 2025 brought all improvement plans under a single roof: ACM's improvement project IPA (in Dutch: *Integraal Plan van Aanpak*). In that plan, a key role is given to an updated oversight vision, an organizational vision, and a leadership's vision. These three cohesive visions, which ACM delivered in 2025, offer further guidance for the improvement processes for BV and IV.

In addition to cohesion, one of the IPA's other key objectives is strengthening the ownership of these change processes. In 2025, ACM moved away from a program-based approach in which many temporary employees were hired to a project-based approach in which more ACM employees were deployed in these IPA teams. A temporary transformation desk coordinated, monitored, and supported this process. This desk consisted of a team of ACM employees led by an external project leader.

The IPA project consisted of 15 projects (building blocks), which were grouped into five 'layers'.

1. Strategy: Oversight vision, Management model (including organizational vision), Leadership and adaptability.
2. The Planning and Control cycle.
3. Management tools: Dashboard, Process for Feasibility and Enforceability Assessments (UHTs), and Control functions
4. Administrative system: Time-keeping system, Finances, Project and portfolio management
5. Information services: IV governance, core systems, data, and the technological foundation

In 2025, the projects produced the following products: a oversight vision, an organizational vision, a leadership's vision, a Planning & Control cycle, a process for new duties and UHTs, a cost price model, a Three lines model for control, and an IV operating model. Some of these products, for example the Planning & Control cycle, were already introduced in 2025. In addition, a new approach was launched in late 2025, which resulted in the mainline departments having more control over the implementation of the delivered products. In 2025, ACM also improved the time-keeping policy, thus keeping better track of the hours, funds, and other resources. The new policy showed an improvement in the ACM employees' time-keeping behavior. ACM continues to strive towards 100% time-keeping each month.

ACM thus ended the 'development year 2025' for IPA on a positive note. 2026 will become the 'implementation year' for a strong and agile organization.

Results of exploratory studies into transition from ‘small’ to ‘large’ autonomous administrative authority

In 2025, two studies were completed on ACM's organizational form: an exploratory study conducted by PriceWaterhouseCoopers, and a report on behalf of executive management advisors Borstlap & De Leeuw. According to the recommendations put forward in those studies, future-ready oversight can be safeguarded best if ACM becomes an autonomous administrative authority under Dutch law (in Dutch: *zelfstandig bestuursorgaan*, or *ZBO*) with its own legal personality. According to the researchers, a future-ready governance and management call for a statutorily enshrined and democratically justified positioning for both the board and the rest of the organization with corporate services that are in order. To ensure that the corporate services are in order, ACM, together with the Ministry of Economic Affairs (EZ), is working on an improvement plan.

At the moment, ACM does not have its own legal personality. Only the board, which consists of three members, is an autonomous administrative authority under Dutch law. ACM's staff is employed with the Ministry of Economic Affairs, and is made available, along with the necessary resources for its day-to-day operations, to ACM. The studies were prompted by ACM's concerns about the hybrid responsibilities and the Board's lack of management mechanisms for the internal organization, and ACM's independent position in a dynamic landscape. The goal is to make clearer who is responsible for what, also considering the regulator's independent position. ACM sees other large regulators as examples: the Dutch Authority for the Financial Markets (AFM), the Dutch Healthcare Authority (NZa), and the Dutch Data Protection Authority (AP).

In a letter to the Dutch House of Representatives (July 2025), the Minister of EZ wrote that a review of ACM's organizational form would be a profound change,

which required careful preparations and a political assessment. The subsequent decision-making regarding the organization model leaves the Minister to their successor.

Board of ACM: new member and reappointments

Martijn Ridderbos began as new Member of the Board on January 1, 2025. He was appointed for five years. His portfolio consists of: consumers, corporate services, information and digital services, the Data and Algorithms Taskforce (TDA). ACM's advisory board (RvA) was also involved in his appointment.

Manon Leijten was reappointed as Member of the Board for five more years, starting March 1, 2025. Her portfolio consists of: digital affairs, the office of the chief economist, energy, and telecom, transport and postal services. The reappointment came after a positive advice from the Works Council (OR) and the RvA.

The reappointment of Martijn Snoep as Chair of the Board of ACM went into effect on September 1, 2025 for a period of five years. His portfolio continues to consist of: competition, strategy & communication, health care, and legal affairs. The reappointment came after a positive advice from the RvA and with the approval of the Dutch Cabinet. Martijn Snoep has been Chair of the Board of ACM since September 1, 2018.

Multi-year strategy and funding

ACM strengthened the planning and control cycle by using the Objectives, Goals, Strategies, and Measures method (OGSM). This method makes the long-term goals and results explicit, while translating them into concrete actions for the next year. The 2025 ACM Annual Plan and the departmental work plans follow the OGSM method. Coordination took place in the drafting of the departmental work plans, for example in the selection of enforcement investigations

and market investigations. ACM monitors their progress using interim reports and management discussions, and gives directions where necessary. For each of the actions, the 2025 Annual Report gives an update of their implementation. The Ministry of EZ granted ACM a multi-year budget for the period between 2025-2030. ACM's basic principle for these multi-year budgets: structural funding for structural duties.

Transparency and information management / IT

Information services (IV)

In 2025, ACM decided to further strengthen its IT and information services. The creation of a permanent Information and Digital Services Department (DI) with its own director (appointment in early 2026) ensures reliable and secure digital environments. In addition, DI is responsible for all IV-related duties, including IT management, application development, information management, architecture, information security, and defining the role of Chief Information Officer (CIO).

The DI Department adds focus and substantive attention to the management of information and digital services, and strengthens and enhances the cohesion. This was the reason for the earlier separation of the information duties from the Corporate Services Department (DBV) in November 2024.

Information security

The importance of high-quality information security increased substantially in 2025. Digital security has come under pressure as a result of an increased threat from cybercrime, geopolitical tensions, and criminal use of generative AI. In 2025, ACM stepped up its monitoring of threats.

Attention for sovereignty, security, and information privacy has increased at ACM, just like at other central-government organizations. For cloud services, Dutch businesses and governments, including ACM, are dependent on several large non-European providers. In 2025, ACM really took the time to rethink its cloud policy, and to draw up an exit strategy as part of its decision-making regarding a modern document-management system.

Baseline Information Security for Government (BIO2)

The Baseline Information Security for Government (BIO2) is the fundamental standards framework for information security across all levels of government. This framework contains the minimum standards and measures on how to deal with information security as an organization. In 2025, ACM stepped up the creation of this BIO policy by coordinating the drafting of policy documents on relevant topics. ACM also decided on the division of responsibilities and on the coordination process. In 2026, the finalized policy will be implemented in the regular work processes.

Information security awareness campaign

At ACM, constant attention is given to information security. ACM staff receives training in order to promote and improve awareness regarding information security and privacy. Each year, an information security awareness campaign is held. ACM staff receives updates on the latest developments regarding digital security and cybersecurity.

Bringing ACM's document management system up to date

ACM wishes to modernize the digital workplace for its employees, and, in 2025, chose for a cloud-based document management system (Microsoft 365). With this DMS, information can be managed, organized, and shared better.

This digital workplace meets the requirements for working with data and information more effectively, efficiently, and securely.

This decision was taken after a thorough process based on possible solutions, scenarios, and risk assessments. At the moment, a fully Dutch or European suite with all applications (from email to case management system) is not yet available. ACM closely follows the developments within the Dutch central government in search of a more sovereign solution, with the goal of becoming less dependent on non-European companies.

