

The Northern Netherlands



- Strong Innovator (EC Regional Innovation Scoreboard)
- Groningen: “powerhouse” (OECD) ← University of Groningen (#66 Shanghai ARWU)
- 96% of businesses SME’s
- Traditionally strong in agrofood, health care, energy → natural gas
- Innovation ecosystem:
 - ‘clear landscape’
 - tradition of cooperation
 - strong bottom up attitude (tendency to act)
 - widely felt social responsibility →
“50% of innovative SME’s consider themselves to be socially responsible’
- Regional Innovation Strategy (RIS3): societal challenges at the core
 - contributing to solutions &
 - taking economic opportunities → new specialisations



Transition to a hydrogen economy

- 1980s-90s: natural gas 5% GDP NLs
- Since 2000 combination of factors → move away from natural gas
 - depletion of gas resources, liberalization gas markets
 - Increasing need society of move towards sustainable energy
 - earthquake issues in NNLs

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closure Groningen gas field → EC: potential loss of 20.000 jobs → **urgency to act**

Urgency → driver of change

- **commitment of actors and stakeholders → cooperation**
- **political backing & support general public**
- **public-private funding from multiple sources**



Transition to a hydrogen economy

Catalyst: Energy Valley cluster organization → New Energy Coalition (platform)

2015: Hydrogen vision, building on strong points region

(location, extensive knowledge, existing gas infrastructure, energy demand industry)

2019: Hydrogen investment agenda:

- Building new hydrogen value chain (2019 HEAVENN 1st hydrogen valley in Europe)
- Decarbonizing industry
- Developing new low carbon economic opportunities

Challenges:

- investing in 'enabling environment' (a.o. road maps, funding frameworks, trade partnerships, human capital strategy)
- connecting broader 'SME-world' (future perspective)
- narrowing down → new specialisations
- ..



THANK YOU