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
  ↓ 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