The reason for the modernization of the DMS was that support for it would expire. In addition, the functionalities no longer meet ACM's requirements and needs. For the functionality requirements and coordination, a user council and the Works Council (OR), among other bodies, have been involved in the project.

Introduction of Teams

Ahead of the introduction of a new DMS, Teams was introduced in 2025 for video conferencing and messaging. All employees received training. Functionalities such as file-sharing and collaborations in a single digital environment will be introduced in 2026.

Exit strategy

In 2025, the preparations for and decision-making regarding the choice of a more up-to-date digital workplace took more time than anticipated. Geopolitical and societal developments called for a much-needed rethink about ACM's cloud policy. For example, ACM developed an exit strategy, and arrangements were made regarding the creation of an exit environment in one of the central-government's data centers. This ensures that ACM can act quickly if certain

risks occur. It also allows ACM to switch to a fully Dutch or European sovereign alternative. In addition, much uncertainty surrounded ACM's available budget for 2025. That hampered the recruitment of mainline staff.

Work planning and portfolio management

The organization's IV needs (including applications) continue to be greater than the available capacity. In 2025, portfolio management was further strengthened in order to gain more insight into needs, capacity, and cohesion. This was done by hiring permanent staff, and by gathering, in a structured manner, all needs that require the use of IV resources. That called for a complete short-term and long-term overview. A new method resulted in an assessment of these needs, also in relation to the IT architecture, information security, and privacy. In combination with the required costs and investments, this method contributes to the cohesive prioritization and planning in the DI department.

Privacy

ACM processes personal data for its regulatory duties, corporate services, and educational efforts. On September 1, 2025, a new Data Protection Officer (DPO) started at ACM. The DPO is charged with enforcing the GDPR internally. Each department has a privacy officer, to maintain a certain level of privacy awareness. In 2025, ACM reported 2 data leaks to the Dutch Data Protection Authority (AP).

Migration to ODC-Noord data center

In November 2025, ACM completed the migration project ODC-Noord. As a result, business applications have been moved from its own servers to ODC-Noord, the data center of the central government, located in Groningen. This migration took place without any major disruptions. With this migration,

ACM contributed to its IV strategy, and to central-government standards. The project has offered efficiency and flexibility, and will save costs in the long term. ACM's IT department will have more capacity to focus on its core processes.

The lead time of the migration was longer than anticipated. This was primarily caused by limited available capacity, both internally and externally.

Digital accessibility of websites

The websites acm.nl and acmconsuwijzer.nl contain a lot of information and educational material. ACM's editors are working constantly to improve these websites so that visitors are able to find and use the information properly. Like in previous years, it is possible to request accessible versions of all previously published documents.

In 2025 too, both websites met all accessibility requirements. This followed from the European Accessibility Act (EAA). ACM's webteam made preparations to ensure that the websites meet the new standard (WCAG 2.2) in 2026.

Information management

In 2025, ACM drew up plans of action for each department with the goal of improving its information management. Approximately 650 employees received training. In addition to an e-learning module, clear work instructions were also made available.

Like in previous years, ACM continued to clean up its network hard drives. Documents that must be saved will be moved to the DMS. In June 2025, an information management expert was added to the CIO Office. This represents

a follow-up to the central government's program 'Open in Order' (in Dutch: *Open op Orde*). Over the past few years, this program has helped improve information management at ACM such as findability and archiving of documents.

Dashboard

In 2025, the first version of the information management dashboard was presented. With this dashboard, ACM executives and managers are able to follow the degree to which departments comply with the established guidelines, including the informational management policy. That also makes it possible to step in where necessary.

Open Government Act (Woo)

In 2025, ACM handed down 38 decisions on requests for public access. This number is the same as in previous years. 26 publication decisions were handed down. 12 requests for public access were withdrawn during the handling thereof. The number of processed objections (14) is higher than that in 2024. In 2025, 3 rulings on appeal were taken.

The processing of requests for public access lasted less long than in the previous years. ACM has invested much in making the processing of requests for public access more professional, by implementing changes to the organization, work processes, consultation structures, and formats. As a result, requests find their way to the right department more easily, steps in the processing phase are taken faster, and decisions are completed sooner.

Table 18a: Number of Woo requests handled

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Handled Woo requests	28	33	35	38	38
Handled Woo requests on objection	4	6	10	7	14
Handled Woo requests on appeal	0	1	0	3	3
Total	32	40	45	48	55

Table 18b: Median lead times of Woo requests (in days)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Median lead time	24	28	42	36	29
Statutory term limit	28	28	28	28	28
Difference	-4	0	14	8	1

Organizing the archives

ACM archives all files in accordance with the requirements laid down in the Dutch Public Records Act (in Dutch: *Archiefwet*). One large project in that context is the archiving of files regarding the registration of phone numbers. This concerns 140,000 files from the period between 1997 and 2018, the archiving of which has already been completed through the year 2008. Some of these files are digitalized by ACM in order to ensure durable access to the information. In 2025, 12,676 files were destroyed. According to the law, destruction is mandatory 15 years after the phone number has been withdrawn. ACM expects to complete the project in late 2026.

Developments with regard to duties and instruments

In 2025, ACM performed 20 Feasibility and Enforceability Assessments (UHTs). Most of these UHTs in 2025 concerned the implementation of the Dutch Energy Act and digital laws. Over the past few years, ACM has been given new responsibilities, particularly with regard to electricity and natural gas, following the introduction of the Dutch Energy Act. In 2025, UHTs were about oversight over new market roles such as energy communities, battery storage and aggregators, or the sharing of energy among buyers. In addition to this oversight over new market roles, other UHTs were about bills that proposed expanding oversight due to security of supply and green principles.

In addition, emphasis was placed on UHTs with regard to digital laws. Since the DSA has designated ACM as digital services coordinator, ACM has become the preferred authority for more coordination duties when it comes to oversight over online platforms. In 2025, bills were put forward in which ACM is granted a coordinating role with regard to political ads and short-term rentals (for example Airbnb) via online platforms, which must comply with 'conformity by design' requirements, among other requirements. That also calls for an expansion of the collaboration with other regulators and the European Commission. The powers in the bills regarding the digital domain have been distributed among different authorities that operate on the basis of different societal objectives, such as with the bill regarding electronic evidence (e-evidence), which involves a collaboration with the Netherlands Public Prosecution Service (OM).

Organizational structure

In 2025, ACM strengthened the organizational structure by formalizing several changes. These included the expedited integration of the Health Care Department (DZ) and the Competition Department (DM), the switch to FMHaaglanden (which is the facility services provider for organizations that are part of the Dutch central government), and the separation of information services (IV and IT) from the Corporate Services Department (DBV). These changes have been incorporated into Organization Decree of ACM. A complete review of the Organization Decree is expected to take place in 2026.

Integration of the Health Care Department (DZ) and the Competition Department (DM)

Over the next few years, ACM will continue to conduct intensified competition oversight over the health care sector, but it does need to make tougher choices with regard to what activities it will do. The Minister of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS) in 2025 announced that the funding for intensified competition oversight over the health care sector will be cut back.

After consultations with the ministry over the summer, a more limited contribution was made available, at least through 2030. ACM will continue to educate market participants in the health care sector about collaborations. In addition, ACM will continue to give advice to VWS and other health care regulators that are involved in competition in the health care sector. In 2030, VWS will determine whether the contribution to ACM will be continued.

In the summer, the ministry of Economic Affairs (EZ) gave clarity regarding ACM's budgets in 2025 through 2027. The agreement with VWS as well as EZ's decision regarding the budget prevented a reorganization within DZ with

mandatory internal transfer candidates (in Dutch: *Van-werk-naar-werk kandidaten*). This offered certainty to DZ colleagues after months of uncertainty.

However, in light of these developments, the Board of ACM did decide to accelerate the integration of DZ and DM. That meant that a planned decision from November 2024 regarding the integration of these two departments was worked out further. At the time, the reason for the integration was that, despite previous expectations, expansion of the duties was no longer in the cards. Also, DZ and DM enforce the Dutch Competition Act (Mw), and their activities are similar, while DZ is relatively small.

The Works Council (OR) and the unions were closely involved in the integration process. It is expected to be completed in the spring of 2026.

Switch to FMHaaglanden

Since June 1, 2025, ACM switched to FMHaaglanden (which is the facility services provider for organizations that are part of the Dutch central government). This switch has been the result of arrangements made in 2023 with the ministries of EZ and BZK. The Zurichtoren building (in which ACM is located) is owned by the Central Government Real Estate Agency (RVB), and is thus automatically part of the government-building management system. ACM shares this building with other central-government organizations. It is standing policy that all central-government organizations switch to service providers for government organizations.

Prior to the switch, a regular reorganization process took place at ACM. As part of that process, employees of ACM's own facility services were placed with FMHaaglanden or elsewhere within ACM for the remaining duties.

Taskforce on Data and Algorithms (TDA)

In November 2025, the Board of ACM handed down a decision in principle to turn the TDA into a full-fledged department. More and more work is done using data and AI. Data-based work is and continues to be important for ACM. TDA works together with all departments to collect, analyze and visualize data efficiently so that we recognize patterns sooner and conduct oversight in a more targeted manner. Moreover, data-based work is needed to continue to conduct oversight over markets in which data and AI play an ever greater role. Since 2023, TDA has been an independent unit, organized as a temporary program. The decision in principle will be worked out further in 2026, a process where the Works Council (OR) is also involved in.

Appreciation and publications

Satisfaction with customer interactions

Businesses and consumers that visit our websites acm.nl and ACMConsuWijzer.nl are able to submit substantive feedback immediately. With this feedback, ACM is continuously able to improve both sites. The number of reports that ACM ConsuWijzer receives is listed in table 3a. At the same time, satisfaction with customer interactions over email and the phone has also risen (table 19a and 19b). Consumers and businesses appreciate the quick response time, and find the provided information to be clear and useful.

ACM organized pilot projects in which our information experts tested different variants for a more targeted answering process, clearer language, and finding the right tone of voice. ACM will include the insights gleaned from those pilot projects in the standard procedures. In 2025, too, ACM used pilot projects for improving its services.

Table 19a: Satisfaction scores regarding ACM ConsuWijzer’s customer interactions

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Phone	8.2*	7.2	8.4	8.4	8.4
Email	6.7	5.9	6.4	6.6	6.7
WhatsApp en Social Media**	9.0	8.7	-	-	-

*On a scale from 1 to 10.
**WhatsApp is no longer used since 2023. Customer satisfaction was not measured on social media.

Table 19b: Satisfaction scores regarding ACM’s customer interactions

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Phone	8.4*	7.9	7.9	8.1	8.6
Email	6.9	6.1	5.7	6.5	6.6

*On a scale from 1 to 10.

Complaints against ACM or ACM employees

If an individual feels that they are not treated properly by ACM or an ACM employee, they have the opportunity to file a complaint. ACM handles complaints in accordance with its Complaints procedure. This procedure is based on the Dutch General Administrative Law Act (Awb). ACM's complaints officers handle the complaints, and gives the Board advice about them. If necessary, the board has the final say. Most complaints are solved by the provision of information and by explaining our methods. Complainants are often satisfied with ACM's handling of their complaints.

The number of complaints about ACM dropped significantly in 2025 (table 20). One of the reasons is that fewer complaints were filed about ACM's actions in the energy market. In other domains, too, fewer complaints were filed though, for example about customer interactions with ACM ConsuWijzer. ACM handed down two formal decisions on complaints.

Table 20: Complaints against ACM or ACM employees

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
New complaints	193	225	146	143	67
Completed complaints from previous year	2	42	7	1	5
Complaints to be completed next year	42	7	1	4	3
Total number of complaints	153	260	152	140	69

Publications

In 2025, ACM published 136 press releases and blogs on ACM.nl. These are mostly publications related to oversight activities within the three strategic objectives (the digital economy, the energy transition, and the sustainability transition). Where possible, ACM publishes externally about its oversight activities. See annex 3 for a complete overview of ACM's press releases and blogs. In addition to press releases and blogs, ACM often also shares publications with the market about its regular regulatory duties, through reports, guidelines, monitors, court rulings, decisions under the Dutch Open Government Act (Woo), investigations, correspondence with stakeholders, opinions, consultations, and concentration notifications.

ACM staff

Growth of the organization

In 2025, ACM dropped to 799 employees. As the necessary funding remained uncertain in 2025, the Board of ACM decided to impose a hiring freeze. This was lifted only after the official funding commitment came in July 2025. The number of employees under the age of 35 remained, by far, the largest group, at 37 percent (table 22). The upward trend in the percentage of women at ACM continued (table 21a and table 23a). The outflow in 2025 was around 10 percent. That is in line with previous years (table 23b). In 2025, 46 employees were hired temporarily. In addition, six former temporary employees were officially employed by ACM.

A gender pay gap study, conducted by Erasmus Q Intelligence, revealed once again that ACM does not suffer from a gender pay gap. In that context, ACM received an Excellent certificate.

Table 21a: Employee utilization rate

	31 Dec 21	31 Dec 22	31 Dec 23	31 Dec 24	31 Dec 25
Total	610	650	752	824	799
Fte	576.7	619.9	712.2	784.4	760.6
Men	49.2%	48.8%	48.3%	47.6%	46.1%
Women	50.8%	51.2%	51.7%	52.4%	53.9%

Table 21b: Temporary employees and secondments

	Temporary 31 Dec 25	Secondments 31 Dec 25
Total	46	8
Fte	41.9	7.1

Table 22: Age structure of staff

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
24 and younger	17	16	21	25	14
25 to 34	173	209	255	289	281
35 to 44	158	150	178	193	188
45 to 54	163	165	164	177	169
55 to 59	62	74	76	64	63
60 and older	37	36	58	72	80

Table 23a: Inflow of staff

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Men	36	52	77	60	22
Women	54	69	102	86	40
Total	90	121	179	146	62

Table 23b: Outflow of staff

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Men	42	29	34	33	46
Women	34	48	43	48	38
Total	76	77	77	81	84

Table 24: Absenteeism rate (in %)

2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
3.9%	4.4%	4.5%	5.2%	5.6%

Absenteeism

Although the absenteeism frequency rate dropped from 1.2 absence spells per employee per year to 1.1, we observed an increase in the average absenteeism percentage. This is primarily caused by an increase in long-term absenteeism (longer than a year), while the short-term absenteeism (less than 43 days) actually dropped. The collaboration between the occupational health experts, HR, and ACM's management teams was intensified in 2025, aimed at identifying trends and discussing effective strategies. This collaboration will be continued in 2026.

Employee satisfaction survey

In 2024, ACM conducted an employee satisfaction survey (MTO). The departments discussed the results with all employees, drafted plans of action, and implemented these in the 2025 work plans. Their progress is part of the progress reports and discussions between the departments and the Board. ACM uses the results of the MTO in its Risk Assessment & Evaluation (RI&E). ACM subsequently created a Social Safety Handbook, with practical solutions for executives and employees in preventing and dealing with workplace harassment. In addition, ACM created the Work-related Stress Handbook, with practical solutions for executives and employees. In 2026, ACM will draw attention to these handbooks with an awareness campaign for executives and employees.

Sustainability transition

Since June 1, 2025, FMHaaglanden has also been responsible for making the facility services more sustainable, such as catering, waste streams, and workspaces. In that context, the Central Government has set targets. ACM enforces the new company rules regarding sustainability, including encouraging traveling by train instead of by car or plane. In 2025, too, ACM was committed to using sustainable options for rental cars. ACM uses these for dawn raids due to the confidential nature of this enforcement activity. ACM continues to have discussions with the rental-car provider about offering electric cars by default. ACM gives EZ yearly progress reports, which publishes a sustainability report.

Office building

The organization's growth in 2025 as well as the number of available workspaces in the office building continue to be a point of attention. Regular discussions were held with the owner (Central Government Real Estate Agency, RVB) and FMHaaglanden about the current situation.

Diversity and inclusion

Personal connections are central to ACM, which seeks to provide a workplace environment where everybody feels safe and welcome. ACM has a Diversity & Inclusion working group, which monitors trends. It also organizes events, for example in connection with International Women's Day, and workshops, for example on 'racism in the workplace' and 'neurodiversity and neuro-divergence'. In addition, ACM also has various employee networks such as

ACM Experience, JongACM (a network for young employees), and an LGBTI+ employee network. ACM is a signatory to two national charters: Charter Diversiteit and Charter Talent naar de Top. Like in previous years, ACM in 2025 again participated in the Cross Mentoring program, a program for female talents with management ambitions, and in the new Cross Cultural Mentoring program for talents from ethnic minority backgrounds. Multiple ACM officers participated in these programs as mentees or mentors. Social safety and unethical behavior in the workplace continue to be important topics.

Confidential advisors

ACM has three independent confidential advisors for integrity issues and undesirable behavior. ACM employees can talk to the independent confidential advisors, if they experience a hostile work environment or not feel safe in the workplace in any other way. ACM employees always remain anonymous. Next to counseling and support, the confidential advisors also give information and advice. ACM employees can also contact the confidential advisors at the Ministry of Economic Affairs (EZ), the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security, and Nature (LVVN), and the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (BZK).

2025 ACM Financial account

From a financial-administrative point of view, ACM consists of two entities: the Autonomous Administrative Authority ACM (in Dutch: *zelfstandig bestuursorgaan*, or *ZBO*) and the ACM organization itself. The financial account of these two entities will therefore be discussed separately.

The financial accounts contain tables with figures. In the tables below, amounts are rounded up or down to the nearest euro. As a result, rounding errors may occur.

Financial account of the ACM Organization

From an administrative point of view, the ACM Organization is an integral part of the Ministry of Economic Affairs (EZ) without any statutory obligation to publish an independent financial account. The audit takes place at the EZ level, to which ACM belongs. Also, this annual statement of accounts has not been audited. The ACM Organization uses a cash-basis accounting system in its financial administration. Expenditures and income are processed in the period in which they actually occur.

Expenditures of the ACM organization

Table 25 lists the expenditures of the ACM organization for 2025 and 2024.

Table 25: Expenditures of the ACM organization (in euros)

	2025	2024
Personnel costs		
Salary costs	80,327,544	75,299,334
Temporary employees	10,708,692	14,745,633
Travel expenses	1,458,347	1,434,544
Employee education and training	858,434	1,294,925
Other personnel costs	472,471	561,375
State Advocate	246,014	315,302
Total personnel costs	94,071,502	93,651,113
Material costs		
Housing	6,857,228	4,410,504
Research	2,296,510	2,247,013
IT	12,591,616	10,368,302
Catering/security/cleaning	525,153	1,281,506
Office furniture and supplies	1,853,095	1,447,515
Public education and events	683,991	651,223
Other material costs	144,797	309,364
Total material costs	24,952,390	20,715,427
Total expenditures	119,023,892	114,366,540

Salary costs

The salary costs went up 7 percent compared with 2024. This increase is caused by the growth in the organization's workforce (by 51 fte on balance), following the continued trend of converting temporary positions into permanent positions. Another reason was the effect of the one-off pay increases based on the collective labor agreement for 2024-2025.

Temporary employees

The expenditures on temporary employees went down as a result of the continued trend of converting temporary positions into permanent positions. Demand for additional capacity primarily came from several IT projects (in Dutch: *Baseline Informatiebeveiliging Overheid*, *SIEM/SOC*, and *Migratie ODC-Noord*).

Employee education and training

The education and training expenses have gone down 34 percent compared with 2024. That has been the result of a more phased approach to education activities, in connection with the previously mentioned uncertainty regarding long-term funding, as a result of which education requests were approved more sparingly.

Housing

Housing expenses went up 55 percent in 2025, which was caused by the switch to FMHaaglanden on June 1, 2025, and by the thereto-related costs. The switch to FMHaaglanden is estimated to result in approximately 2.1 million euros in additional costs each year.

IT

IT expenses³ went up 21 percent in 2025. This increase is primarily related to the continuation of IT projects such as ODC-Noord (project costs, and ODC passing on costs for services rendered), modernization of the document management system, and restructuring LCM-REN. And we see an increase in the hardware and licensing costs, as a result of the growth in FTEs. The migration to ODC-Noord is expected to lead to structurally higher costs.

Catering/security/cleaning

The costs for facility services went down 59 percent. This drop is connected to the switch to FMHaaglanden on June 1, 2025, which means the facility services expenses are now included under housing.

Office furniture and supplies

The costs for office furniture and supplies went up 28 percent (0.4 million euros), which is predominantly caused by paying for an IT advice contract. This is a three-year contract, and has already been paid for.

3 Including price increases and price indexations.

Table 26 gives a breakdown of the expenditures of ACM Organization and ACM ZBO.

Table 26: Total expenditures (in euros)

			2025	2024 ⁴
	ACM Organization	ZBO ACM	Total	Total
Direct material costs	2,852,802	-	2,852,802	2,814,533
Remaining costs based on actual direct hours consisting of:				
Personnel costs	94,071,502	788,942	94,860,444	94,397,322
+ indirect material costs	22,099,588	8,799	22,108,387	17,903,399
Total personnel and indirect material costs	116,171,090	797,741	116,968,831	112,300,721
Total expenditures	119,023,892	797,741	119,821,633	115,115,254

4 See table 31 for a breakdown of ACM ZBO 2024.

Income of ACM organization

Table 27 (Income of ACM organization) provides an overview of the income in 2025 and 2024. ACM passes on costs to market organizations on the basis of the contribution scheme. The amounts of the contributions from market organizations have been laid down in the Regulation on the passing on of costs to regulated parties (in Dutch). The amount that is received from each market category can vary each year, and is connected to ACM's activities in that market category in the preceding year.

Table 27: Income of ACM organization (in euros)

	2025	2024
Telecom		
Electronic communication	3,253,939	3,796,589
Numbers	2,728,595	3,003,070
Arbitration services	4,150,958	591
Total Telecom	10,133,492	6,800,250
Postal services		
Universal Service Obligation	601,798	479,472
Non-Universal Service Obligation	262,500	247,196
Universal Service Obligation (Cross-border parcel regulation)	19,328	7,188
Non-Universal Service Obligation (Cross-border parcel regulation)	31,710	39,259
Total Postal Services	915,336	773,115
Energy		
Distribution system operators (DSOs) electricity	3,711,489	2,708,833
Distribution system operators (DSOs) natural gas	1,732,542	1,449,096
Transmission system operator (TSO) electricity	4,786,038	4,013,025
Transmission system operator (TSO) natural gas	2,155,154	1,890,071
Heat license holders	3,431,137	-
Total Energy	15,816,360	10,061,025
Merger notifications	2,569,800	2,506,375
Licenses of energy providers	-	5,296
Other income	475,294	548,512
Total income	29,910,282	20,694,573

Table 28a: Income from sanctions (in euros)

	2025	2024
Sanctions received	2,194,375	5,832,527
Total income from sanctions	2,194,375	5,832,527

Table 28b: Repayments of sanctions (in euros)

	2025	2024
Repaid sanctions	2,545,332	-
Total repayments	2,545,332	-

The sanctions are imposed by ACM as enforcement organization, and are collected by order of EZ, as the result of legal proceedings. The above tables present the income from sanctions and repayments of sanctions. Under the Streamlining Act, ACM can demand payment of the sanctions within 6 or 24 weeks. In general, ACM receives payment of the fine on behalf of the Dutch State within these term limits, barring any ongoing legal proceedings. If the court hands down a ruling in a case and either lowers or reverses the fine, ACM will have to make repayments on behalf of the Dutch State. Such a situation can also occur years after the procedure, which is why, in the above tables, a distinction has been made between income and repayments.

Outstanding receivables of ACM organization

Table 29a provides a breakdown per category of the outstanding receivables as of December 31, 2025 and December 31, 2024.

Table 29a: Outstanding receivables of ACM organization (in euros)

	2025	2024
Telecom		
Electronic communication	22,907	9,818
Numbers	203,714	142,145
Arbitration services	12,258	-
Total Telecom	238,879	151,963
Postal services		
Non-Universal Service Obligation (Cross-border parcel regulation)	6,787	-
Total Postal Service	6,787	-
Energy		
Heat license holders	-	1,600,272
Total Energy	-	1,600,272
Merger notifications	479,875	445,000
Licenses of energy providers	-	-
Other receivables	349,944	700,863
Total outstanding receivables	1,075,485	2,898,098

Energy

With regard to the Heat license holders, the passing-on of 1.6 million euros only took place in late December 2024, due to a calculation error in the decision costs, which meant that this income was not received in 2024, but has been added as a receivable. In 2025, this income was received (see also table 25).

Other outstanding receivables

The other outstanding receivables mostly (0.3 million euros) consist of the completion of an old sanction (long-term bankruptcy).

Table 29b: Outstanding receivables from sanctions (in euros)

	2025	2024
Outstanding receivables from sanctions	21,654,673	25,406,223
Calculated statutory interest	-	-
Total outstanding sanctions	21,654,673	25,406,223

The line item 'Outstanding receivables from sanctions' in table 29b also includes any forfeited periodic penalty payments⁵ for which a collection decision has been issued but have not yet been paid.

Table 29c: Changes to outstanding sanctions in 2025 (in euros)

	2025
Balance on 31 December 2024	25,406,223
Imposed sanctions	185,463
Income from sanctions	-2,194,375
Decrease in receivables resulting from court rulings and non-recovery of debts	-1,742,638
Changes to outstanding sanctions	-3,751,550
Balance on 31 December 2025	21,654,673

The amount under 'Decrease in receivables resulting from court rulings and non-recovery of debts' is predominantly composed of court rulings. The line item 'decrease in receivables ...' concerns the reductions of sanctions including the statutory interest.

⁵ A periodic penalty payment becomes forfeited when a company fails to comply with the imposed order (repair measure) before the set deadline, as a result of which the fining amount falls due. This acts as an incentive to suspend any violations, at the risk of collection of high amounts if action fails to be taken.

Breakdown of expenditures along market organizations

In the Decision on the method of passing on costs to regulated industries and its amendment, it has been laid down how ACM can pass on costs to market organizations. According to this decision, the income of the year in question is based on the actual expenditure of the previous year. The market categories and the formula have been explained in more detail in the explanatory notes to the Decision on the method of passing on costs to regulated industries of October 27, 2014, and December 10, 2014, respectively, and the Decision of 18 December 2019 amending the Decision on the method of passing costs to regulated industries in connection with the expansion of oversight of the postal services and aviation sectors.

Per sector, ACM calculates the expenditure to be passed on to the relevant categories. For each category, ACM has one or more timekeeping codes, so that the costs are allocated to the right category. This is done as follows:

Per category, the direct material costs are determined, which are the costs that can be directly attributed to this category. Next, the remaining amount is determined, consisting of the indirect material costs and personnel costs. These costs are allocated based on the actual hours spent on these categories.

Table 30, the overview of the allocation of the expenditures of ACM to be passed on to market organizations, gives an overview of the allocation of the total expenditure of ACM Organization and the ACM ZBO to be passed on to market organizations on the basis of the Decision on the method of passing on costs to regulated industries. The amount stated in the column 'total share' indicates the amount to be passed on to market organizations. It does not indicate the total amount of expenditure to that sector. For example, sanction procedures in one of the regulated sectors are not passed on to market organizations but to the Dutch State.

The amount per market category may fluctuate each year. This is because more or fewer studies are needed for ACM's duties each year.

Table 30: Overview of the allocation of the expenditures of ACM (in hours and euros)

Allocation of the total expenditures of ACM Organization and the ACM ZBO

				2025	2024
	Direct hours	Direct material expenditures	Personnel and indirect expenditures based on share of hours	Total share	Total share
	in hours	in euros	in euros	in euros	in euros
Telecom					
Public electronic communication services, public electronic communication networks and related facilities	20,473	46,333	3,255,982	3,302,315	3,331,744
Numbers	14,827	-	2,358,078	2,358,078	3,028,642
Subtotal Telecom	35,300	46,333	5,614,060	5,660,393	6,360,386
Postal Service					
Universal Service Obligation (USO)	3,080	-	489,928	489,928	617,999
Non-Universal Service Obligation	1,672	-	265,984	265,984	262,492
Parcel regulation USO	123	-	19,487	19,487	19,328
Parcel regulation non-USO	147	-	23,326	23,326	38,224
Subtotal Post	5,022	-	798,725	798,725	938,043
Energy					
Distribution system operation Electricity	36,552	34,491	5,812,992	5,847,483	3,711,489
Distribution system operation Natural gas	12,619	34,491	2,006,867	2,041,359	1,732,542
Transmission system operation Electricity	39,839	254,658	6,335,837	6,590,494	4,826,538
Transmission system operation Natural gas	14,699	34,491	2,337,629	2,372,120	2,195,654
Supply of heat	16,979	147,511	2,700,184	2,847,695	1,834,308
Subtotal Energy	120,688	505,642	19,193,509	19,699,151	14,300,531

				2025	2024
	Direct hours	Direct material expenditures	Personnel and indirect expenditures based on share of hours	Total share	Total share
	in hours	in euros	in euros	in euros	in euros
Transport					
Registered pilots	948	-	150,765	150,765	93,361
Aviation	5,108	495	812,284	812,779	500,193
Subtotal Transport	6,056	495	963,049	963,544	593,554
Financial					
Payment system	953	-	151,564	151,564	91,394
Subtotal Financial	953	-	151,564	151,564	91,394
Total market organizations	168,019	552,470	26,720,907	27,273,377	22,283,908
Central government					
State/treasury	567,475	2,300,332	90,247,924	92,548,256	92,831,348
Total	735,494	2,852,802	116,968,831	119,821,633	115,115,256

Financial account of ACM ZBO

This section contains the financial account of the Autonomous Administrative Authority ACM (ACM ZBO). The ACM ZBO concerns the Board of ACM. The ACM ZBO used a cash-basis accounting system in the administrative system of the Ministry of Economic Affairs (EZ).

Expenditures and income of ZBO ACM

Table 31 is an overview of the expenditures and income over 2025 and 2024.

Table 31: Total expenditures and income of ACM ZBO (in euros)

	2025	2024
Personnel costs		
Salary costs	770,886	728,551
Travel expenses (domestic)	29	159
Travel and accommodation expenses (abroad)	11,769	9,749
Training	6,258	7,750
Total personnel	788,942	746,209
Material costs		
Contributions and memberships	8,799 ⁶	2,504
Total material	8,799	2,504
Total expenditures	797,741	748,713
Income	162,000	162,000
Total income	162,000	162,000

As of 31 December 2025, the ACM ZBO did not have any outstanding receivables.

6 These concern newspaper subscriptions. 6K of the 9K euros presented in table 31 under Contributions and memberships concern the ACM Organization, not ACM ZBO.

Annexes

Annex 1: Abbreviations

Abbreviation/acronym	Name/meaning
ACM	The Netherlands Authority for Consumers and Markets
AFM	The Dutch Authority for the Financial Markets
AI	Artificial intelligence
AP	The Dutch Data Protection Authority
API	Application Programming Interface
Awb	The Dutch General Administrative Law Act
BIO	Government information security baseline
BV	Corporate services
BZK	Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations
CBb	Dutch Trade and Industry Appeals Tribunal
CIKP	Consumers in vulnerable positions
CIO	Chief Information Officer
CPC network	Consumer Protection Cooperation Network
CSDDD	Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive
DBV	Corporate Services Department
D&I	Diversity & Inclusion
DM	Competition Department
DMA	Digital Markets Act
DMS	Document Management System
DSA	Digital Services Act
DZ	Health Care Department
EB	Office of the Chief Economist
EC	European Commission

Abbreviation/acronym	Name/meaning
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights
ECHR	European Court of Human Rights
EEA	European Accessibility Act
EU	European Union
EZ	Ministry of Economic Affairs
FG	Data Protection Officer
HRM	Human Resource Management
HSL	High-speed railway
ICS	International Card Services
IV	Information Management
I&W	Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management
Iw	Establishment Act of ACM
KGG	Ministry of Climate Policy and Green Growth
LVVN	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security, and Nature
Mw	The Dutch Competition Act
NCT	New Competition Tool
Nma	The Netherlands Competition Authority
Nza	The Dutch Healthcare Authority
OGSM	Objectives, Goals, Strategies & Measures
OR	Works Council
P&C	Planning and Control
P2B	Platform-to-Business Regulation
RvA	ACM's Advisory Board

Abbreviation/acronym	Name/meaning
RVB	The Central Government Real Estate Agency
SDT	The Digital Regulation Cooperation Platform
TDA	Taskforce on Data and Algorithms
TndT	Talent naar de Top
UHT	Feasibility and Enforceability Assessment
UWV	The Employee Insurance Agency
VHT	Textile Recovery Association
Wcw	Dutch Collective Heat Act
Woo	Dutch Open Government Act
ZBO	Autonomous administrative authority
ZINL	National Health Care Institute

Annex 2: Realized actions of the 2025 Annual Plan

ACM establishes its goals and corresponding actions for 2025 in an annual plan. Based on that annual plan, among other sources, the departments draw up their own annual plans (which have been mutually coordinated), which are approved by the Board. The below table lists the planned actions as well as the results, with a reference to the page number in the annual report for more information. Since this table only lists the actions from the ACM Annual Plan (and not the departments' annual plans), the results do not give a full overview of ACM's activities, hence the references to other sections of this annual report.

ACM executes its mission by providing people and businesses with accessible information and communication; preventing or taking action against harmful practices by businesses, or by drawing up rules; conducting studies into the functioning of markets; and giving solicited and unsolicited advice about how markets can work better.

Planned actions	Results	Page
Optimizing recognizable ACM-wide educational formats.	On acm.nl and acmconsuwijzer.nl, consumers and businesses are able to find a lot of information. ACM's editorial team is continuously working on improving these websites. Also, ACM in 2025 started working with telemarketing forms, and ACM has invested much in making the processing of requests for public access more professional, by implementing changes to the organization, work processes, consultation structures, and formats. This professionalization process will continue in 2026.	41, 67
Campaigns by Consuwijzer / Business Des.k	ACM ran a consumer awareness campaign on warranties as well as one on deceptive discounts. In addition, ACM developed cam-paigns, videos, and online tools to inform consumers and businesses about their rights and obligations when making online purchases or using platforms. ACM published short explainer videos on social media in which the most common problems are explained.	24, 30, 33
Implementing a harmonized approach to market investigations.	In 2025, ACM published a procedure for conducting market investigations. These market investigations will continue in 2026.	36 - 40
Selection of enforcement investigations and market studies in mutually coordinated plans of enforcement departments.	Coordination took place in the drafting of the departmental work plans, for example in the selection of enforcement investigations and market investigations.	64

ACM realizes societal impact by making smarter choices about what it can and cannot (or no longer) do with an eye to its mission; executing those choices as effectively and efficiently as possible; being agile in a changing environment; conducting data-driven oversight; and using innovative instruments where such is effective.

Planned actions	Results	Page
Implementation of oversight vision, including the role of communication therein.	ACM in 2025 drew up a new oversight vision. This vision touches on all tools in ACM's toolkit, and has been published in 2026.	14, 63
Discussions within all departments as well as ACM-wide about what societal impact is and how that can be achieved in an effective and efficient manner.	ACM in 2025 drew up a new oversight vision, regularly conducted evaluations and impact assessments, and held discussions in departments about putting people central to our oversight.	13, 56 - 61, 63
Prominent attention for strategic objectives and results in annual plan / annual report.	Mission-driven oversight and the strategic objections are central to both the annual plan and the annual report.	-
Legislative letter with annual report.	The legislative letter has been published together with the annual report.	-

In the eye of society, ACM is an authoritative regulator by actively engaging, either by itself or together with other regulators, with the outside world with new initiatives; and taking into consideration all public interests on the basis of fact-based analyses.

Planned actions	Results	Page
Revision of strategy regarding external communications / publications.	In 2026, the modernization of ACM's visual identity and brand strategy will be worked out further.	-
Recognizable format for new-style Feasibility and Enforce-ability Assessments (UHTs).	ACM developed and implemented a recognizable format for new-style Feasibility and Enforceability Assessments (UHTs). This was one of the products of ACM's improvement project IPA (in Dutch: <i>Integraal Plan van Aanpak</i>).	63
Execution of actions following reputation study.	Actions that followed from ACM's reputation study have been included in the 2026 annual plan, such as the modernization of ACM's visual identity and brand strategy.	-
Leading role in the Digital Regulation Cooperation Platform (SDT), its Chambers, and conference.	The Digital Regulation Cooperation Platform (in Dutch: <i>Samenwerkingsplatform Digitale Toezichhouders</i> , or <i>SDT</i>) organized the conference on 'How oversight contributes to a fair, safe, and open online society.' The Chairman of the Board of ACM is also the chair of the SDT, and ACM fulfills the role of secretariat.	13, 25
Study into other useful cooperation platforms.	Together with the National Health Care Institute (ZiN) and the Dutch Healthcare Authority (NZA), ACM drafted a joint advice containing recommendations for the Dutch minister of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS) regarding socially acceptable prices of expensive pre-prescription drugs. ACM gave the European Commission recommendations for improving cooperation between the Commission and the national competition authorities, and that between the national competition authorities themselves.	32

ACM is an attractive employer because of its mission-driven culture aimed at societal impact, and its open and inclusive workplace.

Planned actions	Results	Page
Revision and execution of strategic HR agenda.	In the context of ACM's improvement project IPA (in Dutch: <i>Integraal Plan van Aanpak</i>), ACM in 2025 drafted a leadership's vision as part of the strategic HRM agenda. The HRM agenda will be continued in 2026.	63
Follow-ups to action plan regarding employee satisfaction survey (MTO).	The results of the employee satisfaction survey (MTO) have been discussed with all employees, and, where necessary, actions have been taken. Further actions have been included in the work plans and progress reports.	72

ACM's operations are professional, and ACM has a cost-conscious culture because departments are fully responsible for their budgets, staff, output, and compliance; and all employees actively help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the entire organization.

Planned actions	Results	Page
Executing the Insight and Accountability (in Dutch: <i>Inzicht & Verantwoording</i>) program.	In 2025, the Insight and Accountability (in Dutch: <i>Inzicht & Verantwoording</i>) program is incorporated into ACM's improvement project IPA (in Dutch: <i>Integraal Plan van Aanpak</i>).	15, 63
Study into possible status of Large AAA ("Groot ZBO"), and follow-up steps.	In 2025, two studies were completed on ACM's organizational form: an exploratory study conducted by PriceWaterhouseCoopers, and a report on behalf of executive management advisors Borstlap & De Leeuw. According to the recommendations put forward in those studies, future-ready oversight can be safeguarded best if ACM becomes an autonomous administrative authority under Dutch law (in Dutch: <i>zelfstandig bestuursorgaan</i> , or ZBO) with its own legal personality. Follow-up steps were included in ACM's improvement project IPA (in Dutch: <i>Integraal Plan van Aanpak</i>), among other areas, and have become part of discussions with the Ministry of Economic Affairs.	64
Improving the organizational structure.	In 2025, ACM strengthened the organizational structure by formalizing several changes. These included the expedited integration of the Health Care Department (DZ) and the Competition Department (DM), the switch to FMHaaglanden (which is the facility services provider for organizations that are part of the Dutch central government), and the separation of information services (IV and IT) from the Corporate Services Department (DBV). A complete review of the Organization Decree is expected to take place in 2026.	69

Annex 3: Overview of press releases and blogs

Date	Title
16-01-2025	ACM: stricter enforcement of information obligation of telecom companies, further study into the prices in the budget segment of internet services
17-01-2025	ACM: trade associations in the chiropractic sector to no longer interfere in their members' discount policies
17-01-2025	ACM Energy Monitor: Natural-gas price up, filling rates of gas storages down
28-01-2025	ACM's letter to the Dutch Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS): mandate opening up health-care information systems to promote innovation
28-01-2025	Verisure adjusts its contracts and customer-attraction practices under pressure from ACM
03-02-2025	ACM is now fully authorized to enforce the Digital Services Act
05-02-2025	ACM in 2025 to launch five new broad investigations into market problems
06-02-2025	ACM reprimands international company about indications of market manipulation on wholesale market for natural gas
06-02-2025	Data Governance Act: first Dutch registration of a data intermediation service is now official
06-02-2025	ACM conditionally clears acquisition of Open Tower Company by Dutch telecom operator KPN
07-02-2025	ACM: system operator Liander can experiment with flexible contracts
12-02-2025	Focus on Energy 2025: ACM focuses on dealing with grid congestion, consumer protection, and a fair distribution of the grid costs
13-02-2025	ACM's energy monitor: new fixed contracts are up to three percent more expensive
14-02-2025	ACM: collaboration in natural stone sector helps companies make production chain more sustainable
19-02-2025	Energy supplier Kikker Energie solves financial problems following ACM intervention

Date	Title
20-02-2025	Blog Paul de Bijl: Industrial policy, scale, and strategic independence
21-02-2025	ACM clears acquisition of pallet sellers DWP and Vierhouten by competitor Foresco and investigates strategy of 'serial acquisitions'
21-02-2025	Manon Leijten reappointed as Member of the Board of ACM
24-02-2025	ACM warns suppliers of dog food: retailers must be free to set their own prices
28-02-2025	Provider of medical alert systems for seniors to compensate harmed consumers following ACM intervention
04-03-2025	ACM tightens rules so that heat suppliers report more clearly about their financial returns
07-03-2025	ACM launches investigation into acquisition of cash-in-transit company Ziemann by rival company Brink's
10-03-2025	ACM now authorized to investigate compliance with the Digital Markets Act
11-03-2025	Response to CBb ruling: ACM has the independent power to set a prioritization framework and to make choices
13-03-2025	ACM's energy monitor: Feed-in costs for households with solar panels went up approximately 10 percent
14-03-2025	World Consumer Rights Day: Record number of reports filed with ACM
14-03-2025	ACM's response to review of funding of electricity infrastructure
18-03-2025	2024 ACM Annual Report: targeted interventions to ensure that markets work well
21-03-2025	ACM and European consumer authorities: the use of in-game virtual currencies must be clearer in order to protect consumers
26-03-2025	ACM: clear choices are needed for the future of the electricity system ACM

Date	Title
26-03-2025	ACM: More time needed for assessing complaints about Schiphol's charges
27-03-2025	FixitFaster adjusted its practices, and stopped collecting debts following ACM intervention
28-03-2025	ACM to step up its enforcement of compliance with telemarketing rules
03-04-2025	ACM conditionally clears acquisition of Dutch oil company Oliehandel Klaas de Boer by rival FincoEnergies
03-04-2025	ACM Telecom Monitor Q4 2024: Fiber-optic roll-out continues to grow, but not everywhere at same speed
03-04-2025	ACM: Energy-sharing offers opportunities for energy communities and apartment buildings that generate sustainable energy
08-04-2025	International Card Services refunds too high fees for ICS Go Card following conversations with ACM
09-04-2025	ACM: Energy bills go up, households can save money with better contracts
14-04-2025	ACM: Making well-informed decisions about new energy contracts is hindered by uncertainty about resellers and early-termination fees
17-04-2025	ACM to investigate barriers to cancellation among telecom operators
17-04-2025	Blog Paul de Bijl: Import tariffs and competition
22-04-2025	ACM is working on a new decision on opportunities for prioritization of projects that contribute to major social objectives in getting connected to the grid
24-04-2025	ACM calls on companies in the food sector to check their sustainability claims
24-04-2025	ACM's draft decision on group transport agreements marks an important step for energy hubs
25-04-2025	European Commission accepts ACM's request regarding the acquisition of Downtown by Universal Music Group
25-04-2025	Blog Martijn Snoop: Competition authorities have a role in creating new European suppliers

Date	Title
01-05-2025	ACM: additional measures are needed for affordable network tariffs for hydrogen transport
07-05-2025	ACM introduces the DSA check
08-05-2025	ACM fines dropshipper for unclear information about deliveries and returns
12-05-2025	Focus areas of ACM's oversight over the digital economy in 2025
13-05-2025	ACM presents research methods for its market investigation into veterinary services for pets, invites stakeholders to respond
15-05-2025	ACM Energy monitors: Natural-gas price went down further, switching to better contracts continues to pay off
19-05-2025	Designation of first Dutch trusted flagger under DSA is near
26-05-2025	ACM and European consumer authorities: SHEIN must adjust its website
26-05-2025	ACM sets 2026 tariffs for the transmission of natural gas
03-06-2025	Save the date: symposium 'How oversight contributes to a safe digital society' (in Dutch)
04-06-2025	ACM: maximum heat tariffs are less dependent on price fluctuations as a result of new calculation method
04-06-2025	ACM: the increase of Schiphol's charges is not unreasonable
05-06-2025	ACM calls on businesses to prepare themselves for new rules regarding the accessibility of websites and apps
06-06-2025	ACM: further investigation needed into acquisition of Unox by Zwanenberg
12-06-2025	2024 ACM Postal and Parcel Markets Scan: more parcels, fewer postal items, and decreasing reliability
12-06-2025	VodafoneZiggo acknowledges responsibility for the entire chain of telemarketing activities

Date	Title
19-06-2025	ACM warns consumers against telemarketing practices involving home batteries: hang up, or record your call
19-06-2025	Citizens speak their minds: prescription drugs are important, but not at any price
20-06-2025	ACM energy monitors: natural-gas price went up slightly, record amount of LNG imported
26-06-2025	ACM welcomes opinions about its new draft decision on opportunities for prioritization of projects that contribute to major social objectives in getting connected to the grid
27-06-2025	ACM attaches strict conditions to acquisition of RTL Nederland by DPG Media
30-06-2025	ACM: cutbacks to the postal service inevitable, reliability of all postal services must improve though
01-07-2025	ACM checks market participants' risk management in algorithmic trading on the energy wholesale markets
02-07-2025	ACM market investigation into computer-controlled consumer prices in the airline sector: research methods and consultation
04-07-2025	Martijn Snoep reappointed as Chairman of the Board of ACM
07-07-2025	Blog Martijn Snoep: The 2025 Dutch general election: attention for market power needed
08-07-2025	ACM Telecom Monitor Q1 2025: Majority of households uses fiber-optic to go online
08-07-2025	ACM to study the contribution of battery systems and electrolyzers to the grid
08-07-2025	Registration for the symposium of the Digital Regulation Cooperation Platform is now open (in Dutch)
10-07-2025	ACM warns: retailers must comply with warranty rules
10-07-2025	ACM study into the measurement of heat consumption: it is up to suppliers to improve transparency and customer services
15-07-2025	ACM analysis: Financial positions of energy suppliers have improved further

Date	Title
16-07-2025	ACM: more than 90% of non-EU market participants on wholesale energy markets complies with requirement to designate a local representative
17-07-2025	ACM takes the next step in heightened oversight over unsolicited telemarketing calls
23-07-2025	ACM energy monitors: Filling target of gas storages has been met, high electricity prices during windless summer evenings
24-07-2025	Energy suppliers to inform customers better about early-termination fees following an ACM investigation
25-07-2025	ACM holds off on giving a view on Apple's commission because of ongoing conversations between Apple and European Commission
12-08-2025	After a stream of complaints and action by ACM, the website Cvneed has stopped accepting new customers
13-08-2025	ACM reminds online platforms of their responsibilities during election campaigns
14-08-2025	ACM looks into sustainability claims in the coffee and cocoa sectors
18-08-2025	ACM warns consumers against UltraCool, which sells SAPPH lingerie products on shopsapph.com
26-08-2025	Many users are unfamiliar with their rights on online platforms, ACM launches awareness campaign
09-09-2025	ACM launches DSA investigation into Snapchat in connection with illegal sale of vaping products to minors
10-09-2025	As part of its awareness campaign on warranties, ACM opens a pop-up warranty store inside Utrecht Central Station
11-09-2025	Dutch department store De Bijenkorf removes incorrect sustainability claims following an ACM action
11-09-2025	ACM publishes draft guidelines regarding the European Data Act for businesses
12-09-2025	The profitability of organic farmers is under pressure, ACM recommends set of measures
12-09-2025	ACM: Uncertainty surrounding affordability is a large obstacle when switching to heat networks

Date	Title
16-09-2025	ACM: households to pay 25 euros per year more in 2026 in network tariffs for natural gas and electricity
18-09-2025	ACM launches a market investigation into grocery prices in Dutch supermarkets
19-09-2025	ACM wishes to see honest discounts in order to protect consumers against deception
19-09-2025	ACM's Monitor on the consumer energy market: rates have slightly gone down, start of the heating season is a good time to review energy contracts
22-09-2025	With new rules for system operators, ACM stimulates the energy transition as well as investments for combating grid congestion
26-09-2025	ACM warns against Dutch company Opslagplan's telemarketing practices involving home batteries
26-09-2025	Mickie Schoch appointed as Director of ACM's Telecommunications, Transport and Postal Services Department
30-09-2025	ACM launches investigation into abuse of dominance by an international software company
30-09-2025	Video recap of the Digital Regulation Cooperation Platform symposium (in Dutch)
02-10-2025	ACM publishes tariff proposals of distribution system operators and TenneT for 2026
07-10-2025	ACM Telecom Monitor for Q2 2025: Significant increase in mobile-data consumption
10-10-2025	All Dutch energy suppliers now report correctly about the origins of their electricity following ACM interventions
14-10-2025	Blog of Martijn Ridderbos: Supply chain responsibility and well-functioning markets
16-10-2025	Better policies needed for socially acceptable prices of expensive prescription drugs
16-10-2025	Following ACM action, KPN compensates customers for missed discounts
17-10-2025	ACM's Monitor on the consumer energy market: suppliers must inform customers properly about important changes in 2027

Date	Title
21-10-2025	ACM warns against telemarketing practices involving authorizations for energy contracts
23-10-2025	Unilever to adjust sustainability claims following ACM action
29-10-2025	Access to platform data for vetted researchers under the DSA
31-10-2025	ACM: EETRIP is the heat supplier of the residents of residential building De Trip, and must comply with the Dutch Heat Act
06-11-2025	21 airlines to adjust misleading claims following action by European consumer authorities
11-11-2025	ACM: incentives for location choices are important, but implementation of other measures must be straightened out first
17-11-2025	ACM conducts dawn raids at contracting companies following municipal tender process
18-11-2025	ACM's Monitor on the consumer energy market: comparability of contracts must improve
18-11-2025	ACM collaborates with European Commission on market investigation into cloud services
20-11-2025	ACM still sees many misleading discounts, and advises: check before you buy
24-11-2025	ACM is now authorized to enforce the Data Act
26-11-2025	ACM: system operators must give more priority to measures that allow the grid to be utilized more efficiently
27-11-2025	ACM sets 2026 tariffs for distribution system operators and TenneT
05-12-2025	ACM sets the heat tariffs for 2026
05-12-2025	First fine for non-compliance with the DSA: 120 million euros fine imposed on X
08-12-2025	ACM: Potato growers of Farm Frites get more time to decide on contract changes

Date	Title
11-12-2025	Blog Paul de Bijl: Externalities in the attention economy
12-12-2025	ACM: giving priority to projects that contribute to major social objectives remains possible with the new prioritization framework
16-12-2025	ACM: energy traders reduce risks of algorithmic trading, but additional improvements are needed
17-12-2025	ACM: feed-in costs for solar power are not unreasonable, though contracts are difficult to compare
18-12-2025	ACM: protect pet owners against the risk of higher prices and overtreatment
18-12-2025	ACM Telecom Monitor for Q3 2025: significant increase in mobile-data consumption in Q3 too
18-12-2025	Furniture store Velderhof makes arrangements with ACM regarding its practices
18-12-2025	ACM: Tergouw must get its bookkeeping in order, and comply with statutory requirements for system operators and suppliers
19-12-2025	ACM: Energy hubs can file requests for group transport agreements with their system operators
19-12-2025	ACM's Monitor on the consumer energy market: the natural-gas price is low, energy tariffs went down significantly in 2025